ENGL 2950 WA/ENGL/MDST 2950 WDE: Science Fiction

Course Location: RB 3024 (WA) & Zoom (WDE)

Class Times: Mondays and Wednesdays 11:30-1

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
- Office: RB 3038 (Thunder Bay campus)
- Telephone: 807-343-8010 ext. 7825
- Email: divison@lakeheadu.ca
- Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

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

This is a hybrid course. Those in WA will meet in RB 3024 and those in WDE will participate via Zoom. Students in Thunder Bay registered in WDE are welcome to attend in person. WA students unable to attend in person are welcome to participate via Zoom. Class-time will be a mix of lecture and discussion. Additional materials will be posted in mycourselink (D2L). All students are responsible for accessing and reviewing materials posted on D2L as well as regularly attending class.

Please note that this course is not designed to be completed as an asynchronous course.

In keeping with the university decision to delay the start of in-person classes, for at least the first two weeks all students will be participating via Zoom. Currently, the university is planning to resume in-person classes on Jan. 24. Once in-person classes resume, this course will be offered via hybrid delivery. If necessary (e.g. if I am required to self-isolate, or the university decides to again shift online), we will shift to Zoom delivery.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Octavia Butler, *Dawn*. Grand Central.
- Philip K. Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Del Rey.
- Larissa Lai. *The Tiger Flu*. Arsenal Pulp.
- 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. 10: Introduction
Jan. 12: Defining Science Fiction

Week Two – *The Left Hand of Darkness*

Jan. 17:
Jan. 19: **Discussion #1**

Week Three – *The Left Hand of Darkness*

Jan. 24:
Jan. 26:

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

Jan. 31: **DUE: Assignment #1**
Feb. 2: **Discussion #2**

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

Feb. 7:
Feb. 9:

Week Six -- *Dawn*

Feb. 14: **DUE: Assignment #2**
Feb. 16: **Discussion #3 – NO CLASS – post on Discussion board**

Winter Break: Feb. 21 & 23 (No Classes)

Week Seven -- *Dawn*

Feb. 28:
Mar. 2

Week Eight – Individual meetings

There will be no classes on Mar. 7 & 9. Instead, I will hold 15-minute meetings with each student 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 grade for the course.

Use this week to work on your upcoming assignments and watch the film selected by your Film Discussion Group.

Monday, Mar. 7: DUE: Assignment #3

Friday, Mar. 11: Last day to Withdraw from course

Week Nine – *Ancillary Justice*

Mar. 14:
Mar. 16: **Discussion #4**

Week Ten – *Ancillary Justice*

Mar. 21:
Mar. 23:

Week Eleven – *The Tiger Flu*

Mar. 28: **DUE: Assignment #4**
Mar. 30:

Week Twelve – Film Discussion

There will be no classes on Apr. 4 & 6. Instead, I will meet with each Film Discussion Group for 20 minutes to discuss the group's assigned film.

Monday, Apr. 11: DUE Creative Project

Monday, Apr. 25: DUE Take-home Exam

Assignments and Evaluation

Table of Assignments

Assignment	Due date	Value	Length
Assignment #1: *Left Hand of Darkness*	January 31	12.5%	750 words
Assignment #2: *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*	February 14	12.5%	750 words
Assignment #3: *Dawn*	March 7	12.5%	750 words
Assignment #4: *Ancillary Justice*	March 28	12.5%	750 words
Creative Project	April 11	10%	
Film Discussion Group	April 4 or 6	5%	
Discussion Days	Jan. 19, Feb. 2, Feb. 16, Mar. 16	5%	
Take-home Exam	April 25	30%	

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 11:59 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.
- Absence from your Film Discussion Group session will result in a mark of 0 for that assignment. Similarly, failure to attend a Discussion class or post on the Discussion board on Feb. 16 will result in a mark of 0 for that Discussion.
- Students who fail to participate in an individual meeting with me during the week of March 7-11 will receive a 5-mark penalty on their final grade for the course.
- No assignments will be accepted after Monday, April 25.

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. 17.

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 Jan. 31.

Assignment #3

You will be asked to write a 750-word paper on *Dawn*. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Feb. 14.

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. 14.

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 Jan. 12.

Film Discussion Group

You will participate in a 20-minute group discussion on a SF film selected by your group. The discussion will be scheduled during our regularly scheduled class time on Apr. 4 or 6. The assignment will be posted on D2L no later than Jan. 12.

Take-home Exam

The take-home exam will cover the five books read and discussed in the course, and will include a question on *The Tiger* Flu. The exam will be posted on D2L no later than Apr. 6.

Discussion

There will be three classes devoted to in-class 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. On Feb. 16, rather than an in-class discussion, you'll be asked to post discussion comments on D2L.

Writing Support

Your ability to write clearly and with purpose is crucial to your academic success. Because the writing process takes time and expectations vary across disciplines (and from one instructor to another), it is important to manage this process carefully. The following guidelines will help you do that:

1. Start early – The writing process involves several steps: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. You will do your best work when you follow all the steps. Prewriting involves thinking about what you've learned on a topic, often assisted by note-taking, so that your reflections become your writing. It is often the longest and most important step!
2. Read the guidelines – Every assignment has a specific purpose, audience, length, and format. Pay close attention to these specifications and revisit them as you work

on the assignment. Also, remember that different academic disciplines use different styles of documentation. In this course, we will use MLA format, information about which will be provided as part of the assignment instructions.

3. Seek support – Writing is hard work, but you are not alone. Your instructor is there to help you. Don't be afraid to make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your assignment.
4. Put in the time – Writing is a valuable skill, and any time spent developing your writing ability will contribute to your success, both in university and in your personal career.
5. Visit the Academic Support Zone – The Academic Support Zone's writing coaches will work with you at any stage of the writing process from interpreting the guidelines and finding sources to composing and editing drafts. Rather than editing your work for you, writing coaches will engage you in conversation about your writing and help you develop your skills in alignment with assignment expectations and course objectives.

Find Lakehead University's free writing support at https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/academic-success/student-success-centre/academic-support-zone[ii] and visit mysuccess.lakeheadu.ca[iii] to book an appointment.

Marking Standards

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

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

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 misconduct. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic misconduct, including collaborating on individual assignments, will be reported and infractions penalized as required by the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity[v]

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.

- Five 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. All five books are available in Kindle editions, and most are available in Kobo editions.
- You are responsible for accessing the film being discussed by your Film Discussion Group.
- You may not share any course materials posted on Zoom or D2L with anyone from outside of the course.
- For students participating via Zoom, please follow Zoom etiquette and mute yourself when not speaking.
- For those on Zoom, 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 experiencing difficulty, others may be as well.
- I will not be holding scheduled office hours this term, but am happy to meet with you by appointment. For students on the Thunder Bay campus, I am available to meet in person in my office (RB 3038). Otherwise, our meetings will be conducted by Zoom or phone.
- There will be no classes on March 7 and 9. Instead, that week I will be holding individual meetings with each of you 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. These meetings will take place in person (for Thunder Bay students who wish to do so) or by Zoom or phone.
- There will be classes on April 4 or 6. Instead, that week I will be meeting with Film Discussion Groups during our regular class time.
- Contact me at any time by email or phone. I try to respond to emails and voicemail within 24 hours, but generally do not check email on Saturdays.

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Student Code of Conduct[vi].
- **Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code[vii]. 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)[viii] and register as early as possible.

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

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[i] https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home
[ii] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/academic-success/student-success-centre/academic-support-zone
[iii] https://mysuccess.lakeheadu.ca/home.htm
[iv] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/english/marking-standards
[v] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-conduct/academic-integrity/node/51239
[vi] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-conduct
[vii] http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code
[viii] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/student-life/student-services/accessibility
[ix] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/english