

**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**English 393-02 (Winter 2013)
SCIENCE FICTION**

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

Course Description

This course introduces students to the genre of science fiction, providing students with an array of basic tools for interpreting works from this genre. 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 science 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 such temporal paradoxes.

Course Assignments

Initial Report (500 wds)	15%
Essay Outline (500 wds)	20%
Seminar (1000 wds)	25%
Final Essay (1500 wds)	30%
Participation	10%

There will be no Registrar-scheduled exam for this course.

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 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 25% 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.

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

Jan 08: Seminar—Orientation

Jan 10: Lecture (Introduction to Science Fiction)

Jan 15: Seminar—Orientation

Jan 17: Lecture: The Time Machine

Jan 22: Seminar

01:
 02:
 03:
 04:

Jan 24: Lecture: The Time Machine

Jan 29: Seminar

[Initial Report: Due in Class]

05:
 06:
 07:
 08:

Jan 31: Lecture: A Scientific Romance

Feb 05: Seminar

[Marked Reports Returned]

09:
 10:
 11:
 12:

Feb 07: Lecture: A Scientific Romance

Feb 12: Seminar

13:

14:

15:

16:

Feb 14: Lecture: Slaughterhouse-Five

Feb 19: **READING WEEK**

[No Classes]

Feb 21: **READING WEEK**

[No Classes]

Feb 26: Seminar

17:

18:

19:

20:

Feb 28: Lecture: Slaughterhouse-Five

Mar 05: Seminar:

21:

22:

23:

24:

Mar 07: Lecture: The Time-Traveller's Wife

Mar 12: Seminar

25:

26:

27:

28:

Mar 14: Lecture: The Time-Traveller's Wife

Mar 19: Seminar

[Essay Outline: Due in Class]

29:

30:

31:

32:

Mar 21: Lecture: Timecrimes

Mar 26: Seminar

[Marked Outlines Returned]

33:

34:

35:

36:

Mar 28: Lecture: Timecrimes

Apr 02: Seminar

33:
34:
35:
36:

Apr 04: Lecture: Primer

Apr 09: Seminar

29:
30:
31:
32:

Apr 11: Lecture: Primer

Apr 16: Seminar:

[Final Essay: Due in Class]

33:
34:
35:
36:

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+ (90-100%, Outstanding); A (85-89%, 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+ (55-59%); D (50-54%, 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 five business days after the due date. No extensions can be granted on assignments, except in cases of officially documented sickness or hardship.

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/content/scribe-and-muse-reading-and-writing-club>
Our email address is smrwc@ucalgary.ca.

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>.

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>

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>

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

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 a student’s responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. 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 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 Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

artsads@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>

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.