

Fall 2009

English 270 Science Fiction

Section 3239 Online,

Instructor: Dr. Marianne Boretz

Email address: mboretz@msn.com

Office Hours: I will usually reply to messages within 24 hours.

Course Description:

This course presents science fiction as literature, with emphasis on the use of mythology, science fiction by scientists and non-scientists, politically and philosophically oriented science fiction, and science fiction as fantasy and escape literature.

Required Materials:

We will read short stories and novellas by past and present writers available on the Internet. In addition, I have assigned the 3 novels--full length works of fiction-- listed below:

1. Arthur C. Clarke. *Childhood's End*.
2. Karen Traviss. *City of Pearl*
3. Philip K. Dick. *The Man in the High Castle*.

Recommended:

Advice on writing about literature and "rules" for formal writing are available at many different Internet locations. I will supply you with links. But if you prefer to hold a textbook in your hands, here are two of the best:

- Sylvan Barnett & William Cain, [A Short Guide to Writing about Literature](#), New York: Pearson-Longman, 2006, or any similar textbook from taking English 102 (or an equivalent course).
 - Diana Hacker, [A Writer's Reference](#), 6th Edition, New York: Bedford, 2006, or any equivalent handbook.
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Grades:

The particulars of the work described below will be explained in the detailed syllabus at the course site. I will use the following point system to determine your final grade:

- 14 weekly Discussions at 20 points each: 280 points;
- 14 Weekly Reviews at 20 points each: 280 points;
- Research Assignment: 40 points
- Midterm Paper: 100 points;
- Final Exam: 200 points
- Total number of points: 900.

- For an A you need 90-100% of the total points: minimum points for an A = 810 points;
- For a B, 80-89%: minimum = 720;
- For a C, 70-79%: minimum = 630;
- For a D, 60-69%: minimum = 540.

Academic Honesty:

Working together is good! I encourage you to work together to enhance your engagement with these materials. The primary tool for this is the discussion section. This course should be collaborative rather than competitive.

However, all written work must be your own or properly referenced. In any written work, including discussion, if you directly copy or paraphrase another writer--whether professional or student--without acknowledging your source, you will receive a zero for that assignment with no chance of re-write. Here's a link to a major university with instructions on how to avoid [plagiarism](#).

Please note also that the LACC English/ESL Department maintains a Writing Center (JH 302) where you can get tutorial help if necessary.

Proofreading:

This is a college English class. While our discussions can be informal, shoddy (overly careless) work impedes understanding and will lose points.

Due Dates:

All work is due at 11:30 pm of the date specified. Late work may lose points. Students who add the class during Week One will be given a make up option for Discussion 1. Otherwise, no late discussions will be accepted.

Departmental Student Learning Outcomes for English 270:

By the end of the class, students will be able to write a 4-6 page analysis on a work of science fiction that employs the themes and theories that were covered in class, demonstrating research and MLA citation skills.

This analysis will

- show an understanding of science fiction and fantasy in literary, historical and cultural contexts
 - demonstrate critical thinking skills and literary appreciation by applying theories of literary criticism to personal interpretation
 - use examples from the readings for support of argument
 - produce a well-written and well developed essay with a strong thesis in the introduction and support in subsequent paragraphs
 - use research from library indices and online resources, properly cited and documented
 - use grammar appropriate to academic writing
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Special Needs:

Students with a verified disability who may need accommodations for this class are encouraged to notify the instructor. Also, request a letter from the Office of Special Services (x 2270) verifying your disability and stating the needed accommodations. All information will remain confidential.

Important Dates:

Last day to add a class	September 12
Last day to drop a class with a full refund	September 14
Last day to drop a class without a "W" on record	September 27 online
Last day to drop a class with a "W" on record	November 22 online