

FACULTY *of* ARTS
DEPARTMENT *of* ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 201: Approaches to Literature (Lecture 01)

Winter 2015

“Beyond the Human: Aliens and Robots in Narrative Media”

Instructor: Braydon Beaulieu

Office: ss 1021

Email: bpsbeaul@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:00–1:00 PM, or by appointment

Course website: TBA

a. Course Description

This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of literary analysis by studying representations of aliens and robots in literature. We will explore ways in which fictional narratives position aliens and robots as a cipher for race, gender, sexuality, class, and language, and we will examine how such representations either challenge or reinforce how we distinguish nonhuman beings from ourselves. What informs our idea of the nonhuman? How do writers construct nonhumans as metaphors, or more interestingly, as resistances to metaphors? What can science fiction reveal about our culture? Is the truth really out there? To answer these questions, we will study novels, short fiction, film, games, and sequential art published between the late 19th Century and the present, by creators from Canada, America, and the United Kingdom.

b. Required Texts

War of the Worlds, by H. G. Wells (1898)

At the Mountains of Madness, by H. P. Lovecraft (1931)

2001: A Space Odyssey, by Arthur C. Clarke (1968)

Alien, directed by Ridley Scott (1979)

“Bloodchild,” by Octavia E. Butler (1984, readable online)

“A Cyborg Manifesto,” by Donna Haraway (1991, readable online)

“What is a Posthumanist Reading?” by Stefan Herbrechter and Ivan Callus (2008, readable online)

Portal 2, developed and produced by Valve (2011)¹

¹ This game is available on several platforms, including PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, PC, Mac, and Linux. Students may purchase or rent the game digitally if they so wish, via the PlayStation Store, the Xbox Marketplace, Steam, etc. Additionally, the Taylor Family Digital Library owns copies of the game for PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, and Mac, and students may book time in the

Saga, Volume 1, by Brian K. Vaughan and Fiona Staples (2012)

c. Assignments and Evaluation

Participation	10%
Four In-class Quizzes (5% each)	20%
Research Questions	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Research Paper	25%
Registrar-scheduled Final Exam	25%

Participation: Each student is expected to attend lecture regularly and participate in class discussion. Attendance will count toward students' grades, as will their level of engagement. High participation grades result from asking insightful questions, engaging in group discussions, making use of the instructor's office hours, maintaining scholarly decorum, and completing in-class activities as assigned.

In-class Quizzes: Each student will complete five quizzes in class, measuring their understanding of the texts studied. They will be administered at the beginning of a unit, to ensure that students consume the required texts *before* the lectures about those texts. Each student's lowest-scoring quiz will be dropped, and the remaining four quizzes will be worth 5% each. These quizzes will be multiple choice and short answer.

Research Questions: Each student will generate a series of research questions (250–300 words) that explore possible avenues for research paper theses. Research questions, for example, can include inquiries into a text's interplay with culture, examinations of a text's language, or interpretation of a text's narrative. We will discuss research questions more in-depth in class.

Annotated Bibliography: Each student will produce an annotated bibliography (500–600 words) that consists of a finalized thesis based on a proposed research question, and three annotated bibliographic citations of original research. Annotations should address the thesis of a source, and include a critical evaluation of the source. We will discuss theses, citations, and annotations more in-depth in class.

Research Paper: Each student will write a research paper (1400–1500 words) that establishes a concrete and arguable thesis based upon course readings and supplemented with original research.

Digital Commons to play these copies on the appropriate machines. Please also note that some of the challenges in *Portal 2* can be quite difficult, so if you get stuck, you are welcome to use walkthroughs on YouTube.

Final Exam: The final examination in this course will be scheduled by the Registrar. The examination period for the Winter 2015 term is 18–29 April 2015. Students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period. The final exam will be a combination of short answer and essay-style questions and will be closed-book.

There are no extra-credit assignments. *Students must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade in the course, except the quizzes—this way, students do not risk course failure due to missed classes.*

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each business day that the assignment is overdue.

Electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to ss 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. *It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause.* Please note that you are responsible for ensuring that computer problems do not interfere with timely submission of work. Keep multiple backups of all your work, at different locations. (Emailing copies of your work in progress to yourself is one easy way to do this.) Computer issues will not be an acceptable reason for late submission. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

d. Grading System

In this course, all essays, exams, and quizzes will be marked on the University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

Quizzes will receive a numerical grade, to be converted using the following scale:

90+ %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A-	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B-	2.7

67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C-	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events <http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: maboymd@ucalgary.ca
Find *The English Pages* research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.” <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Academic Accommodation:

It is the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403-220-6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at www.ucalgary.ca/access.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students' Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),

(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,

(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,

(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>)

“The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.” This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.