



Syllabus

Course Title: The Psychology of Dracula: Science, Literature, and the Supernatural

Program and Date: Winter Term 2026-2027

Instructor Name: Robert W. Mitchell

Instructor Home Institution: Eastern Kentucky University

Instructor Email and Phone: robert.mitchell@eku.edu; 859-622-3122

Academic Department: Psychology

Get to Know Your Professor

I was raised in New Jersey, where my parents indulgently let me raise hundreds of fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals in their home. It is not surprising that I study the psychology of animals! But my interests are wide-ranging, and include history of psychology, philosophy of mind, animal cognition, human development, and sexuality. All of these topics come together in my course on the Psychology of Dracula. I have done research on cognition in dolphins, sea lions, apes, parrots, dogs, and humans, and have published edited books on topics ranging from deception, pretense, self-awareness, spatial cognition, anthropomorphism, and ape cognition. I am Foundation Professor of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University. I live with my spouse and 5 cats in Lexington, Kentucky. I have previously taken several student groups to France, Greece, Italy, and Ecuador. This will be my third study abroad with CCSA.

Course Description

Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* in the late 19th century, a time of revolutionary intellectual change, when Darwin's theory of evolution challenged conventional biology, scientists were studying supernatural phenomena, and the scientific discipline of Psychology was founded. This class will explore these developments by visiting sites such as the Victoria and Albert and British Museums, the Bethlem Museum of the Mind, Highgate Cemetery, and London Zoo. We will focus on Stoker and the imaginative ways he treated new ideas about mental illness, hypnotism and sexuality and sample contemporary treatment of such issues on the Jack the Ripper walking tour and in the museum.

Course overview: Students will read and discuss Bram Stoker's 1897 novel *Dracula*, as well as original scientific and historical papers related to the Psychological phenomena presented in the novel. Students will read original source materials from the late 1800s in which psychologists describe their own and others' ideas, as well as secondary sources about the historical context in which Psychology functioned. The objective is to make students knowledgeable about the creation of *Dracula*, which incorporated actual Psychological studies on the psychological phenomena described in the novel. Students will also explore London as it relates to Stoker's life, the creation of *Dracula*, and the psychological milieu in which the novel was written.



Syllabus

Course Level and Credit Hours

Upper division, 3 credit hours

Prerequisite(s)

An interest in history of Psychology; some knowledge of Psychology is helpful.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of all coursework with a passing grade and full participation in course activities, students shall be able to:

A. Evaluate and talk knowledgeably about the psychology of the Victorian period, having read original work and historical studies. [How this objective is evaluated: Quizzes]

B. Read and talk knowledgeably about Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. [How this objective is evaluated: Journal, quizzes].

C. Integrate ideas from course material about psychology and *Dracula*. [How this objective is evaluated: Term paper].

D. Integrate experiences of London to *Dracula*. [How this objective is evaluated: Journal].

Required Readings and Materials

Stoker, B. *Dracula*, Norton Critical Edition. ISBN: 9780393970128

I will also be giving you some readings from Taylor, J. B., & Shuttlesworth, S. (Ed.). **Embodied selves**. ISBN: 0198710429, so you don't need to buy this.

Additional handouts will be made available through Canvas.

Text can be purchased online using bookfinder.com, abebooks.com, amazon, bn.com, etc., but must be purchased and received very early in December. Note: used books often arrive well after the bookseller says they will.

Assignments and Grades

1. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all class meetings and activities in London. Although there are no class meetings ahead of our trip to London, there are readings and quizzes to do.

2. **Quizzes:** Prior to going to London, we will have 11 quizzes (one optional) of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and/or true/false questions based on the readings. Each quiz is worth 8 points. Although I provided recommended dates for completing the quizzes, you can complete them after these dates. But be sure NOT to wait to do them all at the last minute prior to leaving for London!

3. **Journal:** *Dracula* is a novel of letters, journals, and other documents. Students will keep a journal that will present, discuss and reflect on their experiences (including their experiences of the readings) just prior to, during, and after the trip; this can be in a manner reminiscent of Jonathan Harker (or



Syllabus

perhaps another character from the novel), if the student wishes, but the writing should present, discuss and reflect on the material they are reading and the experiences they are having in London. The journal will be given to Dr. Mitchell 4 times during the course (see final page). Students need to use the journal to talk to themselves about the pre-trip readings and the on-site activities.

4. **Term paper:** At the end of the course, students decide on a project that will incorporate the knowledge gained from the readings and their experiences. The project will require integrating their experiences and readings related to *Dracula*, as well as their own research on the topic. I will be glad to help you find resources!

Quizzes	80 points (8 points maximum each quiz, lowest quiz grade dropped)
Journal	80 points (20 points maximum each of 4 times journal handed in)
<u>Term Paper</u>	<u>80 points maximum</u>
Total	240 points

Grading Scale

The following scale will be used to compute your grade.

Cutoffs for letter grades: **A=90%**; **B=80%**; **C=70%**; **D=60%**; **F=below 60%**.

Onsite Learning Experiences and Activities

Onsite learning experiences in this class will likely include the following site visits. This is a tentative list which will be replaced with a detailed daily itinerary of class meetings and field trips prior to the departure date.

Jack the Ripper Museum
Jack the Ripper Tour
Bethlem Museum of the Mind
Highgate Cemetery
Freud Museum
London Zoo
Dark London Tour
British Museum
Bram Stoker walk with Anthony Davis
Natural History Museum
Victoria & Albert Museum
Castle Cinema to watch Murnau's (1922) *Nosferatu* and Tod Browning's (1931) *Dracula*.
Café in the Crypt
National Gallery
The Viktor Wynd Museum of Curiosities, Fine Art & UnNatural History
A play relevant to *Dracula*
Strawberry Hill
Ghost Bus Tour



Syllabus

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled activities and class meetings as well as field trip excursions. This includes any virtual meetings before and after the onsite experience. Repeated absences, including for ill health, will require documentation to be excused.

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity refers to students' taking responsibility for their actions, such that they engage in ethical behavior in their educational career. This means that students present their own work, rather than that of others, when asked to produce work for a course. It also means that, while studying abroad, students act as a best exemplar of American students. Students found guilty of an academic honesty violation (e.g., cheating or plagiarism) will receive a 0 on the assignment in question. More serious violations could also result in failing the course, a referral to the appropriate campus office of the member institution of CCSA participants, or both.

Physical Expectations

Program requires walking 3-5 miles per day on uneven pavement in all kinds of weather and long periods of standing. Students must be able to carry their own bags and belongings.

Disability Accommodation

CCSA is committed to providing access to education abroad to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. The earlier CCSA and the faculty know the needs, the more likely we can accommodate them. At a minimum, students seeking accommodations are to contact both the CCSA office and the faculty one month in advance of the program's beginning. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

Title IX Policy

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sexual discrimination violate CCSA policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain support from the Onsite Program Director or the CCSA Executive Director. To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact either of these two officers. Disclosure to faculty instructors or CCSA officers of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on the program or involving a visitor, student or employee is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and other CCSA employees are required to forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the CCSA Executive Director.

Statement about Final Syllabus

Please note that all CCSA syllabi are subject to change, but every effort will be made to ensure participants receive notice of such changes in a timely manner.