

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

**2015-2016**

**C LIT 242 B1: Science Fiction**  
(Winter 2016)

Instructor: Elli Dehnavi  
Office: 446-C, Old Arts Building  
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Time: MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.  
Place: Tory 3-65  
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**Course Prerequisite:** N/A

**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 and novels 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 and short stories we read throughout the semester.

**Required Texts** (Available at the University Bookstore):

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*.  
Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*  
Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*.  
Le Guin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness*.  
Lem, Stanislaw. *Solaris*.  
Well, H. G. *The War of the Worlds*.  
Zeh, Juli. *The Method*.

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

**Grade Distribution (see "Explanatory Notes"):**

Class Participation (ongoing)	20%
Presentation	10%
Midterm: Friday, 12 February 2016	20%
2 Short Research Papers (2x10% each)	20%
-First paper due Monday, 22 February 2016	
-Second paper due Monday, 4 April 2016	
Final Exam: Thursday, 21 April 2016 (Confirm details on Bear Tracks)	30%

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

Presentation: This is a group activity. Form a three-member team, choose a novel, a short story, or an article from our reading list, sign up for it in class, and prepare a 12-minute presentation and 3 discussion questions for that session. In your presentation you should introduce the text and discuss its major themes and concepts. You are encouraged to use visual elements for your presentation. Don't forget that your presentation needs an eye-catching title.

- Please keep in mind that you cannot write your research papers on the novel or short story you have selected for your presentation.

Midterm:

For your midterm, you will have 3 essay questions and you should answer 2 of them. The questions will revolve around the texts and discussions we have in class.

2 Response Papers (4-5 pages each)

Each short research paper (MLA style) presents a thoughtful analysis of relationships, themes, motifs, and/or literary techniques in a novel or short story. You should base

your argument upon specific details from the text, but you must do more than offer an accurate description of content.

- Besides your primary text(s), you need a minimum of 3 secondary sources.

### Final Exam

For the final exam, you will be given 4 essay questions and you should answer 3 of them. The questions will revolve around the texts and discussions we have in class.

### **Required Notes:**

“Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) 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

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> ) and avoid any behaviour which 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 safe and free of discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels this policy has been or 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 directs 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 student ombudservice (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>).

Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at

<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110> .

### ***Academic Honesty:***

**All students** should consult the information provided by the [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) 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 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. Recorded material 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 23.3(1) and 23.5.6 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**, 20 % of the grade is given to attendance and participation in the class discussions.

***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 an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension just **one time** throughout the course with no penalty.

Late assignments will be penalized at 5% per day. After the period of 5 days (from the due date) no assignments will be accepted.

***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 Specialized Support &

Disability Services, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB [www.sds.ualberta.ca](http://www.sds.ualberta.ca) ).

**Grading:**

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below (“**MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale**”). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

**“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+	95-100%	4.0	<b>Excellent:</b> Superior performance showing understanding and knowledge of subject matter far exceeding expectations.
A	90-94%	4.0	<b>Excellent:</b> Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	86-89%	3.7	<b>Excellent:</b> Clearly above average performance with complete knowledge of subject matter.
B+	82-85%	3.3	<b>Good</b>
B	75-81%	3.0	<b>Good:</b> average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	70-74%	2.7	<b>Good</b>
C+	66-69%	2.3	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Basic understanding of the subject matter
C	61-65%	2.0	<b>Satisfactory</b>
C-	58-60%	1.7	<b>Satisfactory</b>
D+	55-57%	1.3	<b>Poor:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
D	50-54%	1.0	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
F	0-49%	0.0	<b>Failure:</b> Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements

**Do You Need Support for Writing?**

- Centre for Writers is a free, one-on-one peer tutoring service available to all students at the University of Alberta. They tutor for every level of proficiency, for all disciplines, and have resources to assist ESL/EAL writing concerns. Do not hesitate to get help from them. <http://www.c4w.arts.ualberta.ca>
- Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University for work on grammar, writing, and citation. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.