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Department of English & Writing Studies

The Storyteller's Art II: The Rise of the Machines
English 1028G (001)
Winter 2014

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Keep

Date/Time: Tuesday & Thursday
9:30am-10:30am

Location: University College 30

Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s): Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course.

Antirequisite(s): English 1024E, 1036E.

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 are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

Where do I end and where does my phone (or my tablet or my laptop) begin? From Frankenstein's Monster to the artificial intelligences of Gibson's cyberpunk classic, *Neuromancer*, our technological prostheses have always been more than simply tools for carrying out the tasks that we have assigned them. They have been, too, the instruments by which we have sought to define what it means to be human in a world in which our microprocessor-driven devices seem to have acquired a mysterious agency, a liveliness all of their own. This course will study novels, short stories, and graphic novels that have sought to explore the social, political, and psychological dimensions of our increasingly intimate relationship with the technological realm. What fears and desires do these new life forms elicit in us? How do they compel us to think differently about what it means to work, think, love? And where, in the future, will we draw the line between what we want from them and what they might want from us?

The weekly course schedule consists of two hours of lecture and a third hour of tutorial discussion facilitated by a teaching assistant. In addition to providing opportunities for the discussion of reading and lecture materials, tutorials will also provide substantial instruction in effective essay writing and research methods.

Objectives:

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- Identify and analyze basic elements of narrative literature, such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, diction, and tone;
- Write an essay about a work of narrative literature, containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text;
- Research critical commentary on literary works;
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, especially those obtained through the Internet;
- Integrate outside research materials and references to the original text into an essay through use of quotations and paraphrases;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Document essays using MLA format.

Course Materials

(Available in the English section at the Campus Bookstore in the University Community Centre)

Required Texts:

Asimov, Isaac. *I, Robot* (Macmillan)
Capek, Karel. *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)* (Penguin)
Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (Del Rey)
Gibson, William. *Neuromancer* (Ace)
Masamune, Shirow. *The Ghost in the Shell: Volume One* (Dark Horse)
Scott, Melissa. *Trouble and her Friends* (Course Pack)
Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (Broadview)

Methods of Evaluation

Four Quizzes: The Best Three (5% each)	15%
Passage Analysis	15%
Essay	25%
Tutorial Group Participation	10%
Final Exam	35%

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.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Quizzes

Four short quizzes will be conducted during the lecture hours on randomly selected dates. Each quiz will be made up of five questions testing your comprehension of the assigned texts and recent lecture materials. Of these four quizzes, we will choose the best three (each worth 5%), to count toward your final grade, for a total of 15%.

Passage Analysis

A Passage Analysis is an assignment in which students get to develop their close reading and interpretative skills in preparation for the longer essay assignment at the end of term.

Students will be assigned an excerpt from a longer work previously studied in class. Read this passage carefully several times and provide a well-documented analysis of its structural features (its use of character, plot, setting, point of view, etc.) and its narrative style, including attention to word choice, figurative language, and use of symbolism. How does this passage contribute to the work's overarching themes and patterns of imagery? What makes this passage important to our understanding of the work as a whole?

The Passage Analysis should be approximately 1000 words or three-four pages in length. It will constitute 15% of your final grade. Further details regarding format and how to submit the assignment (including late penalties), can be found in the **Assignments** section below.

Essay

Students will choose from one of four essay topics to be circulated four weeks prior to the assignment's due date. Each topic will provide an opportunity for the student to develop his or her analytical and research skills, combining a close and detailed reading of the text in question with a knowledge of the secondary criticism related to its study.

You will be expected to use at least two secondary sources, but the essay is not to be a review of such secondary literature. Rather, you should use your secondary sources to either support aspects of your own argument, or to show places in which your analysis differs from that of the critics upon whom you are drawing. The essay is, first and foremost, an account of your interpretation of the text, and should read as such. Please consider using an electronic search tool, such as the MLA Bibliography or the Humanities and Social Sciences Index, to find journal articles.

Your essay should be approximately 2500 words or eight-ten pages in length. It will constitute 25% of your final grade. Further details regarding format and how to submit the assignment (including late penalties), can be found in the Assignments section below.

Tutorial Group Participation

All students will be assigned to a tutorial group of approximately fifteen students, facilitated by a Teaching Assistant. These tutorial groups are, in many ways, the heart and soul of a large lecture course such as English 1028G, affording students' opportunities to raise questions and pursue issues introduced in the weekly lectures, and to share their insights with their fellow students. The tutorial groups will also provide a venue for instruction regarding researching, organizing, and writing an effective, university-level research essay, complete with secondary criticism and a list of works cited.

The Tutorial Group Participation grade will be divided between attendance (5%) and participation (5%). Participation means arriving for your tutorial on time, having read the assigned materials, and regularly volunteering informed, thoughtful, and helpful replies to questions and/or leading group discussions, as arranged by the Teaching Assistant.

In order for the tutorial groups to promote a free exchange of ideas and opinions, all students are expected to treat each other and their Teaching Assistants with dignity and respect. This means listening carefully to each other's' contributions to the group discussion, and allowing

each group member an opportunity to express his or her own point of View, with the objective of sharing and enriching our understanding of the literature we are studying.

Timetable:

January 7	Introduction: The Turing Test
January 9	Freud, "The Uncanny" (text available on the Owl web site)
January 14	Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
January 16	Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
January 21	Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
January 23	Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
January 28	Capek, <i>R.U.R.</i>
January 30	Capek, <i>R.U.R.</i>
February 4	Asimov, <i>I Robot</i>
	Passage Analysis Due
February 6	Asimov, <i>I Robot</i>
February 11	Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream</i>
February 13	Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream</i>
February 18	Reading week
February 19	Reading week
February 25	Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream</i>
February 27	Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream</i>
March 4	Gibson, <i>Neuromancer</i>
March 6	Gibson, <i>Neuromancer</i>
March 11	Gibson, <i>Neuromancer</i>
March 13	Gibson, <i>Neuromancer</i>
March 18	Scott, <i>Trouble and her Friends</i>
March 20	Scott, <i>Trouble and her Friends</i>
March 25	Scott, <i>Trouble and her Friends</i>
March 27	Masamune, <i>The Ghost in the Shell</i>
	Research Essay Due
April 1	Masamune, <i>The Ghost in the Shell</i>
April 3	Masamune, <i>The Ghost in the Shell</i>
April 8	REVIEW

Assignments:

Essay and Passage Analysis assignments will be written according to standard essay style: typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, on white 8.5" x 11" paper. Margins will be 1." A title-page is not necessary, but the first page must include the title of the essay, your name, the course number, the professor's name, teaching assistant's name, and the date.

Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text, rhetorical persuasiveness, syntax, grammar, spelling, and accurate bibliographic citation will all be factors in the grading of the essay.

All bibliographic notation will employ the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a works cited page. Please see "MLA Style Tips," which you can find at the Department of English web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergrad/MLAstertips.html>, or consult a standard style guide

such as the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, which is available in the reference shelves of the DB. Weldon Library.

Assignments will be submitted electronically through the owl site, and are due by 4:30 on the due date. Papers submitted late will be returned with a grade but no comments. Papers handed in late without prior permission will be deducted 2 per cent per day late, including weekends. Papers handed in after the assignment is returned will not normally be accepted.

Please keep at least one copy of each of your papers. Save each file on a memory stick, external drive, or other form of back up media. Retain all returned, marked assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.

Writing Skills

English 1028G is a course in the academic study of literature. Though it provides instruction in essay style and research methods, it does not offer instruction in grammar and composition. Students who require such instruction are encouraged to visit the Writing Support Centre at the Student Development Centre. Details of their services can be found at: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing>.

Email

Questions and concerns about the course should, in the first instance, be directed to your Teaching Assistant. If you have a question that you feel is best addressed to the instructor, please do feel free to get in touch. I will try to respond within one business day; email over the weekend will be returned the following Monday. Please note, however, that email is not the most ideal medium for the discussion of difficult conceptual material, such as is often the focus of queries regarding an English course. If you miss a class and would like to catch up, or are having difficulties with an assignment, please do consider seeing me during my office hours, or, if those times are not convenient, making an appointment to meet at some alternative time.

Electronic Devices

Please switch off cell phones and remove earbuds or earphones during class. Laptop computers and tablets may be used for taking notes but not for web surfing, email, social networking or any other non-course related activity. Students who are found to be using their laptops or tablets for any purpose other than note taking will be asked to leave the class.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken in each class. Chronic absences may result in a formal request to be debarred from taking the final exam, as set out in the Western Academic Calendar: "Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class will be reported to the Dean (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination." Students, of course, who are debarred from taking the exam, automatically fail the course. If circumstances prevent you from attending class regularly for a period, please do let me know so that we can work out some alternative arrangement.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments 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 necessary form 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

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.

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.