

**UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
RÍO PIEDRAS CAMPUS
COLLEGE OF GENERAL STUDIES
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

Course Title:	Literature of Crime
Codification:	INGL 3150
Credits/Hours:	3 credits per semester/3 contact hours per week
Prerequisite:	Advanced Placement in English (score of 4 or more) or completion of first-year English (INGL 3101-3102 or INGL 3103-3104 or INGL 3123-3124 or INGL 3011-3012)

Course Description:

This course is an option for completing the literature requirement of the general education component. This course will focus on true crime; representations of crime in popular culture; literary works in which a crime is central; sensational crimes; crimes against humanity; political and financial crimes; crimes related to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, and socioeconomic and undocumented status, among others. Because crimes are, by definition, transgressions, they serve to highlight what is at the heart of a particular culture or society. Writing focused on crime thus helps us to understand not only what tears communities and societies apart, but also what holds them together. This course is interdisciplinary in focus, drawing from any and/or all of the following modes of critique: literary analysis, cultural studies, history, the law, psychology, and the social sciences.

Learning Objectives:

Consistent with the English Department's general objectives, the student will demonstrate, through a wide variety of forms of evaluation that they are making progress in their ability to:

- Critique and analyze themes in literature focused on and/or featuring crime.
- Enjoy implementing different critical approaches relevant to the study of crime, such as the law; social mores/values; the history of particular communities and the meaning of community in general; economic inequalities; and issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, and/or class,

and demonstrate awareness of how to effectively apply them to class readings.

- Interpret fiction and nonfiction texts using literary theory, cultural studies, and lenses provided by disciplines including but not limited to history, the law, and the social sciences.
- Produce analyses of relevant themes through written responses, discussion, and presentations.
- Recognize and use effective research methods and express appreciation of the value of appropriately and ethically managing information.
- Implement effective strategies for collaborative work among students, including those with disabilities.
- demonstrate the ability to work and interact with digital tools to support their individual or collaborative learning activities and comply with the ethical and legal obligations associated with them.

Content Outline and Time Distribution:

Unit I: Theory

(6 hours)

Introduction: Modes of analysis and relevant theory

- * Literary analysis
- * Cultural Studies
- * Social science analysis
- * Legal frameworks
- * History

Sample texts: Douglass, *Purity and Danger*; Hutchinson, *Is Eating People Wrong? Great Legal Cases and How They Shaped the World*; Bradford, *Crime Fiction: A Very Short Introduction*.

Unit II: History

(12 hours, including time for in-class writing/evaluation)

Investigation of foundational issues related to the chosen theme for the course

- * Historical events and their trajectories

- * Sociopolitical issues
- * Economic issues
- * Ideological issues

Sample texts: *Dred Scott v. Sandford* [U.S. Supreme Court decision]; Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*; Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; White, "I Investigate Lynchings"; Boyle, *Arc of Justice*; Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery*; Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*; Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*.

Unit III: Case Study (12 hours, including time for in-class writing/evaluation)

Examination of a specific event that exemplifies the historical trends examined in Unit II

- * Social change and/or the lack thereof
- * How history is written on human bodies
- * The specifics of a given crime and how they relate to the larger sociohistorical context

Sample texts: News reports and analyses following the murder of Trayvon Martin, including television footage, interviews, and responses from academia and the public sphere.

Unit IV: Literary Representations (15 hours, including time for in-class writing/evaluation)

Examination of literary texts that explore issues related to the crime considered in Unit III, including its effects and implications

- * Aspects of fiction
- * How to analyze literature
- * The social role of literature and the humanities as a whole

Sample texts: Morrison, *Beloved*; Unsworth, *Sacred Hunger*; Jones, *The Known World*; Faulkner, *Sanctuary*; Mullen, *Darktown*.

Total Contact Hours: 45 hours

Instructional Strategies:

This course is based upon collaborative discussion among students and teacher; therefore, oral participation is required. A variety of learning and assessment experiences are used to create an atmosphere of reflection, critical thinking and collaboration. Some of the strategies employed in this course include: discussion, lectures, workshops, group projects, fieldwork, audio recordings, and films/video. Assessment activities and strategies are also used to evaluate student's performance.

Required Student Resources:

Digital projector, A/V equipment, and access to the internet.

Evaluation Strategies:

A. Written Essays	55%
B. Homework Responses	25%
C. Informal Writings	10%
D. Class Participation	10%
Total: 100%	

English Department Attendance Policy:

Six contact hours of absences may lower average one whole letter grade. Five late arrivals are equivalent to one absence.

Rights of Students with Disabilities:

The University of Puerto Rico complies with all state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination including "The American Disabilities Act" (ADA) and Law #51 from the Puerto Rico Commonwealth (Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico). Every student has the right to request and receive reasonable accommodation and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). Those students with special needs that require some type of particular assistance or accommodation shall explicitly communicate it directly to the professor. Students who are receiving VRS services shall communicate that to the professor at the beginning of the semester to facilitate appropriate planning and the necessary equipment according to the Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimentos [OAPI]), administered by the Dean of Students Office. Any other student requiring assistance or special accommodation shall also communicate directly with the professor. Reasonable accommodations requests or services DO NOT exempt the student from complying and fulfilling academic and course related requirements and

responsibilities. Differential evaluation will be provided to students with special needs who have been duly certified by OAPI. (See Circular Núm. 9 de 2002–2003.)

Academic Integrity Policy:

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure laid down in the UPR Students General Bylaws.

Gender and Sexual Identity Discrimination Policy:

The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms, including that of sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy Against Sexual Harassment at the University of Puerto Rico, Certification Num. 130, 2014-2015 from the Board of Governors, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment, must turn to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson, the Office of the Dean of Students, and/or the Coordinator of the Office of Compliance with Title IX for an orientation and/or a formal complaint.

Grading System

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

Bibliography

Primary Sources

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Online Resources

MLA Tutorial

<http://generales.uprrp.edu/biblioteca/tutoriales-biblioteca/>

Dictionary

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Thesaurus

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus>

Research Methods

<https://sites.google.com/site/biblioangelquinteroalfaroupr/tutoriales>

<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

<https://style.mla.org>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml>

<https://www.library.cornell.edu/research/citation/mla>

<https://www.bowdoin.edu/baldwin-center/index.html>

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/research>

<http://www.esc.edu/online-writing-center/resources/research>

Research Materials

<http://www.slavevoyages.org>

<http://libguides.brown.edu/slavery>

<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005202>

<https://www.newyorker.com/topics/true-crime>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/true-](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/true-crime/?utm_term=.d3a309736a20)

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<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women>

<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/organized-crime>

<https://m.youtube.com/user/999popular>

<http://www.guantanamobaymuseum.org/>

<https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/native-americans.html>

<http://knottedline.com/mobile/>

<https://carceralstudies.duke.edu>

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