

**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**English 231-04(Fall 2012)
INTRODUCTION TO FICTION**

Instructor: Christian Bök
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Hours: Tue (13:00-15:00), Wed (16:00-18:00)

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the rhetorical techniques and structural principles, deployed in works of fiction. The course introduces students to some of the fundamentals of literary analysis, providing students with an array of basic tools for interpreting narratives. The readings for this course focus on the trope of time-travel (one of the greatest artifices of storytelling, since its paradoxes thematize the "achronic" quality of temporality itself in all fiction). The idea that time itself is one of most definitive attributes of narrative provides the students with a common thread for discussing a broad range of exciting, literary concepts about the evolving practice of fiction in the modern milieu. The course is divided into three units: first, a discussion of two novels about characters whose travels provide an allegory for dystopic futurism; second, two novels about the psychology of characters who move randomly through time; and third, two films about the complexity of plotlines, generated through the use of temporal paradoxes.

Course Assignments

Initial Report (500 wds)	10%
Essay Outline (500 wds)	15%
Seminar (750 wds)	15%
Final Essay (1250 wds)	25%
Endterm Exam	25%
Participation	10%

Note: All assignments must be completed and submitted in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Initial Report: Students are required to generate a brief report about *The Time Machine* in order to get a diagnostic assessment about the quality of their writing in advance of other assignments.

Essay Outline: Students are expected to produce an outline for their final essay (which consists of a comparative analysis of the first two books on the course). The assignment involves creating a draft for the introductory paragraph of the essay (complete with a thesis statement), followed by a series of cogent points to be addressed in the final draft of the document. The purpose of this exercise is to give students a chance to get feedback about the merits of their argument before embarking on the essay itself.

Seminar Presentation: Students are required to conduct one seminar presentation during the term. Each presentation (worth 15% of the final grade) must take no longer than 10 minutes to present and must prompt subsequent discussion by highlighting one of the key issues in the texts under consideration by the class. Each seminar must incorporate research from an external resource, and students may want to distribute photocopies of any supplementary material in class. The grade for this work reflects the quality of the insights and the analyses delivered in the presentation: their topical relevance, their logical coherence, and their rhetorical eloquence. The presenters are encouraged to provide a written outline for the class, and to use visual aids if appropriate. A copy of the report (approx. 3-4 pages) must be submitted in class to the instructor for subsequent evaluation at the end of the scheduled presentation.

Seminar Participation: 10% of your grade takes into account the quality of your contribution to the class through your preparation, attendance, and discussion over the course of the term.

Endterm Exam: The final exam for this course is to be scheduled by the Registrar for a date in December (and students must make themselves available for the entire period of this scheduling, in order to write the test). The exam focuses primarily on the material studied in the later weeks of the course.

Note: Please make every effort to submit any assignments and manuscripts directly to the instructor. If you cannot do so, please take your assignment to SS-1152, where the work can be dated and then filed in the mailbox of the instructor. Staff in the office cannot return assignments to students under any circumstances.

Required Readings

The Time Machine (by H. G. Wells)
A Scientific Romance (by Ronald Wright)
Slaughterhouse-Five (by Kurt Vonnegut)
The Time-Traveller's Wife (by Audrey Niffenegger)
Timecrimes (Film by Nacho Vigalondo)
Primer (Film by Shane Carruth)

Other Resources

The Elements of Style by William Strunk and E. B. White

Glossary of Literary Terms
http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms.html

Any handbook that contains the MLA style for documenting citations in essays:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

SCHEDULE FOR CLASSES

Sep 11: Seminar—Orientation

Sep 13: Lecture (Introduction to Time Travel and Narrative)

Sep 18: Seminar—Orientation

Sep 20: Lecture: The Time Machine

Sep 25: Seminar

01:

02:

03:

04:

Sep 27: Lecture: The Time Machine

Oct 02: Seminar

[Initial Report: Due in Class]

05:

06:

07:

08:

Oct 04: Lecture: A Scientific Romance

Oct 09: Seminar

[Marked Reports Returned]

09:

10:

11:

12:

Oct 11: **RESEARCH DAY (ABSENT)**

Oct 16: Seminar

13:

14:

15:

16:

Oct 18: Lecture: A Scientific Romance

Oct 23: Seminar

[Essay Outline: Due in Class]

17:

18:

19:

20:

Oct 25: Lecture: Slaughterhouse-Five

Oct 30: Seminar:

[Marked Outlines Returned]

21:

22:

23:

24:

Nov 01: Lecture: Slaughterhouse-Five

Nov 06: Seminar

25:

26:

27:

28:

Nov 08: Lecture: The Time-Traveller's Wife

Nov 13: **READING BREAK (NO CLASS)**

Nov 15: Lecture: The Time-Traveller's Wife

Nov 20: Seminar

[Final Essay: Due in Class]

29:

30:

31:

32:

Nov 22: Lecture: Timecrimes

Nov 27: Seminar

33:

34:

35:

36:

Nov 29: Lecture: Primer

Dec 04: Seminar

[Marked Essays Returned]

37:

38:

39:

40:

Dec 06: Lecture: (Summary)

Policies for Grading

Grading System: For each assignment, students can expect to receive a grade that includes a letter, plus a numerical conversion, expressed according to the following guideline of percentages: A+ (96-100%, Outstanding); A (85-95%, Excellent); A- (80-84%); B+ (77-79%, Very Good); B (74-76%, Good); B- (70-73%); C+ (67-69%, Average); C (64-66%, Satisfactory); C- (60-63%); D+ (57-59%); D (50-56%, Minimal Pass); F (0-49%, Fail).

Late Assignments: The schedule for this course depends heavily upon students delivering their work on the specified, assigned dates. All students must submit their assignments by deadline to avoid any penalties for tardiness, unless arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor to accommodate crises. Any late assignments are penalized with the loss of one third of a letter grade for each business day late— (for example, a paper that might have otherwise received a ‘B’ must receive the mark of ‘B-’ if the paper is submitted one day late). No papers can be accepted four business days after the due date. No extensions can be granted on assignments, except in cases of officially documented sickness or hardship.

Plagiarism Policy: The use of any literary resource whatsoever without adequate citation constitutes a serious offense in the academy. Any attempt to plagiarize the work of another may result in failure on the paper, failure in the class, if not suspension or expulsion. For more information about plagiarism, please consult the following weblink: <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 reading and writing through community service. The club strives to enhance both the academic experience and cultural engagement of undergraduate students by promoting interaction between students and faculty at social events: <http://english.ucalgary.ca/content/scribe-and-muse-reading-and-writing-club>
Contact: smrwc@ucalgary.ca.

English Department Website: For more information about courses, programs, policies, events, and contacts in the Department of English, please go to the website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>.

Writing Support: The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for students at the University of Calgary: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Follow the Department of English on Facebook and Twitter:



Academic Regulations and Schedules: Consult the Calendar for information about academic courses, faculty regulations, important deadlines, and academic schedules, along with rights and responsibilities for all members on campus. The homepage for the Calendar is:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

Guidelines for Email Etiquette: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

Appeal of Grades: Consult the following link to the Calendar and request advice from the Department of English (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 assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, you must fill out a form for the “Application of Deferment of Term Work”; the University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See the Calendar for more information:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Academic Accommodation: Students are responsible for requesting academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability, requiring academic accommodation, but you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact the office at 403-220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters must be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. Any students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal, academic accommodation: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

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 can escort individuals anytime, day or night. Call 403-220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone, or the yellow phone located at most pay-booths in the parking-lots: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources: The Program Information Centre (PIC) is your resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS-110; call at 403-220-3580; or email at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the website for the Faculty of Arts at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> (which has detailed information on common, academic concerns).

Contact the Student Success Centre at 403-220-5881 for any advice about planning your program; or visit the office on the third floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

Contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK (7625) for course registration (add/drop/swap), fee payment, and assistance with your Student Centre; or visit the office 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 the Ombudsman’s Office: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the Department of English 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 emails), 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.”