

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
The City University of New York

Department of ENGLISH

|  |                       |         |
|--|-----------------------|---------|
| Title of Course:                                       | Course Number:        | ENG 332 |
| <b>ENGLISH 332: THE ART OF<br/>THE DETECTIVE STORY</b> | Class Hours per Week: | 3       |
|  | Lab Hours:            | 0       |
|  | Credits:              | 3       |

A. Description

English 332 explores the genre of the detective story: its principal themes, plots, characters and settings; the dramatic changes the genre has undergone (particularly in the twentieth century); its relationship to other literature and new directions of the genre today. In addition, the phenomenal popularity of the detective story will be considered: who is the audience and why has the detective story attracted such a large audience?

B. Prerequisites and/or Corequisites

English 201 or English 121

C. Student Outcomes

Students will

- Discuss course content in a range of critical contexts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of themes and genres of course texts.
- Critique the complexities and differences among course texts.

D. Required Texts and/or Supplementary Materials

*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, Agatha Christie

*The Long Goodbye*, Raymond Chandler

*The Blue Hammer*, Ross MacDonald

*In the Heat of the Night*, John Ball

*The Case of the Sliding Pool*, E.V. Cunningham

*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez

*Detective Fiction*, ed. Robin Winks

Films such as *The Maltese Falcon* based on Dashiell Hammett's 1930 novel and *The Mirror Cracked* based on Agatha Christie's mystery, may be included.

## E. Evaluation and Requirements of Students

Students are required to read a series of detective novels and stories and to pass quizzes on them. A midterm and final examination will be given, and a term paper or series of short papers or a journal will be assigned. Final grades will be based on students' overall performance, including class participation, quizzes, exams, and written work.

### **College Attendance Policy**

At BMCC, the maximum number of absences is limited to one more hour than the number of hours a class meets in one week. For example, you may be enrolled in a three-hour class. In that class, you would be allowed 4 hours of absence (not 4 days). In the case of excessive absences, the instructor has the option to lower the grade or assign an F or WU grade.

### **Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments for this course must contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. BMCC is committed to providing equal access to all programs and curricula to all students.

### **BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's web site, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

## F. Outline of Topics

Weeks 1-2: The Origins of the Detective Story

- A. Introductory Background
- B. Poe's Stories and Poems
- C. Arthur Conan Doyle's Stories

Weeks 3-5: The Golden Age and the British Country House Mystery

- A. Agatha Christie, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*
- B. Discussion of the Golden Age "Whodunit" as Reaction to Modern Literature

C. Film: *The Mirror Cracked*

Weeks 6-8: The American Hard-Boiled Detective Story

A. Film: *The Maltese Falcon*

B. Raymond Chandler, *The Long Goodbye*

Weeks 9-10: The Psychological Crime Novel: Ross MacDonald, *The Blue Hammer*

Weeks 11-12: The Bi-Cultural Detective

A. John Ball, *In the Heat of the Night* (Film, *In the Heat of the Night*)

B. E.V. Cunningham, *The Case of the Sliding Pool*

Weeks 13-14: The Detective Story and Mainstream Literature

A. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*

B. Final Examination