ENGL/MDST 2950 WA: Science Fiction

Course Location: Zoom and D2L

Class Times: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30-4

Should you require information or documents from our office in another format, please let us know. We are happy to help you. Contact me or Cindy Haggerty, the Department of English Administrative Assistant.

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Instructor Information

- Instructor: Dr. Douglas Ivison
- Telephone: (807) 346-7825
- Email: divison@lakeheadu.ca
- Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30 and Wednesdays 1-2

Course Description/Overview

Science fiction is one of the dominant genres of 20th and 21st century culture, providing us with the language and imagery to describe not only possible futures but the contemporary era. Through reading a selection of science-fiction novels written in English and published from the 1960s until the contemporary period, we will examine how science fiction produces encounters with difference through its use and representation of science, technology, and alterity.

Course Format

We will hold our classes on Zoom. Class-time will be a mix of lecture and interactive discussion. Additional materials will be posted on mycourselink (D2L): lecture summaries, powerpoint slides, brief video recordings, links to videos, articles, websites, and other materials. You are responsible for accessing and reviewing materials posted on D2L as well as regularly attending class.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Octavia Butler, *Dawn*. Warner Aspect.
- Philip K. Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Del Rey.
- Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Justice*. Orbit.
- Ursula K. Le Guin. *The Left Hand of Darkness*. Ace.

Course Website

- Desire2Learn (or myCourseLInk)[i]

Course Schedule

Week One

Jan. 11: Introduction
Jan. 13: Defining Science Fiction

Week Two – *The Left Hand of Darkness*

Jan. 18:
Jan. 20: **Discussion #1**

Week Three – *The Left Hand of Darkness*

Jan. 25:
Jan. 27:

Week Four – *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Feb. 1: **DUE Assignment #1**
Feb. 3: **Discussion #2**

Week Five – *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Feb. 8:
Feb. 10:

Winter Break: Feb. 15 & 17 (No Classes)

Week Six

Feb. 22: **DUE Assignment #2**

There will be no classes on Feb. 22 and 24. Instead, I will hold 15-minute meetings with each student to discuss your progress and upcoming work.

Independent Assignment: Watch a science-fiction film and write an assignment on it.

Week Seven – *Dawn*

Mar. 1:
Mar. 3: **Discussion #3**

Week Eight – *Dawn*

Mar. 8: **DUE Film Assignment**
Mar. 10:

Friday, March 12: Last day to Withdraw from course

Week Nine – *Ancillary Justice*

Mar. 15: **DUE Assignment #3**
Mar. 17: **Discussion #4**

Week Ten – *Ancillary Justice*

Mar. 22:
Mar. 24:

Week Eleven: Hugo Awards and other things

Mar. 29: **DUE Assignment #4**
Mar. 31:

Week Twelve:

Monday, Apr. 5 (No Class) – Easter Monday
Apr. 7: Last class – Wrap-up and review

Monday, April 12 (No Class) – **DUE Creative Project**

Take-home Exam DUE: Monday, April 26

Assignments and Evaluation

Table of Assignments

Assignment	Due date	Value	Length
Assignment #1: *Left Hand of Darkness*	February 1	12.5%	750 words
Assignment #2: *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*	February 22	12.5%	750 words
Film Assignment	March 8	10%	500 words
Assignment #3: *Dawn*	March 15	12.5%	750 words
Assignment #4: *Ancillary Justice*	March 29	12.5%	750 words
Hugo Presentations	March 28-31 & Apr 6-9	5%	
Creative Project	April 12	10%	
Take-home Exam	April 26	20%	
Discussion	Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Mar. 3, Mar. 17	5%	

Assignment Policies

- Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are individual assignments and cannot be completed collaboratively.
- All assignment must be submitted via D2L.
- Assignments are due by 11:30 pm on the dates indicated. See individual assignments for submission guidelines.

- If you require an extension, you must ask for one BEFORE the due date.
- Unless you ask for (and receive) an extension, late assignments will be penalized by 3% per day. No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks late.

Details of Assignments

Assignment #1

You will be asked to write a 750-word paper on *The Left Hand of Darkness*. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Jan. 18.

Assignment #2

You will be asked to write a 750-word paper on *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?.* The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Feb. 1.

Film Assignment

You will be asked to write a 500-word paper on a science-fiction film of your choice. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Feb. 10.

Assignment #3

You will be asked to write a 750-word paper on *Dawn*. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Mar. 1.

Assignment #4

You will be asked to write a 750-word essay on *Ancillary Justice*. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Mar. 15.

Creative Project

You will be asked to produce a creative assignment relevant to science fiction. You will be given a number of options of type of assignment. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Feb. 22.

Hugo Presentations

You will be asked to select and read a recent Hugo award-winning novel and then meet with me to discuss the book one-on-one for approximately 10-15 minutes. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Jan. 13.

Take-home Exam

The take-home exam will cover the four books read and discussed in the course. The exam will be posted on D2L no later than Apr. 7.

Discussion

There will be four classes devoted to discussion. Discussion topics and format will be posted on D2L prior to each class, and the class will be divided into break-out rooms for 20-30 minutes. We will then reassemble as a whole to review what you discussed. Failure to attend a scheduled Discussion will result in mark of 0 for that day.

Marking Standards

All assignments will be marked in accordance with the English Department Marking Standards[ii].

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty, including collaborating on individual assignments, will be reported and infractions penalized as required by the **Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity**[iii].

Course Policies

- If you miss a class, you are responsible for all material covered in class, and are responsible for knowing about information re due dates, etc. that is given out in class. Absence from class is not an acceptable excuse for missing an assignment. Please note that the schedule is subject to change, and as a result due dates may change.
- You are expected to read the required readings in advance, and be ready to discuss them in class.
- Four books have been ordered for this course, and all are available from the campus bookstore and should also be available from Amazon, Indigo, and other bookstores.
- E-books are acceptable, and in some cases are significantly cheaper than the print version.
- You are responsible for choosing and purchasing the book you will be reading for the Hugo Presentation assignment.
- I will not be recording our Zoom lectures.

- You may not share any course materials posted on Zoom or D2L with anyone from outside of the course.
- During Zoom lectures, you are not required to turn on your camera. Please follow Zoom etiquette and mute yourself when not speaking.
- During discussion in break-out rooms, it is desirable but not required that you turn on your camera. You do not need to be muted during these discussions.
- If you encounter technical difficulties with Zoom or D2L, please let me know as soon as possible. If you're encountering a difficulty, others may be as well.
- I will not be holding in-person office hours this term. I will be holding office hours via Zoom during the indicated times and you can also chat with me using the D2L site's chat function during the office hours. We can also arrange to meet by Zoom or phone outside of my office hours.
- To contact me, please email me. If you leave me a message on my voicemail, I may not immediately get your message. If I'm on the D2L site, feel free to contact me via chat.
- There will be no classes on Feb. 22 and 24. Instead, that week I will be meeting with each of you (via Zoom or phone) for 15 minutes to discuss your progress and upcoming work. These meetings are mandatory. Failure to meet with me during this week will result in a 5-mark penalty on your Final Mark for the course. Prior to that week, I will post a schedule on D2L and ask you to sign up for a meeting time.

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity[iv].
- **Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code[v]. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS)[vi] and register as early as possible.

This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage[vii] and/or the Desire2Learn or My Courselink[i] site for the course.

[i] https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home

[ii] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/english/marking-standards

[iii] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-conduct/academic-integrity/node/51239

[iv] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-conduct/academic-integrity/node/51239

[v] http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code

[vi] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-services/accessibility

[vii] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/english