

## ENG 110: Approaching Big Problems

Topic: Wonder!

T/Th 12:00-1:15pm

### Instructor Information

This course is team-taught by the following:

Aviva Dove-Viebahn (she/her) <a href="mailto:adovevie@asu.edu">adovevie@asu.edu</a> RBHL 368 Office Hrs: MW 10:00-11:30 (and by appointment)	Bradley Ryner (he/him) <a href="mailto:bradley.ryner@asu.edu">bradley.ryner@asu.edu</a> RBHL 164 Office Hrs: T/Th 1:00-2:30 (and by appointment)	Patricia Webb (she/her) <a href="mailto:patricia.webb@asu.edu">patricia.webb@asu.edu</a> RBHL 331 Office Hrs: T/Th 3:00-4:30 (and by appointment)
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### Course Description

Examines how language helps to shape important issues and big questions in the world today. By studying the process of meaning-making, students work toward understanding these issues better and answering these questions.

### Enrollment Requirements

Prerequisite: None

### Course Overview

What is “wonder”? In this course, we will examine the ways this word is used in different contexts, both now and historically. We will explore how ideas, experiences, and values associated with “wonder” powerfully shape our perceptions of the world around us and contribute to our ability to imagine different possibilities.

### Overall Course Objectives

This course seeks to:

1. Expose students to the varieties of work students can do within the different concentrations in the English Department
2. Foster an understanding of the possible approaches to a shared problem or big question
3. Prepare students to apply one or more of these approaches to some aspect of the course's big questions around the topic "Wonder"

### Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the varieties of work students can do within the different concentrations in the English Department (Creative Writing, English Education, Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Writing, Rhetorics and Literacies)
2. Differentiate among the possible approaches to the topic “Wonder”

3. Apply one or more of these approaches to some aspect of this shared problem or big question

**Texts and Required Purchases:**

- Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Mexican Gothic* (Del Rey 2020). ISBN: 978-0525620808
- *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Director Benh Zeitlin, 2012, 93 minutes)

All other assigned texts listed on the syllabus will be available through links posted on Canvas.

**Assignments**

**Weekly Engagement (30%):** You will participate in weekly check-in assignments, such as crafting questions, defining terms, or posting to a discussion board. These assignments will be graded based on the level of engagement that they show with the ideas and artifacts being discussed.

**Language Analysis (30%):** You will select one of the assigned texts for the course, from a list posted on Canvas, and analyze the use of language in the text. You will present your analysis in a paper of 1,200 words in which you make an argument for how language functions in the text. You may wish to consider: What is the historical or contemporary context of the text? What structures and patterns are present in the language of the text? Which elements of the text are crucial to creating specific meanings and effects? Does the author / writer / speaker of the text seem to be using specific strategies to achieve certain effects? This assignment will be graded based on how well it identifies significant features of a text, uses appropriate techniques to analyze these features, and communicates the overall significance of this analysis to the reader.

**Final Project (40%):** Building on work that you have done for the above assignments, you will craft a paper (1,500 to 2,000 words) or presentation (7-to-10-minute audio or equivalent multimodal presentation) that engages with the central question(s) explored throughout the course. This assignment will be graded based on how well it presents a question relevant to this course, analyzes a specific text (or texts), and makes an argument as to how this analysis provides some insight into the central question of “Wonder.”

**Grade Scale and Grading Procedure**

A+	98-100%	B-	80-83%
A	94-97%	C+	78-79%
A-	90-93%	C	70-77%
B+	88-89%	D	60-69%
B	84-87%	E	Less Than 60%

Any final term grades that have a fraction are rounded up to the next highest whole number.

Weekly Engagement	30%
Language Analysis	30%
Final project	40%

### **Technology support**

Computers, tablets, and cellphones are welcome. Please refrain from using technology for anything unrelated to the class. Failure to abide by this guidelines will have a negative impact on your student's participation grade since this will be considered an instance of non-participation.

### **Absence Policy**

In class activities are an essential part of the learning process, and students are expected to attend class regularly. Every absence after the fourth will lower your course grade 1/3 of a letter. Some absences are, however, unavoidable. Excused absences for classes will be given without penalty to the grade in the case of (1) a university-sanctioned event [ACD 304-02]; (2) religious holidays [ACD 304-04; a list can be found here <https://eoss.asu.edu/cora/holidays> ]; (3) work performed in the line-of-duty according [SSM 201- 18]; and (4) illness, quarantine or self-isolation related to illness as documented by a health professional.

If a medical emergency arises during the last week of class, you may request an "Incomplete" in the course, provide Professor Himberg with appropriate documentation prior to the end of term, and make arrangements to complete the coursework within one year.

### **Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities**

Students who participate in university-sanctioned activities that require classes to be missed, shall be given opportunities to make up examinations and other graded in-class work. Normally, the made-up work will be due on the class day immediately after the absence. Absence from class or examinations due to university-sanctioned activities does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of the absence. For more information, visit <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-02.html>

Anticipated absences for university-sanctioned events, religious holidays, or line-of-duty activity should be communicated to the instructor by email at least 3 days before the expected absence. Absences for illness should be documented by a health professional and communicated to the instructor as soon as possible by email.

Please note: Excused absences do not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Faculty will provide accommodations that may include participation in classes remotely, access to recordings of class activities, and make-up work.

### **Expected Classroom Behavior**

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on- or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

### **Accommodation for Religious Practices**

The university community should, in all its activities, be sensitive to the religious practices of the various religious faiths represented in its student body and employees. Faculty are asked to recognize the obligations of their students who may be participating in the observance of religious holidays. Students should notify faculty at the beginning of the semester about the need to be absent from class due to religious observances. For more information, visit <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd304-04.html>

### **Academic Integrity and Anti-Plagiarism Policy**

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, and laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity>

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Students must take the exams independently without assistance from other students. Students may not submit papers written by persons other than themselves. Students must submit original work for this course and may not submit papers previously submitted to (an) other class (es). The ASU student academic integrity policy lists violations in detail. These violations fall into five broad areas that include but are not limited to: (1) Cheating on an academic evaluation or assignment; (2) Plagiarizing; (3) Academic deceit, such as fabricating data or information; (4) Aiding academic integrity policy violations and inappropriately collaborating; (5) Falsifying academic records. See <https://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity>

### **Disruptive, Threatening, or Violent Behavior**

In the classroom and out, students are required to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes an environment that is safe and conducive to learning and conducting other university-related business. All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student will be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. Such incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the policies and procedures described in Section 104-02 of the Student Services Manual, available at <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm104-02.html>

### **Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services office should contact SAILS immediately. The SAILS Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. SAILS staff can also be reached at (480) 965-1234 (V) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: [www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc).

### **Copyright**

Students must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement. For more information, see the Computer, Internet, & Electronic Communications Policy at <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html>

### **Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

## **Course Itinerary**

Aug 22 Introductions

### **Wonder as Inquiry**

Aug 27 **WATCH:** Robert Haas, "How Poetry Captivates"

Aug 29 **READ:** Selection of Poems

Sep 3 **READ:** Valerie Kaur, "Wonder"

Sep 5 **READ:** Roland Barthes, "Leaving the Movie Theater"

Sep 10 **READ:** selections from Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*

Sep 12 **READ:** Dacher Keltner, "The Eight Wonders of Life"

### **Wonder and Fantasy**

Sep 17 **READ:** Tom Gunning, "An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator"

Sep 19 **WATCH:** Benh Zeitlin (Dir.), *Beasts of the Southern Wild*

Sep 24 **WATCH:** Benh Zeitlin (Dir.), *Beasts of the Southern Wild*

Sep 26 **READ:** Ted Chiang, "Story of Your Life"

Oct 1 **WATCH:** Black Mirror, "San Junipero" (Creator Charlie Brooker)

Oct 3 **READ:** Stephen King, "Why We Crave Horror Movies"

### **Sublime Wonder and Horror**

Oct 8 **READ:** William Wordsworth, "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey"; Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Chapters 1 and 2

Oct 10 **READ:** Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, Chapters 3 and 4; **TURN IN: Language Analysis (due by midnight)**

Oct 15 **Fall Break; No Class**

Oct 17 **READ:** Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Mexican Gothic*, Chapters 1 through 5

Oct 22 **READ:** *Mexican Gothic*, Chapters 6 through 13

Oct 24 **READ:** *Mexican Gothic*, Chapters 14 through 19

Oct 29 **READ:** *Mexican Gothic*, Chapters 20 through 27

Oct 31 Final Project Workshop

### **Writing Wonder**

Nov 5 Final Project Asynchronous Brainstorming; **Election Day**

Nov 7 **READ:** Jimmy Butts, "What is Strangely Rhetorical"

Nov 12 **READ:** Laurence Ross, "Wonder Where You're Going"

Nov 14 Preparation for Peer Review

Nov 19 Peer Review

Nov 21 Peer Review

Nov 26 Writing Workshop

Nov 28 **Thanksgiving; No Class**

Dec 3 Conclusions; **TURN IN: Final Project (due by midnight)**  
Dec 5 Future / Wonder