

This syllabus has been provided as a reference tool for students considering this course. It has been modified to follow Senate regulations. Current students enrolled in any undergraduate course must obtain the most recent syllabus from their course instructor or from their course website. This is not the latest version.



## Department of English & Writing Studies

### **Speculative Fiction: Science Fiction English 2071F (001) Fall 2013**

**Instructor:** Dr. John Kelly

**Date/Time:** Monday 7:00pm-10:00pm

**Location:** University Community Centre 56

#### Antirequisites

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

#### 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:**

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

- Write an essay about a work of literature, containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively.

#### Course Materials

##### **Required Texts:**

William Gibson, Neuromancer.

Ursula Le Guin, The Left Hand of Darkness.

Ursula Le Guin and Brian Attebery. eds. The Norton Book of Science Fiction.

Haldeman, Joe, Forever Peace.

Walter E. Miller Jr., Canticle for Lebowitz.

Marge Piercy, He, She, and It.

Mary Shelley, Frankenstein.

H. G. Wells, The Time Machine and War of the Worlds.

Yevgeny Zamyatin. We.

### Methods of Evaluation

Learning Cell – on Zamyatin’s <i>We</i>	15%
Midterm Exam - In Class Essay	10%
Critical Paragraph – on Haldeman’s <i>Forever Peace</i>	10%
Essay (6 pages – 1500 words)	30%
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>.

### **Timetable:**

**Mon. Sept. 9:** Introduction & Gibson, "The Gernsback Continuum." Arnason, "The Warlord of Saturn’s Moons." & Malzberg, "Making It All the Way

**Mon. Sept. 16:** Shelley, *Frankenstein* & Bear. "Schrodinger's Plague."

**Mon. Sept 23:** Wells *Time Machine* & *The War of the Worlds*. Russ, "A Few Things I Know About Whileaway." & Smith. "Alpha Ralpha Boulevard."

**Mon. Sept. 30:** **Learning Cell - Zamyatin, We** - Discussion. Readings cont.

**Mon. Oct 7:** Miller, *Canticle for Leibowitz*. Preuss. "Half-Life." Waldrop, *The World, as we Know 't.*"

**Mon. Oct. 21:** Bradley. "Elbow Room." James Tiptree, Jr. "The Women Men Don't See." & Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

**Mon. Oct. 28: Midterm:** Midterm-Prepare before exam and write in class.

Robert Heinlein, a noted science fiction writer and theorist, argues that science fiction possesses an implicit didactic function. Focusing upon three texts, explore this understanding of science fiction as a genre impelled by a didactic function towards being a literature of social criticism.

Readings: continued, Le Guin. Atwood. "Homelanding." Butler. "Speech Sounds." Kessel. "Invaders." Dick, *Frozen Journey*."

**Mon. Nov. 4:** Readings cont. & Haldeman. *Forever Peace*.

**Mon. Nov. 11: Critical Paragraph Due** - Topic: Is the process of humanization in Haldeman's novel beneficial or detrimental? - Discussion. Haldeman cont, Gunn. "Stable Strategies for Middle Management," Dorsey, "(Learning About) Machine Sex," & Gloss, "Interlocking Pieces."

**Mon. Nov. 18: Movie Night: "Blade Runner."**

**Mon. Nov. 25:** Gibson. *Neuromancer* & Piercy, *He, She, and It*. **Essay Due.**

**Mon. Dec. 5:** Piercy. Le Guin, "The New Atlantis" & Final Exam Review.

#### 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](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](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](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.