

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

2019-2020 C-LIT 210 A1: Cyberliterature
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Jennifer Quist
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Time: T, Th 09:30-10:50
Place: Humanities Centre 2-14
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00-12:00
or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: none

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

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

Yes No, not needed

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

Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

This course surveys digital media, both the historical and the contemporary, in terms of formats, trends, narratology, and cultural and theoretical contexts. These media include videogames, interactive fiction, fan fiction, web series, microblogging, online publishing, fan-subbing, online folklore, etc. Analyses focus on story, discourse, storyworlds, and users' interactions with them. At the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- analyse and interrogate digital media beyond personal preference through critical literary analysis.
- navigate and contribute to discussions of ongoing evolutions of concepts of authorship and copyright.
- situate digital literature within cultural, theoretical, and global contexts.
- Present literary analyses orally, visually, and in writing.

Course Format: The objectives of this course will be learned from a combination of lectures, class discussions, student presentations, assigned readings, and audiovisual materials. Students will need access to Steam and Netflix during the course.

Texts:

Arkane Studios. *Prey*. 2017 (available on Steam)

Mateas, Michael and Andrew Stern. *Façade*. 2006. (free download)
<https://facade.en.uptodown.com>

Ryan, Marie-Laure. “The Interactive Onion: Layers of User Participation in Digital Narrative Texts.” *New Narratives: Stories and Storytelling in the Digital Age*, edited by Ruth Page and Bronwen Thomas. University of Nebraska Press, 2011, pp. 35-62.
<http://www.marilaur.info/onion.htm>

Slade, David. “Bandersnatch.” *Black Mirror*. 2018 (available on Netflix)

Spielberg, Steven. *Ready Player One*. 2018 (available online from the University of Alberta library)

Other texts, films and games will be announced or made available on eclass as appropriate.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 3, 2019

Add/Delete Date: September 16, 2019

50% Withdrawal Date: October 3, 2019

Withdrawal Date: November 29, 2019

Last Day of Class: December 5, 2019

Final Exam Date: Not Applicable – Final Paper due Dec 19

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Attendance & Participation	20%	ongoing
Written Review (500-750 words)	10%	Oct 1
Video Review (4-6 minutes)	10%	Oct 29
Midterm Exam	15%	Nov 7

Group Presentation (15-17 minutes)	20%	Dec 3 &5
Final Paper (1800-2000 words)	25%	Dec 19

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Guidelines for assignments will be provided in greater detail on eclass.

Attendance and Participation (20%) - Class participation will be assessed based on students' contributions to in-class discussions. To make contributions possible and meaningful, it is expected that assigned readings, viewings, and gaming will be undertaken before class. Attendance will be recorded, and if absences exceed more than the one allowable unexcused absence, 1% of the mark will be deducted per ensuing incident.

Written Review (10%) – A 500-750 word review of a work of digital media is assigned to promote engagement with the texts and to develop critical review skills beyond expressing a personal preference which may transfer to real world academic, journalistic, and online activities. Sample professional reviews will be provided in class to serve as loose models.

Video Review (10%) – In a 4 to 6 minute video review to be posted on YouTube.com, students will expand the skills developed in their written reviews to online video presentation of a different work of digital media. This format allows for relevant visuals of students' choosing to be combined with student commentary. Commentary must run the length of the video.

Midterm (15%) – An in-class mid-term exam on **Nov 7** will assess students' grasp of digital media terminology, its historical development, key theoretical approaches, details of assigned texts, etc. Since there is no single textbook for this new and developing field, attendance in class lectures is essential for preparation for this exam.

Group Presentations (20%) - In groups of two (or three if needed), students will build upon skills developed in written and video reviews to make in-class, in-depth critical presentations of works of digital media. Presentations are scheduled for **Dec 3 and 5**. Groups will be randomly assigned to either date. Presentation topics must be approved by the instructor by email by **Tuesday Nov 14**. Presentations will not only report and review but will also draw connections to larger cultural and theoretical contexts. All presentations will be accompanied by a slide show. Videos may be played but only with the audio turned off and a group member speaking as the clip plays. Slide shows are to be uploaded to eclass in PPT or Google Slides formats by 11pm on the day before the presentation is to be given. No bibliography is required but be prepared to support claims by naming sources if asked. The presentation portion will be no longer than 15 minutes in length, followed by a roughly 2 minute question period. Pacing of presentation time is a learning outcome of this project, therefore meeting as a group to

rehearse and establish proper timing is vital.

Final Paper (25%): The final paper takes the place of a final exam for this class and is due on eclass **AND on paper** at the instructor's office (Arts 446-C) during our assigned final exam period, **9-11am, Thursday Dec 19**. Essay topics must be submitted to the instructor for approval no later than **Thursday Nov 21**. The finished essay, including a "Works Cited" page prepared in MLA format, will be 1800-2000 words in length.

Required Notes:

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

Student Responsibilities:

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](#) 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.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

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](#).

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that the use of on-line translation to complete assignments constitutes a form of cheating as the student's own understanding and work is therefore not reflected. Also, students in language 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 Behaviour.

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](#).

Sexual Violence Policy:

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

Territorial Statement:

“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.” (~~from the beginning of the Calendar~~).

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.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.

In this course, if absences exceed more than the one allowable unexcused absence, 1% of the attendance and participation mark will be deducted per ensuing incident.

Policy for Late Assignments:

All assignments must be submitted to eclass on the dates specified in the course outline. Additionally, the final paper must be submitted on paper. Students who consult with the instructor in advance regarding circumstances preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Such an extension will be granted only once throughout the course without penalty. In the case of additional late excused assignments, half of the mark assigned for the particular work will be deducted. 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.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

Accessibility Resources: (1 – 80 SUB)

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

The Academic Success Centre: (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

The Centre for Writers: (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

Health and Wellness Support: There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

Office of the Student Ombuds:

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

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

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