

IDH2930 §14HH: Spring 2018 (Un)Common Reads: A Game of Thrones**Instructor**

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Description, Purpose, and Policies

First published in 1996, George R. R. Martin's *A Game of Thrones* (*AGOT*) has garnered numerous literary accolades, including wins or nominations for the Hugo (fantasy) and Nebula (science fiction) awards. Following HBO's television adaptation, it has also enjoyed popularity, including spending months on *The New York Times* best-seller list. Contrary to HBO's adaptation, which often features streamlined plots and one-dimensional characters, *AGOT* actively seeks to subvert simplistic fantasy tropes and stereotypes (e.g., good vs. evil), replacing them with a world as morally complex and ambiguous as our own. For example, *AGOT* is told through eight third-person limited-point-of-view characters, each with their own biases, perspectives, and agendas that shape their actions and interpretations of events. The result is an unexpectedly rich tapestry of not-quite-reliable narrators, and so readers are tasked with unraveling and reweaving these narratives to discover the truth. These multiple narratives also allow readers to see characters and groups from different perspectives. Over time, characters once seen as "good" or "evil" become far more "grey" or morally ambiguous. Among the themes explored in *AGOT* are (a) the horror and futility of war, (b) distinguishing justice from vengeance, (c) xenophobia, (d) the role of religions in society, (e) the cruelty and unfairness of feudal societies, and (f) honoring multiple pledges. The purpose of this course is to expose readers to a modern fantasy masterpiece that strives to undermine its own genre's stereotypes. Attendance, participation, reactions papers, and leading group discussions will determine grades. Reaction papers will focus on plots and themes that are present in the book, but absent from the HBO series. Students will uphold the University of Florida Honor Code in all aspects of this course. Class attendance is mandatory. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Grading

Item and Description	No.	Points	Total
Attendance and Participation	14	2	28
Reaction Papers ("RP"; 250 words)	4	12	48
Leading Group Discussions (6 "noble houses" of 2–3 people)	2	12	24
			100

Book

Martin, G. R. R. (2016). *A Game of Thrones*. New York: Bantam Books. (835 pp.; \$9.99 mass-market paperback).

Schedule and Readings

Date	Chapters (pages)	Topic or Discussion Group	Due
1/08	—	Introductions & Expectations	
1/15	—	NO CLASS — MLK, Jr. Day	
1/22	Prologue, Bran I, Catelyn I, Daenerys I, Eddard I, Jon I, Catelyn II (1–67)	Group: House Stark	
1/29	Arya I, Bran II, Tyrion I, Jon II, Daenerys II, Eddard II (68–117)	Group: House Lannister	
2/05	Tyrion II, Catelyn III, Sansa I, Eddard III, Bran III, Catelyn IV (118–175)	Group: House Targaryen	RP#1
2/12	Jon III, Eddard IV, Tyrion III, Arya II, Daenerys III, Bran IV (176–249)	Group: House Tully	
2/19	Eddard V, Jon IV, Eddard VI, Catelyn V, Sansa II, Eddard VII (250–323)	Group: House Greyjoy	
2/26	Tyrion IV, Arya III, Eddard VIII, Catelyn VI, Eddard IX, Daenerys IV (324–395)	Group: House Baratheon	RP#2
3/05	—	NO CLASS — Spring Break	
3/12	Bran V, Tyrion V, Eddard X, Catelyn VII, Jon V, Tyrion VI (396–461)	Group: House Stark	
3/19	Eddard XI, Sansa III, Eddard XII, Daenerys V, Eddard XIII, Jon VI (462–522)	Group: House Lannister	
3/26	Eddard XIV, Arya IV, Sansa IV, Jon VII, Bran VI, Daenerys VI (523–594)	Group: House Targaryen	RP#3
4/02	Catelyn VIII, Tyrion VII, Sansa V, Eddard XV, Catelyn IX, Jon III (595–664)	Group: House Tully	
4/09	Daenerys VII, Tyrion VIII, Catelyn X, Daenerys VIII, Arya V, Bran VII (665–740)	Group: House Greyjoy	
4/16	Sansa VI, Daenerys IX, Tyrion IX, Jon IX, Catelyn XI, Daenerys X (741–807)	Group: House Baratheon	RP#4
4/23	—	Capstone Discussion	

Course Grading Scale

Letter	Percent	Letter	Percent	Letter	Percent
A	≥ 93.33	B-	≥ 80.00	D+	≥ 66.67
A-	≥ 90.00	C+	≥ 76.67	D	≥ 63.33
B+	≥ 86.67	C	≥ 73.33	D-	≥ 60.00
B	≥ 83.33	C-	≥ 70.00	E	< 60.00