IDH 2952: (Un)Common Arts

Instructor Noah Mullens

Spring 2026, Honors, Class Number 27651 (21st Century Horror Film)

Time: Monday, Period 5 (11:45am-12:35pm)

Location: Little Hall 119

Office Hours: TBA

Email: noahmullens@ufl.edu

Course Description

This discussion-based course examines 21st-century horror cinema as a vital and evolving artistic form, exploring how contemporary horror challenges the boundaries between high and low art. Once dismissed as mere genre entertainment, horror has increasingly been recognized for its aesthetic innovation, cultural critique, and psychological depth. Drawing on critical theory, film studies, and cultural analysis, we will investigate how horror films reflect and distort collective anxieties around gender, race, technology, class, and the body. Students will collaboratively select the films we study, from mainstream blockbusters to arthouse experiments, and each will be paired with academic readings that frame horror as a site of artistic performance and social commentary. By analyzing horror's visual style, narrative strategies, and thematic concerns, we will consider what it means for a film to be both terrifying and artistically ambitious. This course is ideal for students interested in film, performance, and the cultural work of fear.

Course Calendar

Week One: January 12
Introduction (Zoom)

Week Two
No Class (After Drop/Add)

Week Three: January 26
Group 1 Film

Week Four: February 2
Group 1 Film

Week Five: February 9
Group 2 Film

Week Six: February 16
Group 2 Film

Week Seven: February 23
Group 3 Film

Week Eight: March 2
Group 3 Film

Week Nine: March 9
Group 4 Film

Week Ten
Spring Break

Week Eleven: March 23
Group 4 Film

Week Twelve: March 30
Group 5 Film

Week Thirteen: April 6
Group 5 Film

Week Fourteen: April 13
Group 6 Film

Week Fifteen: April 20
Group 6 Film

Film Pairings

Every film in this course will be selected by the students. Students will be assigned a number (e.g., S1: Jane Doe; S2: John Doe, and so on) and placed into six groups. Groupings will be finalized after the drop/add period ends on January 16. Each student will participate in a group twice over the course of the semester.

Films will be chosen from a curated list and must be selected by the group at least one week before the film is scheduled. One group representative will post the selected film to the course discussion board for classmates to review in advance. The group that selects the film will be

responsible for leading class discussion by engaging with relevant peer-reviewed articles, critical essays, or video essays related to the film. On the Sunday prior to the film's first class discussion, group members (via a single designated submitter) must upload a brief "lesson plan" to Canvas. This document should outline proposed discussion topics, key scenes, themes, and any critical reflections drawn from independent readings. The group is expected to open the class session by leading the initial discussion of the film.

Note: To ensure a wide range of critical perspectives, students are encouraged to select films that contribute to the overall diversity of the course. If a previous group has chosen a film within a particular subgenre (e.g., found footage or slasher), subsequent groups should aim to select a film that explores different stylistic, thematic, or formal approaches.

Film 1:
Students: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5

Film 2:
Students: S1, S6, S7, S8, S9

Film 3:
Students: S2, S6, S10, S11, S12

Film 4:
Students: S3, S7, S10, S13, S14

Film 5:
Students: S4, S8, S11, S13, S15

Film 6:
Students: S5, S9, S12, S14, S15

Assignments

Film Choice (45%): See notes above.

Discussion Notes (45%): See notes above.

Active Participation / Attendance: Daily and engaged participation is a priority in this course. All students should participate every day in some fashion by offering points of view, raising questions, asking for clarification, participating in group activities, and/or writing when it is required. (10%)

Film Options
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28 Days Later (2002)
A Dark Song (2016)
A Field in England (2013)
A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night (2014)
A Tale of Two Sisters (2003)
Act of Killing, The (2021)
Antichrist (2009)
Autopsy of Jane Doe, The (2016)
Barbarian (2022)
Baskin: Karabasan (2015)
Caché (2005)
Candyman (2021) *** Note: If chosen, students must also watch the 1992 original.
Climax (2018)
Coraline (2009)
Cropsey (2009)
Cuckoo (2024)
Devil's Backbone, The (2001)
Eyes of My Mother, The (2016)
Gerald's Game (2017)
Get Out (2017)
Gonjiam: Haunted Asylum (2018)
Good Boy (2025)
Good Manners / As Boas Maneiras (2017)
Green Room (2015)
Haunting Me (2007)
Hell's Ground (2007)
Hereditary (2018)
House of the Devil, the (2009)
Huesera: The Bone Woman (2022)
In a Violent Nature (2024)
Inland Empire (2006)
It Follows (2014)
Jesus Camp (2006)
Ju-On: The Grudge (2002
Knife+Heart (2018)
La casa lobo / The Wolf House (2018)
Lake Mungo (2008)
Lamb (2021)
Let the Right One In (2008)

Longlegs (2024)
Martyrs (2008)
Midsommar (2019)
No Country for Old Men (2007)
Noroi; The Curse (2005)
November (2017)
Personal Shopper (2016)
Possessor (2020)
Possum (2018)
Poughkeepsie Tapes, The (2007)
Pulse (2001)
Reflections of Evil (2002)
Sinister (2012)
Skinamarink (2022)
Snowtown (2011)
Sun Don't Shine (2012)
Suspiria (2018) *** Note: If chosen, students must also watch the 1977 original.
Taking of Deborah Logan, The (2014)
Talk to Me (2022)
Terrifier 2 (2016)
The Golden Glove (2019)
The Lure (2015)
The Nightmare (2015)
The Shrouds (2025)
The Substance (2024)
The Wailing (2016)
The Witch (2015)
They Look Like People (2015)
Tigers Are Not Afraid (2017)
Titane (2021)
Tokyo Gore police (2008)
Under the Skin (2013)
We Are Still Here (2015)
We're All Going to the World's Fair (2021)
When Evil Lurks (2023)
White God (2014)

Note: Not all films on this list can be easily categorized as "horror." One of the central questions we will return to throughout the course is what, precisely, constitutes a "horror film." Is horror best understood as a marketable genre, a set of formal conventions, or a broader category encompassing works that are "scary" or "nightmarish"?

Grading

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards Honors Completion Requirements. Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Requirements module to earn Honors Milestone / Completion credit.

Sensitive Content Notice

Some of the required materials in this class include explicit depictions and/or descriptions of nudity, sexual acts, and physical and emotional violence. If you believe engagement with these materials would likely cause you significant discomfort, it may be in your interest to drop the course.

University Policies and Resources

Attendance policy
Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

Students requiring accommodation
Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF course evaluation process
Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
3. The central portal at https://my-ufl.bluera.com

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy
University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course. For additional information, see https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/.

In-class recording
Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party-note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Procedure for conflict resolution
Any classroom issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact a (noahmullens@ufl.edu, a). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu; 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu; 352-392-1261).

Resources available to students

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.
- University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.
- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.
- Teaching Center: 1317 Turlington Hall, Call 352-392-2010, or to make a private appointment: 352-392-6420. Email contact: teaching-center@ufl.edu. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.
- Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.

Honors

- Honors Program, Honors Village Complex #4, 352-392-1519
- Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu

- Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: https://bit.ly/UFHonorsAdvising
- Honors Program Event Calendar: https://www.honors.ufl.edu/news--events/calendar-of-events/