

ENGLISH 104: Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Speculative Fiction

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Ray Rondot
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Office: PLC 327

MWF 1-1:50pm
Cascades 202
Winter 2016

Office Hrs: Mondays and Wednesdays: 11:30-12:30pm & 2:30-3:30pm and by appointment

Course Description:

This course will cover American “speculative fiction,” which incorporates science fiction, as well as utopian and dystopian literature. We will explore how individuals have imagined better and worse worlds, including post-nuclear apocalyptic societies and the modern post-9/11 U.S. Because speculative fiction expresses what an author sees as possible, hopes is possible, and fears is possible, it is inherently a political and social critique. We will discuss the causes and effects of these critiques as well as how to interpret them. Using key vocabulary and concepts, such as character, plot, setting, symbolism, narrative, theme, and focalization, among many others, we will explore how to read, interpret, and write about speculative fiction. At the end of the term, you will test out your knowledge and creative skills to craft your own speculative fiction short story.

Course Materials: All books are available at the Duck Store and online.

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

Margaret Atwood, *Handmaid's Tale*

Lois Lowry, *The Giver*

Susanne Collins, *The Hunger Games*

Short Stories and Essays available on Canvas. Please print all Canvas files and bring to class.

Course Policies and Guidelines

Access

If you have a disability (documented or undocumented) that may affect your ability to participate in this class, please see me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements for your full access to all classroom activities. If you require additional help for this course in any way, please let me know so that we can work together to get you the help you need.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted for this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrasing) must be properly documented. Please refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is standard practice. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Attendance

Discussing fiction in a group setting is vital to critical learning and thus *attendance is mandatory*. Of course, emergencies happen. Consequently, you will not be penalized for missing up to 3 lecture sessions. **For each additional absence, whatever the reason, your final course grade will be lowered by 4%.** Any absence after six missed classes *will* result in failing the course. To be considered present, you must show up on time, stay the full period, and stay awake and engaged. **Two late arrivals or early departures will be counted as 1 absence.** If you are late or absent, you are responsible for collecting any assignments you may have missed as well as changes to the syllabi announced in class. Check Canvas and email frequently, as I will post some materials there.

Observance of Religious Holidays

Students who observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with the teacher.

Late work

If you do not attend class on a day when an assignment is due, you should make prior arrangements with me. All work is due at the beginning of class or during the specified time on the syllabus. If you fail to turn in a written assignment, you can turn it in for an additional 2 days (or 48 hours), but it will automatically be lowered by a full letter grade. After this 2 day period, I will not accept late work. In addition, you cannot make up in-class assignments, peer reviews, or quizzes.

Electronic Etiquette

All forms of technology* are not allowed in class. Please silence and put phones away during class time. I have the right to count you as absent if you engage in any of these activities during class time. Laptops are only allowed for students who have unique needs or circumstances that necessitate their use.

*Note: electronic translators for ESL students are permitted.

Instructor Contact

Please feel free to come to office hours at any time for any reason (all office hours are drop-in). You can also schedule an appointment with me when needed. When you have a quick question or if you feel more comfortable in the virtual world, I am also happy to engage in conversation via email. I **strongly prefer** that you email me rather than “message” me on Canvas since these communications easily get lost.

Canvas Requirements

Navigating a new digital platform can be challenging, but the more knowledgeable you are about Canvas, the more helpful it will be. Please familiarize yourself with how Canvas works ASAP. If you can't find a reading or assignment or if you have any questions about how it works, ask me or CMET immediately. Technology issues with Canvas are not an excuse for late work.

You are required to change your notification settings in Canvas so that you receive announcements and messages from me. In the upper right corner, click “Settings.” On the left side, click “Notifications.” On this page, make sure that the tabs labeled “Announcement” and “Conversation Message” are marked “ASAP.” You can choose to receive other types of updates on an immediate, daily, weekly or limited basis.

Students who experience gender-based violence

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, coercion, and/or sexual harassment is encouraged to seek help. You can visit <https://safe.uoregon.edu> for information, and I also encourage you to contact Renae DeSautel, Sexual Violence Response & Support Services Coordinator, desautel@uoregon.edu. She will keep your information confidential. In addition, the UO Ombudsperson Bruce MacAllister (541 346-6400 or ombuds@uoregon.edu) can provide confidential support and assistance. You can also contact any pastor, priest, imam, or other member of the clergy. All of these people, including all UO faculty members, have an obligation not to reveal your name or other specific information without your permission, although faculty members do have to provide “general information” (nothing that identifies anyone) that will help us create a safer campus. As your instructor, I can also reassign work partners and make other accommodations.

Assignments

Final Term Grade

Participation	10%
Discussion Facilitation	10%
Reading Quizzes	10%
Final Exam	20%
Close Reading Kit	20%
Creative Short Story Rough Draft	5%
Peer Review	5%
Creative Short Story Final Draft	20%

Participation

Discussion is a vital aspect of this course. You should come to each class prepared to speak about the readings and your reactions and to be respectful of others' opinions.

	A	B	C	D/F
Large Group Discussion	<p>You frequently participate voluntarily</p> <p>Your contributions are thoughtful and respectful</p> <p>You listen well and make space for other classmates to speak</p>	<p>You occasionally participate voluntarily</p> <p>You listen thoughtfully and are willing to participate if called on</p>	<p>You rarely participate voluntarily, but you will if called on</p> <p>You may have rare instances of D/F expectations</p>	<p>You are often distracting or inappropriate during large group discussion (sleeping, intentional rudeness, using your phone, etc.)</p>
Small Group Discussion	<p>You are engaged, interested, and show initiative during small groups</p>	<p>You are interested and on-topic during small groups</p>	<p>You are occasionally off topic; your discussion is often driven by only doing the bare minimum to address questions</p>	<p>You are frequently off topic, uninvolved, or distracting to other group members</p>
Attendance / Preparedness	<p>You are always punctual and well prepared</p> <p>You always bring your textbook and have completed the readings and homework</p>	<p>You are frequently punctual and prepared</p> <p>You usually bring the textbook and have done the readings and homework</p>	<p>You are occasionally late or unprepared</p> <p>You occasionally don't bring the textbook or complete readings</p>	<p>You are frequently absent, late, or unprepared</p> <p>Rarely bring textbook or complete readings/assignments</p>

Discussion Facilitation

Every day for which there is an assigned reading, there will be 2-3 student discussion leaders who will facilitate 15 minutes of discussion. Student Facilitators should ask questions, draw attention to important moments in the text, and practice active engagement with peers. Student Facilitators may provide additional materials as needed (i.e. a short video or excerpt from a reading, powerpoint, etc.). We will go over specific guidelines and practice skillful facilitation during Weeks 1-2.

Reading Quizzes

Occurring at least once a week (I will not specify which day), these quizzes allow you to show that you are keeping up with the readings **with thoughtful intent**. Some quizzes will ask you to reflect on what you have read while others ask for specific examples or ideas, which you will not be able to merely guess. I will give the class between 8-10 quizzes throughout the term, some in-class and some take home. You cannot make up quizzes or do quizzes via email on days when you are absent—no exceptions.

Close Reading Kit

This assignment asks you to *deconstruct* a story, analyze its various parts, and then *reconstruct* its meaning. This won't be an easy task, but should aid you in your ability to use course terminology with purpose, and help you understand how close analysis alters and enriches your understanding of a story's meaning. This assignment will involve several layers of analysis, from outlining a story's characters and plot point, to analyzing the story's key themes and motifs. More details and rubric to follow.

Creative Short Story

Using the course key terms, discussions, and readings, your final project for this course will be to create your own speculative short story. More details and rubric to follow.

Essay Checklist

The following list is meant to assist you in formatting your essays to my specifications. I will deduct **3%** for each specification (except the page limit) your essay fails to meet. If your essay fails to meet the page limit, it cannot receive a grade higher than a C-. This may look long and complicated, but most of these steps are fairly simple and should become routine.

- 1) Meet the minimum page limit specified in the essay handout.
- 2) One-inch margins (Note: some versions of Word have a default setting of 1.25". Please change this.)
- 3) Double Spaced
- 4) In *Times* or *Times New Roman* 12-point font
- 5) Upper left corner of 1st page:
 - a. your name
 - b. assignment description (ex. Creative Short Story)
 - c. course number (i.e. ENG 104 Winter 2016)
 - d. my name (Sarah Ray Rondot)
 - e. date
- 6) Include a relevant, original title, centered at the top of the first page in 12pt font
- 7) Last name and page number in upper right corner of each additional page. On Word, you can do this by selecting "insert page number" and then typing your name next to the numeral (e.g., Smith 4)
- 8) Document sources & use correct MLA citation
- 9) Proofread and spell-check
- 10) Remove all extra spaces between paragraphs and after the title. The paper should be uniformly double spaced. Make sure this is the case by looking at your program's formatting settings.
- 11) Name your files using your last name and the assignment, for example: rondot2.1.docx.
- 12) Submit to Canvas as a **WORD DOCUMENT** only (.doc or .docx). I cannot accept files in other formats (like pages, notebook, google docs, etc.)
- 13) If turning in an assignment in hard copy, **staple** the pages together.

Extra Credit Paper

Choose from the following list of science fiction books to read on your own time. Write a short summary (1 page) using at least 3 of our course's key terms. Next, write a 2-3 page critical reading of the novel. Due on Canvas anytime before Monday of Week 9.

Book List: *Divergent*, *Herland*, *1984*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *V for Vendetta*, *Oryx and Crake*, *Egalia's Daughters*, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Class and Reading Schedule*

Week 1: Introduction to Speculative Fiction

Date	Agenda & Readings	Assignments Due
Monday 1/4	Syllabus, Introductions	Demographic Questionnaire
Wednesday 1/6	What is Speculative Fiction?; Presentation Sign-Up Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery" (1948)	
Friday 1/8	Critical Reading Ray Bradbury, "The Veldt" (1950)	Canvas Account picture and set-up

Week 2: Story and Plot

Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Monday 1/11	John Wyndham, "The Wheel" (1952) Jonathan Culler, "Narrative"	
Wednesday 1/13	Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1952)	
Friday 1/15	Ursula Leguin, "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (1973)	

Week 3: Character and Characterization

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 1/18	CLASS AND OFFICE HOURS CANCELLED for Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
Wednesday 1/20	Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds" (1983) Joseph Kelly, "Narration and Point of View"	
Friday 1/22	Octavia Butler, "The Evening and the Morning and the Night" (2001)	

Week 4: Character and Characterization

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 1/25	<i>Brave New World</i> Chapters 1-4	
Wednesday 1/27	<i>Brave New World</i> Chapters 5-7	
Friday 1/29	<i>Brave New World</i> Chapters 8-10	

Week 5: Narrative and Perspective

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 2/1	<i>Brave New World</i> Chapters 11-14	
Wednesday 2/3	<i>Brave New World</i> Chapters 15-end	
Friday 2/5	CLASS CANCELLED	Close Reading Kit Due by midnight

Week 6: Narrative and Focalization

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 2/8	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 1-2	
Wednesday 2/10	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 3-8	
Friday 2/12	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 9-15	

Week 7: Theme and Symbol

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 2/15	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 16-29	
Wednesday 2/17	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 30-38	
Friday 2/19	<i>Handmaid's Tale</i> Chapters 39-end	
Sunday 2/21		Rough Draft of Short Story due on Canvas by 5pm

Week 8: Young Adult Speculative Fiction

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 2/22	<i>The Giver</i> Chapters 1-8	
Wednesday 2/24	<i>The Giver</i> Chapters 9-14	
Friday 2/26	<i>The Giver</i> Chapters 15-end	Peer Review Due

Week 9: Contemporary Speculative Fiction

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 2/29	<i>Hunger Games</i> Chapters 1-7	
Wednesday 3/2	<i>Hunger Games</i> Chapters 8-13	
Friday 3/4	<i>Hunger Games</i> Chapters 14-18	

Week 10

Date	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Monday 3/7	<i>Hunger Games</i> Chapters 19-23	
Wednesday 3/9	<i>Hunger Games</i> Chapters 24-end	
Friday 3/11	CLASS CANCELLED – extended office hours 12-3pm in the Marche Café	Final Short Story Due on Canvas by midnight

*I reserve the right to update and make changes to this syllabus. It is your responsibility to keep up with all changes made to the syllabus, whether or not you attend class.

Final Exam: Tuesday, March 15th 2:45 – 4:45pm