

English 2071F(650) Syllabus

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & WRITING STUDIES
English 2071F (650) Speculative Fiction: Science Fiction Online
Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. Mark Stephenson

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Office: (Old) Ivey Building, 2G28L

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:00-1:30 or by appointment (see below)

TA: Kirin Rogers

Miller, Walter M. *A Canticle for Leibowitz*.

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*.

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Essay 1	Due Oct. 12	1,500 words	25%
Essay 2	Due Nov. 30	2,000 words	30%
Participation			10%
Final exam	TBA (December examination period)		35%

******Final Grades******

STUDENTS MUST PASS BOTH TERM WORK AND THE FINAL EXAMINATION (IN COURSES WITH FINAL EXAMINATIONS) IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE. STUDENTS WHO FAIL THE FINAL EXAMINATION (REGARDLESS OF THEIR TERM MARK) AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE.

Students whose term and final exam grades combine to result in a grade of 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Your final grades are released by the Registrar's Office.

A Note on the Texts and How to Approach Them

This course is one of three derived from the former English 134E "Science Fiction, Fantasy , – on, F

Eleanor Arnason, "The Warlord of Saturn's Moons" (NBSF)
Barry N. Malzberg, "Making it all the Way into the Future on Gaxton Falls of the Red Planet" (NBSF)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Greg Bear, "Schrodinger's Plague" (NBSF)

Unit 2 (Sept. 22-Oct. 5) *The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds, and Utopian/Dystopian Stories*

H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*
H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*
Joanna Russ, "A Few Things I Know About Whileaway" (NBSF)
Cordwainer Smith, "Alpha Ralpha Boulevard" (NBSF)
Howard Waldrop, ". . . the World, as we Know't" (NBSF)

Unit 3 (Oct. 6-19) *A Canticle for Leibowitz* and New Concerns

Walter M. Miller, *A Canticle for Leibowitz*
Paul Preuss, "Half-Life" (NBSF)
Marion Zimmer Bradley, "Elbow Room" (NBSF)

Unit 4 (Oct. 20-Nov.2) *The Left Hand of Darkness* and Alien Encounters.

Ursula Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness*
Margaret Atwood, "Homelanding" (NBSF)
John Kessel, "Invaders" (NBSF)
Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds" (NBSF)
Philip K. Dick, "Frozen Journey" (NBSF)

Unit 5 (Nov. 3-16) *Forever Peace* and the Body

Joe Haldeman, *Forever Peace*
Molly Gloss, "Interlocking Pieces" (NBSF)
Eileen Gunn, "Stable Strategies for Middle Management" (NBSF)
Candas Jane Dorsey, "(Learning About) Machine Sex" (NBSF)

Unit 6 (Nov. 17-30) *Neuromancer, He, She and It, and Conclusion*

William Gibson, *Neuromancer*
Marge Piercy, *He, She and It*
Ursula Le Guin, "The New Atlantis" (NBSF)

Email

I am happy to communicate with students by e-mail, but there are two provisos. However, I can't always answer emails instantly; please allow 24 hours for a response on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. If you haven't received a response to your email within 24 hours (or 48 on the weekends), resend your email: it may have been overlooked by me, or (as is sometimes the case) it may have gotten lost in cyberspace.

Students must check their UWO email regularly for messages pertinent to the course. In addition, please ensure that your emails conform to the rudimentary standards of university discourse: emails should be written using correct grammar, complete sentences, and a professional tone.

Telephone

Students wanting to engage in an extended conversation about the course work—discussions or questions about lecture material, essay or exam expectations or results, course readings, etc.—may e-mail me to set up a time that is convenient for both of us to have a telephone conversation. Either I will call you (if the call is not long-distance) or you can call me at a phone number I will give you, depending on where I am the day of the appointment. Please note that I cannot return long-distance calls.

In person

Students who are in the London area and who would prefer to talk with me in person rather than by telephone or e-mail may

University Policy on Academic Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>.

The full policy is set out here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

This policy remains in place for all assignments,

I will be locking the discussion threads one week after the end of each unit so that the discussion stays on track. For example, the discussion thread for Unit 1, which corresponds to the first two full weeks of classes, will be locked on **Sunday, September 28 at 10:00 pm EDT**. I will lock the next unit's discussion thread two weeks later, and so forth.

Your participation grade will reflect both the quantity and quality of your contributions to the discussion board. Remember that any message posted in the Forums can be read by any member of the class. Use appropriate language and observe proper netiquette.

Final Exam

The final exam will be written in person at the approved exam centre that you selected when you registered for the course (see the Distance Studies section of the Academic Calendar for more information). It will not be an online exam. The final exam is scheduled by the Registrar. You must be prepared to write the exam on the dates assigned: do not make travel plans until the final exam schedule is posted.

For information on the general structure of the final exam, see the two files related to it in the "Learners Resources" section of the course website. I will re-direct your attention to these as the final exam date draws closer. The exam will be held during the exam period – Dec. 6-17.

Citing Sources and Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a 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. This includes Internet sources. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Further details of the University policy on academic offences can be found on pages 19-21 of the 2013 Academic Calendar.

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 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>).

Steps to follow to avoid plagiarism:

- 1) Do as much work as possible *before* beginning your secondary research – read the novel(s), think of a thesis statement, sketch out your argument. Write down your own ideas before reading any criticism.
- 2) Develop a note-taking style that clearly indicates what ideas are your own and what ideas are taken from another source. You can use different coloured pens, cue cards, or any other method that helps you distinguish your own ideas from those of other critics.
- 3) Feel free to disagree with any critic you are reading

As Smith points out...

Smith observes that...

(c) a reference in parentheses that indicates the source of the idea (often just the page number, if you've already used a tag phrase)

5) Cite the source in full in your Works Cited list (see guidelines below).

MLA Guidelines

Your essays should follow MLA format:

1) In the top left-hand corner of the first page, put your name, the name of your professor, the name of the course, and the date.

2) Number your pages in the top right-hand corner.

3) Double space.

4) If you use a snappy, attention-grabbing title, follow it up with an informative sub-title that indicates your topic and the works you will be discussing (i.e. Robot Sex: Bodies and Intimacy in Marge Piercy's *He, She and It*).

5) Titles of books should be *italicized*. Titles of short poems, articles, and short stories should be in quotation marks.

6) Introduce quotations in your own words, identifying the speaker and context: i.e. Bruce Sterling argues that cyberpunk embodies an "integration of technology and the Eighties counterculture . . . when authority still had a comfortable margin of control" (311). Use ellipses to indicate where you have omitted material.

7) If the quotation is longer than four lines, do not use quotation marks; instead, indent the passage ten spaces (or two tabs) from the left and continue to double space.

8) For short quotations, indicate the page number(s) in parentheses after the quotation marks and before the end punctuation. For long, indented quotations, place the parentheses after the end punctuation. Do not use abbreviations such as p. or pp. or include the author's name if the identity of the author is clear from the context.

9) List all the works you have referred to in a Works Cited list at the end of your paper. Use the following format for the entries in your Works Cited list:

Author's last name, Author's first name. "Title of article or short story." Title of Book.

City of publication: Publisher, date of publication.

There is a useful online guide to MLA format at the following address:

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

See the Guidelines for Properly Citing Sources (MLA style tips) on Western's Department of English website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/MLAstyletips.html> for more detailed information.

Further Information for Students

For English Department regulations governing Term Work, Exams, Faculty Office Hours, Academic Relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please consult "Information for Students" on our Department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/info-for-students.html>

University Policy on Prerequisites

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

Please note that English 134E is an antirequisite to this course; hence, if you have taken English 134E, you cannot receive credit for English 2071F/G.