

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 393-01

Fall 2015

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Office hours: W 9:30-10:30

Speculative Fiction I: Science Fiction

Course description: This course surveys the field of science fiction writings in English, from the origins of the genre in the early nineteenth century through the present day. Special emphasis is placed on the SF novel as a literary mode that not only responds to particular discoveries in the history of science, but also speculates on the possibilities that advancements in mathematics, physics, biology, and ecology might hold for human and inhuman forms of life. The class relies upon the discipline of close textual analysis in order to arrive at a somewhat counterintuitive argument: as much as science fiction seems to be about exploring the future, it is intimately concerned with the realities of the present day, to the extent that one can even read certain SF works as parables for the socio-economic challenges and anxieties posed by the emergence of new media forms and techno-scientific discoveries. By looking at a variety of texts across time, space, and subgenre, the course surveys the major historical events and formal innovations that drive the development of science fiction novels and short stories.

Texts and readings:

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Norton Critical Edition)
- Edwin Abbott, *Flatland*, Ed. Ian Stewart (Basic Books)
- H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (Norton Critical Edition)
- H.P. Lovecraft, *At the Mountains of Madness and Other Tales of Terror* (Del Rey)
- William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (Ace)
- Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (Anchor)
- Course pack available at campus bookstore

Assignments and Evaluation:

- Class participation and attendance: 10%
- Midterm Examination: 20%
- Critical Reader Responses (3 responses, 500 words, 15% apiece): 45%
- Registrar-scheduled Final Exam: 25%

Class participation and attendance: Attendance and active participation are essential to the success of this course. Attendance and participation are both worth 5% of your grade. Attendance will be monitored regularly and participation will be evaluated according to engagement in interactive, small-group activities

and class discussions. Any unexcused absences in excess of two class periods will reduce the final class participation and attendance grade by 20% per absence.

Sample grading rubric for participation component:

A = Student engages in all small-group activities, and frequently contributes thoughtful comments and questions to class discussions that enhance understanding of the texts being studied

B = Student engages in most of the small-group activities, and occasionally offers a comment or question in class

C = Student shows little to no evidence of engagement in small-group or class discussions

Midterm Examination: This closed-book exam covers reading and lecture material and is comprised of short-answer style passage identifications and an essay prompt that asks students to discuss works on the syllabus with respect to their particular formal, thematic, stylistic, and philosophical features.

Critical Reader Responses: Over the course of the quarter, students complete three critically-engaged writing activities that investigate texts on the syllabus. Although these assignments are creative and exploratory, responses must nevertheless meet standards of acceptability for turned-in, written work at the U of C. That is to say, papers are evaluated according to clarity, organization, grammatical fluency, and argumentative sophistication. The responses must use a close-reading based interpretive approach in order to generate an argument about a text. All responses should identify a critical problem or question that a text poses, suggest an answer to it, and then explain the significance of that answer to how one reads and interprets the text. Students are encouraged to use these activities to think about how scientific discourses and discoveries are deployed in the fictions on the syllabus; in other words, to what aesthetic and argumentative ends are the featured authors recruiting, re-imagining, and transforming science and technology? The three reader responses should cover works from roughly the first, second, and third parts of the course, respectively.

Final Exam: The registrar-scheduled final examination will cover reading and lecture material. It is a closed-book exam that will include short-answer passage identifications and a final essay prompt. The final examination period begins on 11 December and continues through 22 December. Students must be available for examinations through the final day of the examination period.

Additional Class Policies:

- It is necessary to complete all course assignments in order to receive a passing grade.
- If the course is to be worthwhile, students must come to lecture prepared to engage with the texts, their fellow classmates, and the instructor. Therefore, students should complete all assigned readings before class and bring the relevant texts to each lecture. To prepare for class, students are advised to read actively at home by annotating their books and making a list of questions and compelling ideas as they progress through the course readings.
- There are no extra credit assignments.
- Make-up assignments, excused absences, and extensions will only be issued by the instructor in the event of extenuating circumstances.
- Assignments must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class period on the date that they are due. The late penalty for assignments is 10% per day, which includes weekends and holidays. Note that late assignments will receive little, if any, feedback. Assignments more than four days late will not be accepted.
- Please turn in assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take the assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the departmental dropbox; assignments will be date-stamped

and placed in the instructor's mailbox. Students should retain a copy of all assignments in the event that they are lost. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the departmental office. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that assignments submitted via dropbox are received by the instructor.

- Electronic submission of assignments is not permitted.
- Students are prohibited from using cellular phones and/or recording devices during lecture. Students are most welcome to use word-processing devices to take notes during class, but should not be using them to surf the internet, listen to music, email, text, etc.

Grading system:

All assignments will receive numerical grades, which will in turn be converted into final letter grades according to the following standard 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, section 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 four-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.](http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club)

Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com.](mailto: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.](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: maboyd@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-6.html)

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html.](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html)

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf.

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 Advisory:

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.