

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

C Lit 242-B1 Science Fiction
(Summer 2018: July 9-Aug. 15)

Instructor: Dr. Elli Dehnavi
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Time: MWF 9:00-10:50 a.m.
Place: Tory 1-96
Office Hours: Fridays 8- 9 a.m.
or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: No prerequisite.

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes * No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional * None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>

See explanations below

Document distributed in class

Other (please specify)

* NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes * No

Course Description and Objectives:

This survey course will familiarize students with Science Fiction, the origins and historical developments as well as the major themes and types of the genre. Science fiction is an influential genre of Speculative Fiction that examines the human beings' relationship with science and technology while also addressing contemporary social and political conditions. The main themes consist of time, technology and progress, artificial intelligence, utopias and dystopias, apocalypse and post apocalypse, and alien encounters. This course will focus on canonical SF short stories, novels, and films that have clear political and social concerns. It will also incorporate theoretical and philosophical approaches to discuss the issues of gender and identity, surveillance and terror, democracy and dictatorship, class division and struggle, race and colonialism, politics and the environment. The class format will be a combination of lectures and

discussions. At the end of the course, students will have a general understanding of the genre and its major themes and debates. They will also understand the fundamental social and political issues through science fiction, and will be able to discuss the concepts of gender, race, colonialism, tyranny, oppression, etc. in the novels, films, and short stories we read throughout the semester.

Texts:

Required Texts (Available at the University Bookstore):

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Le Guin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

Masri, Heather. *Science Fiction: Stories and Contexts*.

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*.

*Other required texts will be available online or on eClass. The complete list will be distributed on the first day of class.

Recommended Texts:

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th Edition.

James, Edward and Farah Mendelsohn, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Class Attendance and Participation 15%
Group Presentation, Discussion Questions, and debate 15%
Midterm (30 July 2018) 20%
Creative Project (13 August 2018) 20%
Final Exam (16 August 2018, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.) 30%

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):

A student who has missed a final exam because of incapacitating mental and/or physical illness, severe domestic affliction or for circumstances as described in the University's Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy (including religious belief) may apply for a deferred exam. Please consult the website for more information:

[http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#Examinations_\(Exams\)](http://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=806#Examinations_(Exams))

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Presentation, Discussion Questions, and Debate (15 min): This is a group activity (3 members) on the author(s)/ texts of your choice. Define your topic clearly and keep your presentation focused. You are encouraged to use visual elements for your presentation. Don't forget that your presentation needs an eye-catching title. Each student is required to prepare **2 critical questions** in relation to their presentation and email them to the instructor **one day before** the date of the presentation. The questions must be open-ended and prompt discussion within the class about the text's thematic issues, socio-political context, or formal aspects. Each presenter is responsible to use their discussion questions and lead a group debate following the presentation.

Midterm (75 min): For your midterm, you will have 3 essay questions to answer. The questions will revolve around the texts and discussions we have in class.

Creative Project (in pairs): Find a teammate and work together to create your own adaptation of your favorite story, novel, or film on the syllabus, or develop a creative response to any of the texts discussed in class. You can present your project as a poster, a blog with comics content, a video, etc. You will need to prepare handouts for your classmates so that they can follow the project as you present it in class on August 13th. For your choice of the text and the medium of your response please consult the instructor.

Final Exam (120 min): For the final exam, you will be given 5 essay questions to answer. The questions will revolve around the texts and discussions we have in class.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, regular attendance is mandatory. Any absences from the class will lead to partial or total loss of the participation segment of the course grade (15%), unless the student has a valid excuse for his/her absence (e.g., health problems, serious emergency case, serious domestic issues).

Policy for Late Assignments:

All assignments must be handed in on the stated deadline. Students who consult in advance (at least 3 days before the deadline) with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may be granted an extension (max of 2 days) just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse will be granted for late assignments, half of the mark assigned for this particular work will be deducted. Otherwise, all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed-in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59