

Department of English & Writing Studies

Speculative Fiction: Science Fiction
English 2071G (650)
Winter 2017

Instructor: John Kelly – jkelly1@uwo.ca

Antirequisites: Please note that English 134E AND 171F/G are antirequisites to this course; hence, if you have taken English 134E or 171F?G, you cannot receive credit for English 2071F/G.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

The science fiction course explores a selection of science fiction short stories and novels by focusing on the author's imaginative recreation of the human world. The course focuses upon critical science fiction themes such as the creation of artificial intelligence, the reconstruction of a conventional social and political order, the breakdown of traditional gender definitions, alien encounters, and explorations of otherness.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Think critically about science fiction literature and culture, and understand the historical and literary contexts of works;
- Be able to distinguish between periods, movements, and styles of science fiction literature;
- Write an essay about a work of literature, containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text and documented following the Modern Language Association method;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively.

Course Materials

- * Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*.
- * Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*.
- * --. *The War of the Worlds*.
- * Miller, Walter M. *A Canticle for Lebowitz*.
- * Le Guin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness*.
- * Haldeman, Joe. *Forever Peace*.
- * Gibson, William. *Neuromancer*.
- * Piercy, Marge. *He, She and It*.
- * Le Guin, Ursula and Attebery, Brian, eds. *The Norton Book of Science Fiction*.

Methods of Evaluation

Essay # 1 (1,500 words / 6 pages)	25%
Essay # 2 (2,000 words / 8 pages)	35%
Discussion bonus points	1.5%
Final Exam	40%

Late papers will be penalized one point per day.

Course Work and Exam:

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Timetable:

WEEK 1— INTRODUCTION: Introduction and Introductory stories. Begin *Frankenstein*.

WEEK 2— *Frankenstein*.

WEEK 3— Greg Bear, "Schrodinger's Plague," and Wells, *The Time Machine*.

WEEK 4—Wells, *War of the World*.

WEEK 5— Utopian / Dystopian stories and begin *A Canticle For Leibowitz*.

WEEK 6— *A Canticle for Leibowitz*.

WEEK 7— New Concerns and Women's Science Fiction. Begin *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

WEEK 8— *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

WEEK 9— Alien Encounters. Begin *Forever Peace*.

WEEK 10— *Forever Peace* and *The Body*.

WEEK 11— William Gibson, *Neuromancer*.

WEEK 12— Marge Piercy, *He, She and It* and Conclusion.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.