

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
ENGL-2612-050: Science Fiction**

Term: Fall 2018

Time: Monday 6:00pm-9:00pm

Room: 1L06

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30pm-2:30pm

Thursdays 1:30pm-2:30pm

Professor: Andrew Burke

Office: 2A30

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the history of science fiction and a consideration of the ongoing cultural and political significance of the genre. We will begin with a classic, H.G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, but the course will largely focus on more recent work, drawing its readings from authors such as Octavia Butler, Nnedi Okorafor, Ted Chiang, and Drew Hayden Taylor. In addition to our readings, the course also considers the impact that science fiction has had on film and in the visual arts. The world(s) of science fiction are immense, and while the course will deliver a thumbnail history of the genre and a consideration of its many variants and subgenres, our primary focus will be on the catastrophic. Taking our cue from Fredric Jameson's observation that it is now easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism, the course will zero in on the images and representations of the catastrophic in science fiction and contemplate the causes and the consequences of our collective fascination with apocalyptic scenarios and survival strategies. In our investigations, we will pay particularly close attention to gender, race, and class, and reflect upon the ways in which science fiction, whether set in the near or distant future, is first and foremost about the present.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The University of Winnipeg is in Treaty One territory and is located on the traditional territory of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. The English Department recognizes the role of the English language and English as an academic discipline in contributing to the historical and present formations of settler colonialism and imperialism in Canada and around the world. In giving expression to our Land Acknowledgement, we commit ourselves to engaging with, questioning, and challenging these formations in ways that support the decolonizing work being done by Indigenous peoples in Manitoba and elsewhere.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Butler, Octavia. *The Parable of the Sower*. Warner, 2000.

Chiang, Ted. *Stories of Your Life and Others*. Vintage, 2016.

Okorafor, Nnedi. *Lagoon*. Hodder and Stoughton, 2014

Taylor, Drew Hayden. *Take Us To Your Chief and Other Stories*. Douglas & McIntyre, 2016.

Wells, H.G. *The War of the Worlds*. Oxford UP, 2014.

In addition to these course texts, we will be screening and discussing the following short films, one feature-length film, and one television episode in class:

La jetée (Chris Marker, 1963, France)

23 Skidoo (Julian Biggs, 1964, Canada)

Remigration (Barry Jenkins, 2011, USA)

Pumzi (Wanuri Kahiu, 2009, Kenya)

Arrival (Denis Villeneuve, 2016, USA)

Wakening (Danis Goulet (Cree/Métis), 2013, Canada)

Selected episode of *Black Mirror* (Channel 4, 2011-, UK)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Students should have access to a style guide that provides details on proper MLA formatting and documentation. The 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* by Joseph Gibaldi is the authoritative resource for all questions of style, format, and documentation. A legitimate online source of information regarding MLA documentation is Purdue University's Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

For a helpful guide to writing on film, please consult Timothy Corrigan's *A Short Guide to Writing on Film*. Corrigan's book is now in its ninth edition, but earlier editions are just as useful in providing a good overview of the formal conventions and technical vocabulary associated with writing on film.

ASSIGNMENTS

Literary Analysis Essay	1250-1500 words	Due October 22, 2018	25%
Film Essay	1250-1500 words	Due November 10, 2018	25%
Research Essay	2000 words	Due December 3, 2018	40%
Participation			10%

PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

Participation is based on attendance, but more importantly on the quality of your contributions to class discussion and demonstrated evidence that you have read and thought about the material in advance of class. The rubric below is freely adapted from the guidelines provided by the University of Winnipeg's Senate Curriculum Committee.

Outstanding (9.0-10): Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate thorough preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that builds expertly and insightfully on discussion and formulates new and original questions about the course material. Demonstration of exceptional in-class ability.

Excellent (8.0-8.9): Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate thorough preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that builds on discussion and formulates interesting questions about the course material. Demonstration of excellent in-class ability.

Very Good (7.5-7.9): Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate strong preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that shows the ability to contribute to discussion and to formulate interesting comments and questions about the course material.

Good (7.0-7.4): Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate satisfactory preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that shows the ability to contribute to discussion and offers some insights into course material.

Fair (6.5-6.9): Inconsistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that suggest partial or inadequate preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor, but characterized by some level of disengagement or the inability to grasp, communicate, or formulate questions about fundamental aspects of the course material. Occasional distracting

behavior (mobile phone use, inattention) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere and collective work of the course.

Poor (6.0-6.4): Inconsistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities. Participation marked by a disengagement with the course material resulting in infrequent or irrelevant contributions to class discussions. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

Very Poor (5.0-.5.9): Inconsistent on-time attendance or extended absences that compromise ability to participate fully in the work of the course. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

Fail (0.0-4.9): Frequent absences and consistently poor preparation that compromise required classroom contributions. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

GRADING SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA 4.50	C+	65 - 69%	GPA 2.5
A	85 - 89%	GPA 4.25	C	60 - 64%	GPA 2.0
A-	80 - 84%	GPA 4.0	D	50 - 59%	GPA 1.0
B+	75 - 79%	GPA 3.5	F	Below 50%	GPA 0
B	70 - 74%	GPA 3.0			

NOTES

1. This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some of the above topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.
2. When it is necessary to cancel a class due to exceptional circumstances, instructors will make every effort to inform students via uwinnipeg email (and/or using the preferred form of communication, as designated in this outline), as well as the Departmental Assistant and Chair/Dean so that class cancellation forms can be posted outside classrooms.
3. Students are reminded that they have a responsibility to regularly check their uwinnipeg e-mail addresses to ensure timely receipt of correspondence from the university and/or their course instructors.
4. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.
5. Cellular phones and other electronic devices **MUST** be turned off during classes.
6. It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or digitized copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.
7. Students are advised to read the pertinent pages of the current course calendar for the rules regarding Registration, Voluntary Withdrawals, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals. **Concerning plagiarism, please note** that as a general rule, an F in the course will be

the penalty recommended by the English Departmental Review Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Misconduct, for plagiarism on major assignments in English Department courses.

8. Accessibility Services: Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.
9. The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposures to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities.
10. Students facing a charge of academic or non-academic misconduct may choose to contact the University of Winnipeg Students' Association (UWSA) where a student advocate will be available to answer any questions about the process, help with building a case, and ensuring students have access to support. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit our website at www.theuwsa.ca/academic-advocacy or call 204-786-9780.
11. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the Calendar.
12. **Monday, November 12th, 2018** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses that begin in September 2018 and end in December 2018 in the 2018 Fall term. Please note that withdrawing before the VW date does not necessarily result in a fee refund.
13. **Late Assignment Penalties:** 10% will immediately be deducted from any assignment handed in late. A further 5% will be deducted for each additional day late, including weekends. No late assignments will be accepted more than 7 days after the due date has passed unless official documentation (ie. a medical or legal note) is provided.
14. The English Department wishes to ensure your right to privacy regarding handing in and getting back assignments is protected. Most assignments will be handed in and handed back in class or at the Instructor's office. If assignments are to be handled in another way and you are concerned about others having access to your work, you should attach to your assignment a self-addressed envelope that can be sealed. If this is not done, it is assumed that you have waived your concerns in this area.
15. Students may be asked for identification when writing a test or examination.
16. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.

17. Students are advised that the UW Bookstore may run out of textbooks early in the term. Also, the bookstore always ships textbooks back to the publisher if they are not purchased within the first few weeks of term. Students are responsible for communicating directly with the bookstore if they need to order texts or ask for texts to be held for them.
18. For more information regarding the English Department, please refer to our website at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/english-index>
19. Students who plan to conduct research interview, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, even a family member, must obtain the approval of the UHREB before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/research-human-ethics> for submission requirements and deadlines.
20. All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect
21. Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>
22. No make-up classes scheduled.

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

1. Punctuality and Presence. Class begins promptly at the stated start time and ends at the listed time. Please be ready to go at the stated start time of class and be prepared to stay for the duration of the class. In the extraordinary situation where an appointment will require you to arrive late or depart early, please let me know in advance.

2. Email: I tend to only respond to students' emails during regular work hours (Mon.-Fri. 9am-5pm) and I may take up to 24 hours to respond. Please do not email me through Nexus.

3. Mobile Devices and Laptops: All phones must be turned to silent and put away before class starts. Students using laptops must sit at the back of the room to avoid distracting other students. You may not record lectures or class discussions.

SCHEDULE

September 10	Introduction <i>La jetée</i> (Chris Marker, 1963, France)
September 17	H.G. Wells. <i>The War of the Worlds</i>
September 24	H.G. Wells. <i>The War of the Worlds</i> <i>23 Skidoo</i> (Julian Biggs, 1964, Canada)
October 1	Octavia Butler. <i>Parable of the Sower</i>
October 15	Octavia Butler. <i>Parable of the Sower</i> <i>Remigration</i> (Barry Jenkins, 2011, USA)
October 22	Nnedi Okorafor. <i>Lagoon</i>
October 29	Nnedi Okorafor. <i>Lagoon</i>

November 5 Drew Hayden Taylor. *Take Us To Your Chief and Other Stories Wakening* (Danis Goulet (Cree/Métis), 2013, Canada)
November 12 Drew Hayden Taylor. *Take Us To Your Chief and Other Stories*
November 19 *Arrival* (Denis Villeneuve, 2016, USA)
November 26 Ted Chiang. *Stories of Your Life and Others*
December 3 Episode of *Black Mirror* to be announced