CUST-2029Y-A: Science Fiction
2020FW - Remote (Peterborough Campus)

Instructor
Instructor: Brent Ryan Bellamy
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Phone Number: NA
Office: NA
Office Hours: By Appointment

Meeting Times
Synchronous Schedule Meeting Time: Monday 11:00am - 1:50pm

Department
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Description
This course introduces the genre of science fiction and science fiction criticism with three distinct, yet related approaches. First, in the first semester, the course focuses on short fiction, and readings are drawn from a variety of online journals and magazines. You will be introduced to modes of science fiction writing as well as the broad-strokes movements of science-fiction writing: from golden age science fiction to cyberpunk. Second, in the winter semester, the course focuses on contemporary developments in science fiction, particularly highlighting novelistic works and anthology collections. This latter half of the course will introduce students to long-form science fiction. Third, throughout the course, you will work on assignments designed to familiarize yourselves with science fiction criticism and with your own interests when it comes to the fantastic, speculative, and weird. These assignments will be collaborative and scaffolded. You will rely on one another's work to collaboratively develop a working bibliography of relevant science fiction criticism. You will also prepare research primers in the first term for use in writing book reviews and essays in the second.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course a you will be able to:

- demonstrate through oral or written explanation that science fiction is not a stable object of study with fixed meanings, but rather a complex set of narratives, tropes, forms, modes, storytelling techniques, practices, and institutions that are each in constant negotiation;
- display improved capacity in reading, writing, oral presentation, and analytical skills;
- explain theoretical concepts and keywords fundamental to science fiction and science fiction criticism;
- prepare a well-researched overview of specified topic with the express purpose of instructing others about your findings and suggestions for further research.

Texts

Required Texts

All articles, stories, and chapters available through Blackboard and Leganto.
Ken Liu, editor and translator, *Invisible Planets*
Grace Dillion, Editor, *Walking the Clouds*
Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower*
One self-selected text to be chosen by you!
Two additional texts to be determined based on discussion and interest in the first term.

Readings

See Blackboard and Leganto for course readings.

Assessments, Assignments and Tests

Fall Term

05% - September 28 - Selected Article Summary
05% - October 12 - Researched Article Summary
05% - November 02 - Research Question and Bibliography
15% - November 30 - Summary of Research, Updated Bibliography, and Updated Question (Research Primer)
15% - No Date - Participation

Winter Term
05% - February 01 - Review Presentation
05% - February 22 - Book Review
30% - April 05 - Essay
15% - No Date - Participation

Grading

The research primer and essay will be grading a rubric that takes into account originality and balance of argument, organization of ideas, clarity and style of writing, and consistency of format. I am not here to be your copy editor. If submitted work has a significant level of major errors (many typos, abundant grammatical mistakes, sentence fragments, and so on), I will return it to you to proofread and correct before I grade it. Academic Skills has an amazing set of resources that I encourage you all to use in each of your courses. Here is their overview of editing your own writing: https://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/how-edit-your-writing. The following sections describe the assignments in more detail. For full instructions please consult Blackboard.

Selected and Researched Article Summaries

You will share the work of developing a collaborative annotated bibliography. By each reading, analyzing, and summarizing one piece of science fiction criticism, you will produce a resource for the whole class. For the first summary you will select from a list of provided articles and chapters. For the second summary you will select an article or chapter from the bibliography of one the provided articles and chapters.

Participation

Calculated each term. In order to receive top marks in participation, attend synchronous sessions, post questions about the course and the readings to the Course Questions Forum, complete assignments in a timely manner, and treat your classmates with respect. This course asks you to be intellectually vulnerable, please take care with each others' thoughts and feelings.

Grade Total by Withdrawal Date

55% by 8 February 2021

Schedule

Fall
September 14 - Introduction to Science Fiction and the Course |
September 21 - Science Fiction and the Pulps |
September 28 - Discussion of Article Summaries | Selected Article Summary **due** |
October 5 - Science Fiction in Paperback |
October 12 – Holiday (Thanksgiving Monday) | Researched Article Summary **due** |
October 19 - Science Fiction goes Mainstream? |
October 26-30 - Reading Week |
November 2 - Presentation of Research Questions and Discussion | Research Question and Bibliography **due** |
November 9 - Trends in 20th Century Science Fiction |
November 16 - New Technologies or New Ways of Thinking? |
November 23 - Science Fiction as Genre and as Mode |
November 30 - Politics of Science Fiction | Summary of Research, Updated Bibliography, and Updated Question **due** |
December 7 - Discussion of Research Primers and Plans for Next Term |

Winter
January 11 - Post-Apocalyptic America |
January 18 - Post-Apocalyptic America |
January 25 - To Be Determined |
February 1 - Self-Selected Reading Presentations | Self-Selected Reading & Review Presentations **due** |
February 8 - Self-Selected Reading Presentations | Book Review **due** |
February 15-19 - Reading Week |
February 22 - Chinese Science Fiction |
March 1 - Chinese Science Fiction |
March 8 - Indigenous Futurism |
March 15- Indigenous Futurism |
March 22 - To Be Determined |
March 29 -To Be Determined |
April 5 - Course Wrap | Essays **due** |

Course Guidelines

Email

Students in this class are required to check their official university email account at least once a day, in case there are any announcements. Course instructors and workshop leaders will endeavor to respond to emails within 48 hours. Students are encouraged to post non-confidential questions to the blackboard discussion boards so that everyone can benefit from having the question addressed.

Course Discussion Boards

Students in this class are required to check the blackboard discussion board at least once a day, in case there are any announcements. Course instructors and workshop leaders will respond more quickly to discussion posts than to emails.

Academic Skills Centre

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the Academic Skills Centre at any stage of the course or writing process. Please visit their website: http://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/.

Flexibility

If it will benefit the class, changes may be made to the syllabus after notice, discussion, and online vote has taken place.

Accommodations

If you who believe you will require accommodations in this course you should contact Student Accessibility Services by visiting their website at student accessibility services. Please feel free to be in touch with your course instructor or workshop leader.

Academic Integrity

The university expects that you will hold to the highest level of academic integrity. The university's standards for academic integrity are outlined in the Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy. For questions, please consult the Academic Integrity FAQ. Because this course requires you to work with each others' ideas and writing, it is of the utmost importance that we recognize who's work we are building upon and make note of it.

Academic Freedom

We all enter this classroom with pre-existing political, ethical, and intellectual commitments. You are all required to engage the material—but you are absolutely not required to agree either with any of the writers we will discuss in whole or in part.

Respect

This course forms a community. It is crucial that we treat each other with the appropriate level of courtesy and respect. No one should be made to feel unwelcome

here. Failure to treat other students with the respect they deserve will severely negatively impact your standing in this course. Please take care with others' feelings and thoughts.

Notice Regarding Remote Participation
Regular participation is central to your success in the course. Courses delivered remotely may invite student participation in scheduled (synchronous) lectures and seminars via web-based platforms, such as Zoom. Students unable to participate fully (i.e., video and audio) or partially (i.e., audio only) should email their instructors at the beginning of term to make alternative arrangements for participation in these synchronous discussions.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism and cheating, is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from failure on an assignment to expulsion from the University. Definitions, penalties, and procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating are set out in Trent University's *Academic Integrity Policy*. You have a responsibility to educate yourself – unfamiliarity with the policy is not an excuse. You are strongly encouraged to visit Trent's Academic Integrity website to learn more: www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity.

Access to Instruction
It is Trent University's intent to create an inclusive learning environment. If a student has a disability and documentation from a regulated health care practitioner and feels that they may need accommodations to succeed in a course, the student should contact the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS) at the respective campus as soon as possible.