



COURSE DESCRIPTION

## 2016 Winter Session (2016-2017 Academic Year)

ENGL 100-008: Evil - Miranda Burgess

### Reading and Writing about Literature

Term 1

TTh, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Focused on literary texts in their critical and theoretical contexts, ENGL 100 is a course in academic writing that fulfills the first-year component of the Faculty of Arts Writing Requirement.

In this course, we will explore five iconic, and very different, literary depictions of evil. In *Doctor Faustus*, a polymath scholar, tired of the limits of existing knowledge, sells himself to the devil in order to go beyond them. In *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, a sailor on an expedition in search of Antarctica commits an act of cruelty and finds himself facing the ghosts of the slave trade—and “the nightmare Life-in-Death.” In *Dracula*, a Transylvanian aristocrat finds ways to reproduce his “blood” in western Europe. In *The Master and Margarita*, a trio of devils—one in the shape of a cat—cause havoc in Stalin’s Russia. And in *Beloved*, the legacies of Atlantic slavery are explored through their terrible effects on the lives of one African American family. Aimed at students who are thinking about majoring in English (or in another humanities field), this course will teach you the skills of literary analysis through an engagement with these texts and some of the questions they raise. (What is evil? What forms does it take? How and why has it preoccupied modern writers?) You will learn how to ask rich and compelling questions of your own about literature, and how to explore possible answers in dialogue with other scholars, while developing skills as a clear, logical, and persuasive writer that will serve you well throughout your university studies, and beyond.