

## First Year Seminar: The Art of the Detective in Fiction and Film

Dickinson College, Fall 2020 (FYSM 100-

Mondau/Friday 11:30-12:45

Class Blog: <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/fysdetective/>

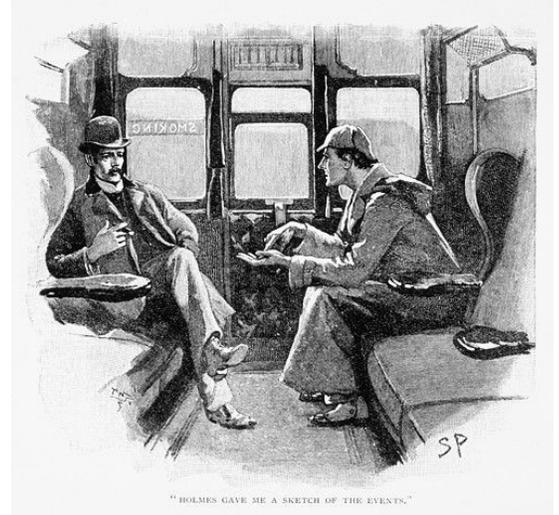
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Office: East College 413

Zoom link:

Office Hours: TBA

**“...when you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.” ~Sherlock Holmes**



### Course Materials

The following texts are required for the course and are available at the college bookstore:

1. *Writing Analytically*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen (Cengage Learning, 2011) ISBN#: 978-1337559461
2. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Dover Thrift Editions, 2009) ISBN #: 978-0486474915
3. *The Maltese Falcon*, by Dashiell Hammett (Vintage Crime/Black Lizard, 1989) ISBN#978-0679722649
4. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, by Stieg Larsson (Vintage Crime/Black Lizard; Mass Market Paperback edition, 2011) ISBN#: 978-0307949486
5. Additional readings are available on our class website unless otherwise specified in the syllabus.

\*Note: (I hope!) We will be screening 3 films/TV episodes. I am working out the details of the screenings. Films/episodes to be screened are:

- *Rear Window*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock (1954)
- *Sherlock*, “A Scandal in Belgravia”, created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss (season 2, episode 1; 2012)
- *Veronica Mars*, “Pilot”, created by Rob Thomas (season 1, episode 1; 2004)

### Learning Goals and Course Description

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) introduces you to Dickinson as a “community of inquiry” by developing habits of mind essential to liberal learning. Through the study the art of detective fiction and film, students will:

- critically analyze information and ideas in the texts we discuss;
- examine issues from multiple perspectives;
- discuss, debate and defend ideas, including one’s own views, with clarity and reason;

- learn to find, evaluate, and correctly incorporate outside sources so as to avoid plagiarism;
- create clear academic writing.
- utilize the small group seminar format to interact and engage in discussion with your peers as well as with me, your professor

For our FYS, we will examine the appeal of the mystery and suspense genre. We'll work to develop an understanding of the literary devices used to foster audiences' experience of mystery and suspense, including point of view, characterization, plot, and setting. In mysteries, characters and plots are driven by issues of power, crime, and law, but also gender, desire, politics, class, race, individuality, and society—just to name a few! This is a genre driven by questions: questions of identity (Who is it?



Whodunnit?), questions of epistemology (How do we know?\_What do we know?), and questions of hermeneutics (How should we interpret and understand?). Over the course of the semester we will examine 19<sup>th</sup> -, 20<sup>th</sup> - and 21<sup>st</sup> century short stories, novels, and films as well as a range of secondary readings that will provide theoretical frameworks through which *you* will become the investigators of literary and cultural contexts.

### **What Is Required of Me? (aka: What *all* professors expect from Dickinson students)**

You should complete all readings and writing assignments in advance of the class in which they will be discussed. You should also complete the tasks from the Course Schedule that are listed in the columns labeled “Reading Assignments due IN CLASS” and “Writing Assignments due IN CLASS.” You will want to reference this column every day so that you know what is expected of you at each class.

In order for our meetings to be successful, it will be important for you to do the following:  
(taken from the book, *Peer Instruction for Astronomy*, by Paul J. Green, p. 29)

1. READ. Come to class prepared to discuss the material.
2. RISK. Be open with your opinions and your questions. Listen to and encourage everyone's ideas so they can take risks too.
3. RELAX. Don't take criticism of your own ideas personally. Change your mind when the evidence shows that you should.
4. RESPECT. Act toward your peers as you would have them act towards you. Be civil. Be charitable.
5. REASON. Play the skeptic, but be critical of reasoning, ideas, and data -- not of people.
6. RESTATE. Try to paraphrase another's explanation in a way that makes sense. Focus on coming to the best possible answer.

### **Attendance and Participation**

**Preparation, attendance, and participation are crucial to this course and your success in it.** Regular attendance and conscientious preparation for class are assumed and expected. These are strange times, however, and things may happen. I expect you to show up to our synchronous meetings and to any group meetings, but if something happens please let me know as soon as you are able. We're a small class and we will miss anyone who is not in attendance!

Just showing up for class, however, is not enough to guarantee a high participation grade. Your participation grade will be calculated based on the following criteria:

- You come to class having done the day's reading.
- You prompt discussion and/or respond to your peers when asked.
- You enter the conversation without dominating or silencing others.
- You offer more than just personal opinion or anecdote – that is, you root your comments in the text we are discussing. (In other words, people who try to comment on things they have not read will lose points.)
- You attend peer review sessions with a complete rough draft.
- You work collaboratively with people to achieve learning goals when you are placed in a small group.
- You do your best to be present and engaged in every class. This means preparing for each class meeting, joining class meetings with your video feed active when possible, and following along so you are ready to participate when asked.

I recognize that some students are hesitant to speak in front of class. If this is the case, please come talk with me early in the semester. In addition, if extenuating circumstances arise that are interfering with your ability to attend and/or participate in this class or others, please come see me as soon as possible. Dickinson has many resources available to you that might help you navigate a challenging a time or situation. As both your advisor and your professor I am in a great position to help point you toward those resources. Don't hesitate to ask!

### Journals

Frequently, I will ask you to complete some form of a writing task (be sure to check the column in the Course Schedule labeled "What to prepare for class today") in your journals. You are expected to be able to access your journal in every class. I will be taking a look at these throughout the semester for completion grades. You may use a pen and paper notebook (you'll have to send me pictures later) or a text file of some sort. Note: make sure you have enough screen space to be able to see Zoom, our class texts, and your notebook if you plan on using an electronic source.

### Papers

Each paper will go through the invention, drafting, feedback, and revising process. The process of revision and the ultimate success of the paper depend upon a thoughtful first draft as well as a polished final draft. For each paper, you will have ample time for writing the first version and for revising after receiving feedback on the draft. All papers (first and final versions) must be word-processed and meet standard format practices: double-spaced; 12 point font, pages numbered in the right hand corner, title and name on first page, date of submission. Throughout the paper, the citations and documentation style should be consistent. Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade.

### **Evaluation Policies for Writing Assignments**

In general, I will evaluate your writing by considering how well you have achieved the following goals (developed by the Writing Program):

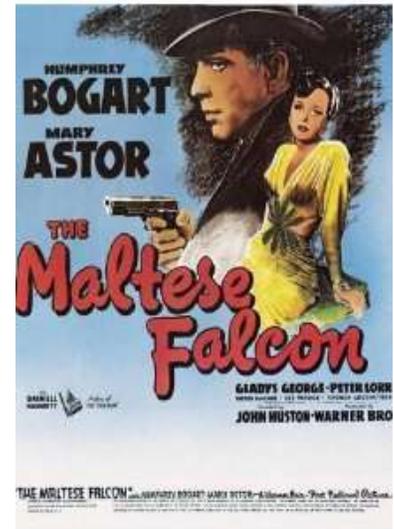
1. The author crafts an introduction that identifies a question, frames the question, and states a thesis.
2. The author organizes the writing, demonstrates a progression of ideas, and maintains a consistent focus or thread.

3. The author contextualizes the question and supports it with evidence.
4. The author sustains analytical inquiry throughout the assignment.
5. The author effectively incorporates relevant outside information.
6. The author engages the intended audience with a consistent, distinctive voice appropriate to the task.
7. The author adheres to appropriate standards for language use.
8. The author conforms to appropriate formats for citation of source material.

**Grading Overview**

Beyond in-class participation, your grade will be based on weekly journals and three more formal papers. The relative weight of each component is as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Paper #1	15%
Paper #2	15%
Paper #3	15%
Paper #4	20%
Journal, other writings, and Information Literacy assignments	25%



Paper topics will be handed out in class at least a week before the first draft is due and we will engage in a peer-review process during class. You will have a week after peer review to revise your paper before handing it into me.

**Grade Calculations:**

I use an excel worksheet to calculate my grades. If you would like to discuss graded work, please take at least two days to review my comments, along with the grading criteria for the assignment. While I don't negotiate grades, I am happy to discuss strategies for improving your writing.

Final letter grades will be assigned in the following way:

A = 93-100	B- = 80-82	D = 60-69
A- = 90-92	C+ = 77-79	F = 0-59
B+ = 87-89	C = 73-76	
B = 83-86	C- = 70-72	

**Deadlines:**

Deadlines are firm. Unless you have asked for and received prior permission to extend the deadline or have extenuating circumstances about which I have been made aware, late assignments will lose one grade increment per day late. I cannot accept assignments more than one week late.

**Extra Credit:**

If you attend any Dickinson College screening, workshop, or lecture and write a 1-2 page reflection stating how the event related to this class and what was interesting about it for you, I will award 1

point extra credit. You may complete up to 5 extra credit reflections. These points will be added to your lowest paper grade at the end of the semester. I will reject any reflection I feel is insufficient or unsuitable. These will be virtual, of course, and I am happy to consider other events that might be available to you in your community provided you talk to me about it.

**“How can I know what I think until I see what I say?” – E.M. Forster**

**Writing is a process and not an end product.** At the end of the semester, you will hand in a written reflection about your writing throughout the course of the semester, so make sure to **keep all** returned in-class writings and short assignments as well as formal papers.

**Peer Review and Conferences:**

Students will meet with me at least twice during the semester to discuss writing. Failure to meet with me **counts as one absence**. Students will also participate in Peer Review in class. **You must have peer reviews to receive full credit for your final paper.** Further details TBA.

**The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center**

The MWC consists of both English and foreign language writing tutoring services. The English writing tutors work with native and nonnative speakers of English, and the foreign language writing tutors work with writers of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson’s trained peer writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor’s preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing – among other things.



This semester all sessions will take place online. To schedule an appointment online, use the online scheduler: <https://dickinson.mywconline.com/>

All meetings will take place on Zoom. Prior to your appointment, tutors will send you a Zoom link. Please show up promptly as there will be a ten-minute grace period after which the tutor is no longer available.

**Academic Integrity**

With respect to all assignments in this course, I expect you to do your own work. You are certainly encouraged to discuss course content and readings with your fellow classmates, but your work in papers must be your own. Regarding outside sources, you will need to cite all of your sources. We will discuss ways of doing this before your first paper is due. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please feel free to ask.

From Dickinson College's Community Standards:

"Respect for ideas — our own and others' — is a hallmark of academic integrity. We show respect by acknowledging when we have used another's words or ideas in our work. We expect others to acknowledge when they use our ideas or words in their work. Students are expected to do their own work on quizzes, papers, examinations, class assignments, etc. Normally, a paper may be submitted in fulfillment of an assignment in only one course. Exceptions require permission from the instructors. Collaboration must be noted in writing and requires the consent of all instructors."

From: [https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20391/library/2583/the\\_library\\_and\\_first-year\\_seminars/3](https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20391/library/2583/the_library_and_first-year_seminars/3)

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Consistent with Dickinson College's Student Code of Conduct, cheating of any kind may lead to disciplinary action, which often includes failing the course. Submission of someone else's written work or using sources without proper credit is unacceptable. Enrollment at Dickinson represents a commitment to abide by the College's principles of academic integrity. Please read Dickinson's plagiarism and academic integrity policy, available at the link above.

### **Accommodations**

I am committed to including all students in this course and am happy to discuss accommodations with students, provided that this conversation happens **early** in the semester and definitely before any papers/projects are due. From Dickinson College's Disability Services:

Dickinson College makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must make their request and provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Biddle House. Because classes change every semester, eligible students must obtain a new accommodation letter from Director Marni Jones every semester and review this letter with their professors so the accommodations can be implemented.

The Director of ODS is available by appointment to answer questions and discuss any implementation issues you may have. ODS proctoring is managed by Susan Frommer at 717-254-8107 or [proctoring@dickinson.edu](mailto:proctoring@dickinson.edu). Address general inquiries to Stephanie Anderberg at 717-245-1734 or e-mail [disabilityservices@dickinson.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@dickinson.edu). For more information, see [www.dickinson.edu/ODS](http://www.dickinson.edu/ODS).



### **Other Needs:**

If you have a concern or issue regarding this class, your ability to participate in it, or the material we are covering, please stop by my office hours or email me to set up an appointment. The sooner we can talk about your concerns, the better I will be able to help you negotiate a solution. I am committed to providing equal educational opportunity to all students.