Liberal Studies 2212-115  
Literature and Culture: Science Fiction  
Spring 2018

Dr. Aaron A. Toscano (atoscano)  
Office: Fretwell 280F  
Office hours: Mon. & Wed. 1:00 – 2:00 pm (and by appt.)

Classroom: Fretwell 113  
Time: Mon. & Wed. 3:30 – 4:45 pm

https://clas-pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/

Course Description and Purpose

This class explores science fiction as a product of the culture and time period from which it comes. Students can also expect the course to demonstrate how science and technology play a role in these often-speculative works. Science fiction is not simply a prediction of the future; instead, this genre critically examines the social, economic, and aesthetic conditions of the author’s culture. In order to understand both the texts and the cultural contexts, we will read works from a variety of authors. Viewing films and video games related to this exciting genre will also be part of the class.

Texts and Materials

Required:  
Boulle, Pierre. Planet of the Apes. 1963. [any edition...not the movies.]  
Wells, H. G. Time Machine. 1895.  
Access to Canvas

Expectations

I expect students to be prepared when they come to class. There is quite a bit of reading in this course, but it is manageable if you plan your school-work-life needs. Students should have read the assigned reading prior to coming to class. Also, to get the most out of this course, students should read and take good notes on the reading. I will have a website devoted to this class, and Canvas will have additional information. This is a large lecture class, so it is vital that you follow along with the syllabus and class website. Do not expect detailed notes about the readings via e-mail. In addition to the readings, tests, and exams, students must post 250-word reflections weekly about a specific topic or the reading in general on Canvas. Students can expect responses at least once (but probably more times) a semester, so make sure you post reflections. Reflections are not right or wrong; instead, they are chances for you to write out your thoughts and have a record—this is vital for developing critical thinking faculties. Remember, you are here to learn. This course, specifically, and LBST requirements, in general, are supposed to help you expand your thinking. These courses are not to tell you what to think—that’s up to you. My goal is to demonstrate how ideas, discourse, and society provide filters for how we understand broader cultural ideology. Liberal studies is a discipline that attempts to foster learning not for any specific job but to be an informed (perhaps, well-rounded) citizen. The critical thinker and informed citizen do not look to be spoon fed ideas. He or she strives to ask appropriate questions about topics or situations or life itself. However, you should leave with more questions than answers and learn to cope with ambiguity. You are entering a conversation. These questions are ways to discover meaning and meanings related to the knowledge and tools cultures produce. Our bias in this course is on American and Western cultures.

This 3-credit course requires 3 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction and 6 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks. Out-of-class work may include but is not limited to: required reading, research, assignments, and studying for tests and exams. The above outside-of-class work expectations are derived from Academic Affairs: http://provost.uncc.edu/policies/academic-calendar (see III. Definitions).

Work Requirements

In order to assess how well students understand the readings and class lectures, students will take two tests, a Midterm Exam, and a Final Exam. If all goes according to plan, those tests and exams will be on Canvas, and students will take them
wherever they have Internet access, so we won’t meet as a class on those days. However, we will meet as a class the day your syllabus quiz is due (taken on Canvas): 01/31/2018. Your Final Exam is also on Canvas and will be on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

Grading Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests, Exams, Posts</th>
<th>pts.</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>A= 90 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>B= 80 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>C= 70 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>D= 60 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>F= Below 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canvas Posts</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please notice that the Canvas Posts are worth 40% of your overall grade. Not doing them isn’t a good strategy to pass this class.

Canvas Access and Late Work

Although you are not turning anything in as a hardcopy, I expect you will post the reflections by 11:00 pm on Wednesdays when the Canvas posts are due. No late posts will be accepted. Please be aware that any online system may “time out” randomly. It is your responsibility to make sure your posts were not lost. Therefore, after you post to Canvas, you need to check to make sure your post is up. My advice is to type your post in Microsoft Word and then copy and paste the text into the Canvas box. Do not upload the Word Document. Typing your post directly into the Canvas box is risky because you may lose your post because of a glitch. It is better to word process your response, save it, and then paste it into the Canvas box. Students are responsible for making sure they have access to the Internet (at home, on campus, on a handheld device, etc.). Get on Canvas, and make sure you have reliable access. You do not want to find out you do not have a good connection the day of a test. If you are absent, follow along with the syllabus and webpage or get class notes from another student. Do not expect me to e-mail the class notes to you. Of course, never e-mail me and ask, “so…like, Dr. Toscano, man…did we…like…you know…do anything the other day in class?”

Attendance

I will not take attendance. We may over 100 students, so monitoring who is here and who is not wastes valuable class time. It is very important that you attend every class in order to keep up with the discussion. YOU WILL NOT DO WELL IN THIS CLASS IF YOU MISS CLASS. Class discussion is important because it reinforces the material you read and helps explain the possible cultural context important for finding meaning in an author’s work. Author assumptions are not always obvious on a first reading. What I have noticed from past semesters is that students who miss class also forget what is coming up—readings, exams, etc. DO NOT EXPECT A TEST OR EXAM MAKEUP. Ultimately, your success in this course lies with your decision to commit to the course requirements and appropriately balance school-work-life needs. There are no such things as excused absences. Only students participating in UNC Charlotte sponsored activities (with the proper documentation) will be allowed to change test or exam times. I will ask you to request a meeting with the Dean of Students if you have situations that you feel should allow you an exception to these course policies. Cars break down, parking is limited, students get sick, and traffic is brutal, but class still happens. Please get to class on time, and, if you are late, be courteous and do not disturb the class with your noise. Also, if you have to leave class, do so quietly.

Academic Integrity

All UNC Charlotte students have the responsibility to be familiar with and to observe the requirements of The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity. This Code forbids cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials (such as Library books on reserve), and complicity in academic dishonesty (helping others to violate the Code). Any further specific requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor, and are also binding on the students in this course. Students who violate the Code can be punished to the extent of being permanently expelled from UNC Charlotte and having this fact
recorded on their official transcripts. The normal penalty is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to "F." If you do not have a copy of the Code, you can view it on UNC Charlotte's Academic Integrity website at http://integrity.uncc.edu/. Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty they become aware of to the course instructor who is responsible for dealing with them.

If you try to pass off any work in full or part as your own without proper credit being given to the original source—you will receive an 'F' in this course. If you use non-sanctioned resources (e.g., other classmates) to complete tests and exams, you will receive an 'F' in this course.

In addition to the above identification of Academic Dishonesty, students should be aware of technology-mediated concerns related to Academic Integrity. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "integrity" as "The condition of having no part or element taken away or wanting; undivided or unbroken state; material wholeness, completeness, entirety." A second definition states that integrity means, "The condition of not being marred or violated; unimpaired or uncorrupted condition; original perfect state; soundness." Therefore, anything that draws students' attention away from course activities and goals is a violation of academic integrity because it corrupts the soundness and condition of learning. For instance, engaging in critical thinking/awareness is a sound, perfect state activity for this course; on the other hand, devoting attention to Facebook, texting/messaging, non-class-related Web surfing or e-mailing, etc. violates or corrupts the learning goals of this course. Although we may point to the Internet in general and social media sites specifically in our discussions of 21st-Century communication, engaging oneself in them during class to "catch up with friends" diverts your attention and may be distracting to members of this class. This violation is as serious as plagiarism and will result in an 'F' in participation (Canvas Posts) the first time and an 'F' in this course for a subsequent violation. This syllabus section is your warning. Yes, it is obvious when you are using laptops and handheld devices to take notes or when you use them to corrupt the learning environment.

You will also receive an 'F' in the course for other academic integrity violations. Do not expect another warning—this is it. Please see me if you need further clarification regarding cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, or complicity in academic dishonesty. Again, so there's no confusion, you will most likely fail the course if you violate any part of the academic integrity code.

Instructional Modifications

Students who have a condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with professionals to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. Please inform me about circumstances as soon as possible. I do not need specifics, but I do need to know what accommodations to make. For information and assistance, contact the Disabilities Resource Center: http://ds.uncc.edu/.

Important Dates and Administrative Information

The syllabus schedule on the last two pages has important dates for readings, tests, and exams. Students are responsible for not only knowing course deadlines but also knowing UNC Charlotte deadlines (drop/add, billing, vacation, etc.). Please visit the following link for the registrar's calendar: http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendar.

Statement of Academic Freedom

I strongly encourage students to use class as a place for free inquiry and intellectual growth. Although we as a class will not always agree or be comfortable with the views of others, every student has the right to his or her own tastes and convictions. I promise to be fair and always support your right to look at the world from your own position, but I encourage all students to branch out and consider multiple perspectives. If you think texts have single, objectively reasoned meanings...well, you are about to get a radical new perspective in this course. Our biases filter our interpretations of the world around us. Family, culture, media, law, religion, etc. influence how we perceive the world. Your perspectives might be similar to those close to you, but your worldview is not universally held. I will not tolerate any harassment or abuse (emotional or physical) or any instance where others adversely affect students' learning. Remember, harassment is not just verbal—I will not tolerate harassing or abusive posts.
Inclement Weather/Building Issues

Some buildings can have HVAC problems. Occasionally, the powers that be close buildings and classes are canceled because it is too brutally hot to remain inside. If a building related “issue” cancels class, continue to keep up with the class webpage, readings, and Canvas posts. The library has lots of space and many computers. We will pick up where we left off on the syllabus when we return to class. This also goes for inclement weather.

Right to Make Changes

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or to make our lives easier.

Schedule for Readings and Assignments

(Have readings and assignments done before class. Have Canvas posts up by 11:00 pm on Wednesdays.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction on how to think about literature from a cultural studies perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 10</td>
<td>Asimov, Isaac. “Cult of Ignorance” (1980) on Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary for discussing literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15*</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—University Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heinlein, Robert A. “All You Zombies—” (1959) [Anthology pp. 324-336]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*January 16th: Big day for the semester:
- Last day to register. If you’re not registered, you will not be allowed to continue in the course.
- 2nd Cancellation for non-payment 11:59 PM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Marinetti, F. T. “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marinetti, F. T. “Destruction of Syntax—Imagination without strings—Words-in-Freedom” (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marinetti, F. T. “War, the World’s Only Hygiene” (excerpt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>Forster, E. M. “The Machine Stops” (1909) [Anthology pp. 50-78]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lafferty, R. A. “Slow Tuesday Night” (1965) [Anthology pp. 359-366]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>Wells, H. G. <em>Time Machine</em>. (1895)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>Wells, H. G. <em>Time Machine</em>. (1895)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wells, H. G. “The Star” (1897) [Anthology pp. 39-49]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syllabus Quiz—We meet for class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>Leiber, Fritz. “Coming Attraction” (1950) [Anthology pp. 221-233]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>Test 1—No class meeting. Take the Test on Canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Boulle, Pierre. <em>Planet of the Apes</em> (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>Boulle, Pierre. <em>Planet of the Apes</em> (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Clarke, Arthur C. “The Sentinel” (1951) [Anthology pp. 241-249]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tenn, William. “The Liberation of Earth” (1953) [Anthology pp. 266-282]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>Weinbaum, Stanley G. “A Martian Odyssey” (1934) [Anthology pp. 136-159]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
February 26  
Tiptree, James, Jr. “And I Awoke and Found Me Here on the Cold Hill’s Side” (1972) [Anthology pp. 516-524]  

February 28  
Midterm Exam (slightly cumulative)—No class meeting. Take the Exam on Canvas.

March 5th – March 11th: No Class—Spring Break

March 12  

March 14  

March 19*  

March 21  
Delany, Samuel R. “Aye, and Gomorrah…” (1967) [Anthology pp. 405-414]  
Russ, Joanna. “When It Changed” (1972) [Anthology pp. 507-515]

*March 19th: Last day to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade (and retain other courses)*

March 26  
Merril, Judith. “That Only a Mother” (1948) [Anthology pp. 211-220]  

March 28  

April 2  
Dick, Philip K. “We Can Remember it for You Wholesale.” (1966) [Anthology pp. 385-404]

April 4  
Test 2—No class meeting. Take the Test on Canvas.

April 9  

April 11*  

April 16  

April 18  
Cadigan, Pat. “Pretty Boy Crossover” (1986) [Anthology 587-597]  

April 23  

April 25  

April 30  
Last Day of Class

May 2  
Reading Day—No class meetings

May 9 Wednesday  
Final Exam (slightly cumulative)—On Canvas 8:00 am—11:00pm. You’ll have two and a half hours.  
https://registrar.uncc.edu/sites/registrar.uncc.edu/files/media/Spring%202018%20FE%20Table.pdf

Commencement May 11th & 12th