

Contemporary Literature: Stephen King's DOCTOR SLEEP
Fall Semester 2022 ENGL 5953 x10 Online Course

GRADUATE SYLLABUS

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OFFICE HOURS: MTWRF 11:00 AM – 1:00 AM. If you can, let me know by email that you are dropping by. Also: I can make in-person and ZOOM appointments. Afternoons are best for me.

GRADUATE Course goals

- Read Stephen King's novel Doctor Sleep.
- Engage in a writing process that includes invention, drafting, and revision.
- Examine one's own assumptions and how they change over three papers.
- Utilize credible supporting sources in our essays according to MLA citing.
- Demonstrate proficient use of Standard Written English.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

I take attendance through D2L's login history and class progress. Be sure to log into our course at your earliest opportunity and click on our modules. That way you will be counted PRESENT.

LATE WORK

The THREE essays may be submitted to their drop box after the due date and time. The late penalty is capped at 10 points out of 100.

DUE DATES & PERCENTAGE VALUE OF SEMESTER GRADE

Note: the DROP BOX will mark the ESSAYS late after 11:59 PM the night of the due date. Threads must be posted before 11:59 PM of the date specified. I will reply to late threads, but they cannot receive point value.

D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for a 50	Monday Sept 12
D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for a 60	Monday September 19
D2L Submit RELATIONSHIPS essay to DROP BOX – 20%	Monday October 3
D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for a 70	Monday October 10
D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for an 80	Monday October 17
D2L Submit MEANT TO BE essay to DROP BOX – 30%	Monday October 31
D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for a 90	Monday November 14
D2L Post rough draft as THREAD – for a 100	Monday November 21
D2L Submit SHINING essay to DROP BOX – 40%	Monday December 5
D2L THREADS – 10% (1 is worth the grade of 50; 2 = 60; 3 = 70; 4 = 80; 5 = 90; 6 = 100).	

Required Text:

Stephen King, *Doctor Sleep*. 2013. Scribner (Simon & Schuster), 2013.
This is the original hardback edition. ISBN 978-1-4767-2765-3.

OUR GRADUATE APPROACH TO THINKING AND WRITING

The three papers of the Graduate course are different from those of the undergraduate course in this important respect: they are meant to represent THREE STAGES of inquiry. The first paper is EXPLORATORY at a basic level and asks for tentative conclusions, which are not presumed to be final. The second paper asks the graduate student to RECONSIDER earlier conclusions and to propose QUESTIONS that as yet still need answers. The third paper SYNTHESIZES relevant supporting sources in order to gain perspective on the issues raised in the first two papers and to

offer answers to the questions of the second paper. In this way, the third paper maintains continuity with the first and second paper, which the undergraduate course does not require. The goal of this continuity is to promote CREATIVITY and INDEPENDENCE. CREATIVITY means revisiting earlier assumptions and REFLECTING on whether they have held up under scrutiny. INDEPENDENCE means developing a thoroughgoing method of ANALYSIS that is SELF-AWARE and re-examines one's own assumptions. We expect the progress and outcome of serious inquiry to surprise us in a way we might not anticipate at the beginning of our considerations. In their papers, graduate students are free to use the first person singular "I." They can also use "we" to talk about assumptions and questions about those assumptions.

TWO-FOLD GRADUATE PROMPT:

In addition to the basic prompt question, graduate students must examine their own operating assumptions. They need to answer this question: what is the basis for my conclusions?

GRADUATE Model for Re-examining Basis for Analysis w. supporting source in 2nd essay:

The suffering in *Doctor Sleep* is troubling because the shining is food for the antagonists—namely, Rose the Hat and the other RV-traveling members of the True Knot—and that food is best disseminated and absorbed by torturing the possessor. Suffering and the shining seem to go together in King's world. Suffering seems to increase the power of the shining. Despite the vast physical distance, young Abra Stone experiences the Baseball Boy's death if only because pain seems to be the ultimate wavelength of the shining. The book of Job in the Bible is a seminal source on the inexplicable centrality of suffering in the human experience. According to *The Jewish Study Bible*, the first thing we learn about pain is that we tend to blame the victim: "The claim that all suffering is deserved will inevitably persuade those who hold that view to falsify either the character of the sufferer or the character of the Lord" (1500). My assumption is that the shining is the battleground of Good versus Evil in Doctor Sleep. King clearly develops a group of "good guys" and a group of "bad guys." We get caught up in that fight. We want the young protagonist to avenge the Baseball Boy. But we also know that the suffering of those who died in the Twin Towers attracted the True Knot months before the planes crashed into them. Suffering seems meant to be—a natural accompaniment to the shining. Should we blame the shining itself for the boy's undeserved suffering?

THE THREE GRADUATE ESSAYS

RELATIONSHIPS in DOCTOR SLEEP (20 percent):

Stephen King has remarked (in ON WRITING: A MEMOIR OF THE CRAFT) that he is SITUATIONAL. This essay should be THREE pages double-spaced or 1.5 spaced. **TWO-FOLD GRADUATE Prompt:** What dynamic or principle brings people together in *Doctor Sleep*? What is the basis for your conclusions?

THINGS MEANT TO BE in DOCTOR SLEEP (30 percent):

In *Doctor Sleep*, Stephen King is very immersed in the motif of THINGS MEANT TO BE. Everything seems to happen for a reason. This paper should be FIVE pages double-spaced or 1.5 spaced. **TWO-FOLD GRADUATE Prompt:** What purpose or principle--and we are doubtless talking about more than one dynamic--motivates or instigates the unfolding of events in *Doctor Sleep*? What is the basis for your conclusions? **GRADUATE STUDENTS SHOULD OFFER QUESTIONS IN THIS ESSAY.** [Needs ONE source in addition to *Doctor Sleep*.]

The SHINING in DOCTOR SLEEP (40 percent):

The most important thing in DOCTOR SLEEP is how this thing--the SHINING--works in people's lives. I almost said "people's fates" because the SHINING is a supernatural gift that ANTICIPATES what is going to happen to people (and not just the person who possesses the gift). The SHINING is a dynamic force of super nature. This paper should be TEN pages double-spaced or 1.5 spaced. **TWO-FOLD GRADUATE Prompt:** How does the shining work in *Doctor Sleep*? What is the basis for your conclusions? **GRADUATE STUDENTS SHOULD COME BACK TO THE QUESTIONS THEY PROPOSED IN THE SECOND PAPER AND OFFER ANSWERS.** [Needs FOUR sources besides *Doctor Sleep*.]

THREADS (10 Percent):

THREADS are a great opportunity to rack up points towards 10 percent of the semester grade being a 100. There are SIX opportunities. Students are posting an incomplete rough draft of their upcoming essay—they do so TWICE before the essay is due revised and finished in the DROP BOX. The THREAD postings are NOT awarded points on the basis of their current polish or quality. Students receive the points simply for posting something irrespective of its present stage of development. If students don't participate by posting their work-in-progress in THREADS, they risk a low grade for 10 percent of the semester grade. If they post nothing the whole semester, that's a "0" for 10 percent of the semester grade.

DROP BOX due dates

When essays are complete, they need to be submitted to the drop box in order to count and to be created. Click on ASSESSMENTS; then click on ASSIGNMENTS—you will see the drop box.

GRADES ARE NOT ROUNDED UP - D2L Final Calculated Grade is the semester grade.

Here is are the numeric-letter values: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-70 (C), 69-60 (D), 59-0 (F). NOTE: An 89.9 is a B; 79.9 is a C; 69.9 is a D; and 59.9 is an F.

OTHER SOURCES [We use MLA – See PURDUE OWL online.]

The FIRST essay only uses *Doctor Sleep*—that's all. The second essay uses ONE other source. The third essay uses FOUR sources besides *Doctor Sleep*.

OPTIONS FOR OTHER SOURCES (they must be QUOTABLE):

Use other stories or books by Stephen King.

Use stories by OTHER authors, which relate to Stephen King.

Use books or articles ABOUT Stephen King or fantasy, horror, mythology, or science fiction.

Dialogue/narration from movie, videogame, or YouTube video ABOUT a videogame.

Plagiarism

Any use of a non-documented source as if it were a student's original work is academic dishonesty. The grade will be a "0" (no points) for the assignment and the student can no longer attend the course. The course grade is F. The student will be removed with a WF; offenders will be reported to the Chair of the Department. NOTE: Students have the right to appeal an alleged incident of Academic Dishonesty. More information about this policy and appeal procedure can be found on page 55 of the *Student Handbook* <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/assets/files/handbook.pdf>

Language too close to source

Students sometimes borrow the phrasing of their documented sources as if it were their own. Students certainly can use key words from their sources, but they must use their own phrasing—not the source's.

Readability & Originality

The rubric has a category devoted to legibility and originality. Student writing must be readable and original. Students should NOT adapt material from either the instructor's models or the paragraphs other students submit in a THREAD.

Students with disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees reasonable accommodation. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.