

Fall 2021

ENGLISH 4716/5716: Science Fiction/Fantasy

Thematic title: Classics of Science Fiction

TTh 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Wehr Life Science 108

Professor Gerry Canavan

Marquette Hall 244

gerry.canavan@marquette.edu

Office Phone: 414-288-6860

Office Hours: TTh 12:30 PM – 2 PM or by appointment

This course engages the subfield of science fiction studies by looking at widely recognized classics in the genre from the postwar period in the United States, beginning in 1945 and running through to the present. Some of these texts exist within the hybrid genre sometimes called “slipstream,” variously read by different audiences as both genre fiction and “serious literature”; others fall much more squarely within the oft-derided category of “pop culture.” We will study these texts alongside scholarship that theorizes both genre classification in general and science fiction in particular, and devote particular attention to how to think and write about works that may not fit comfortably within the prestige economy of traditional literary studies. We will also explore how periodization and canonization operate in literary studies, as well as explore how texts intended for consumption by mass-market audiences can help us index the hopes, anxieties, and social transformations of a given cultural moment.

LEARNING GOALS

Marquette Core Curriculum: Cognition, Memory and Intelligence: Guiding Questions

A defining characteristic of human beings is our desire to ask questions and to explore the unknown. We spend our lives seeking to understand our origins, probing the boundaries of the universe and uncharted frontiers, and investigating unsolved mysteries. Yet each new discovery reveals additional limitations that must be explored if knowledge and understanding are to proceed. Our impulse to expand our horizons can be seen in several traits: our innate, human creativity; our pursuit of new technologies that better respond to our challenges and provide greater insight into the unknown; and our use of imagination and inventiveness to examine our relationship to the world in which we live. Courses in this theme will focus on how the process of discovery--through art, scientific research, and other modes of seeking answers to fundamental questions--expands our understanding of the value of life and enriches our interaction with our communities, the planet, and the universe. Additionally, courses in this theme may engage the ways in which human activity and advancing technology must be weighed against immediate and long-term consequences, like climate change and pollution, in order to create sustainable solutions for the future.

English Department Learning Outcomes

- Articulate how the imaginative constructs of poetry, drama, and prose (fiction and nonfiction) illuminate fundamental questions of human experience.
- Define critical theories/methods of reading.
- Identify rhetorical tactics within texts.
- Analyze the function of rhetorical tactics within texts.
- Argue for interpretations and evaluations of texts.
- Reflect on the validity of personal bases for evaluating texts in light of textual, historical, and cultural evidence.
- Construct well-written texts in a variety of genres and/or media.
- Deliver effective multi-media presentations.
- Demonstrate effective strategies for collaboration with peers.

ENGL 4716, “Science Fiction/Fantasy” Learning Outcomes

- Study and critically analyze major works of twentieth- and twenty-first-century science fiction;
- Demonstrate understanding of the cultural, historical, and political contexts in which various works of science fiction have been produced;
- Investigate major concepts, methods, and theoretical movements that have shaped the practices of contemporary literary studies;
- Explore the relationship between science fiction and interrelated ideas of history, futurity, ecology, disability, gender, race, utopia, and the nation;
- Use literary study to develop skills for careful reading and clear writing;
- Produce cogent writing in a variety of modes and media

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

Everyone at Marquette recognizes that this is an extremely difficult time which may be filled with different sorts of uncertainty as we move forward with the academic year. Your safety, health, and well-being are our primary concern and we want to be able to support you in any way that we can.

The university also understands that you may be facing personal obstacles that may make it difficult to meet your typical academic goals. Please refer to the Student Resources page on the Marquette COVID-19 Response webpage for information and resources on basic needs such as housing, food, financial aid, and medical and mental health; the webpage also offers information on official University communications, access to technology, and student services. Faculty and staff are also here for you.

If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your situation outside of class, please don't hesitate to talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. You are not alone.

COVID-19 POLICY

Everyone in this class will be expected to follow the current COVID-19 policies in effect on campus, including current guidance on masks.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969)

Joanna Russ, *The Female Man* (1975)

Octavia E. Butler, *Kindred* (1979)

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others* (2002)

N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* (2015)

Any edition of these texts will do. Students are even invited, if they choose, to read the recent graphic novel adaptations of *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Kindred*; students who wish to do this should simply check in with the professor to make sure they understand how the texts are similar and how they are different.

An earlier version of this syllabus included William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, but this is no longer required. In its place, we will watch and discuss a classic science fiction film from the 1980s, selected by the students in the class through a NCAA-style single-elimination tournament.

Additional course material will occasionally be distributed via D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation	20%
Discussion Inauguration Day	10%
Sandbox Posts	20%
Papers	50%

Students in this class can choose between doing three smaller papers (4-6 pages) or one larger seminar paper (12-18 pages). A detailed description of the two writing assignment options appears on the last pages of this syllabus, with further elaboration available on D2L.

Graduate students will have slightly different expectations; we can discuss this as a group.

GRADING

Grades will follow the following rubric:

* To earn a **C**, you must clearly restate the meaning or project of a text in your own terms. A C essay may volunteer an original argument, but will likely lack evidence or analysis of its sources. C essays are clearly written, though they might display some grammatical weakness.

* To earn a **B**, you must begin to raise important questions about the text under consideration and to use those questions to drive your own interpretive agenda. A B essay typically advances an original argument and provides solid analysis of the text(s) under consideration. B essays are clear, concise, and free of grammatical errors.

* To earn an **A**, you must construct an essay that does more than simply comment on the work of others; you must forward, counter, or transform what they have to say. An A essay advances an original argument that builds toward a climax and makes a persuasive case for its own significance. A essays are clearly written, and often eloquent.

* A **D** means that you have not written in clear prose or that you seem to have deeply misunderstood the text. An **F** means that you did not fully or seriously engage the assignment.

* **A-**, **B+**, **B-**, **C+**, and **C-** grades fall squarely in the gaps between the above categories.

Grades are not awarded on an artificial curve or in competition with each other. There is no reason that every student cannot receive an A in this course.

UNGRADED ASSIGNMENTS

Your makeup posts and sandbox posts will be graded on an extra-credit / pass / low-pass / fail basis:

- Fulfilling all the requirements of the assignment will earn you full credit;
- Failing to do so will earn you half-credit (at best) or no credit (at worst);
- Going beyond the terms of the assignment in an especially ambitious or creative way can earn you extra credit.

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class discussion is an essential component of this seminar; class discussion, not lecture, will be the primary means by which we will investigate these texts together. It is crucial that you come to class every day having read the required material and prepared to discuss it.

Consequently, attendance in this class is mandatory. You should plan on attending every class. Please talk to me (in advance if possible) if you ever find you will need to miss a class meeting. Students who miss class on a given day will be expected to make that work up via a post on D2L in order to have the absence excused.

The course adheres to Marquette University's attendance policy, which can be found on the Internet at <http://bulletin.marquette.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/#attendance>.

You are allowed **four unexcused absences** over the course of the fall semester. Upon the fourth unexcused absence, you may receive a WA (Withdrawn—Excessive Absences) for the semester.

Merely being present in class is insufficient for an “A” in class participation. Each student is expected to *participate in* and *contribute to* our discussions. Just being in the room is not enough.

DISCUSSION INAUGURATOR

Beginning with Week Three, each member of the class will have one day in which they are expected to inaugurate our discussion based on the readings for that day. The requirements for this are necessarily very loose, as each day of the course will have a very different type of text to be discussed; in general, however, the discussion inaugurator will be asked to (1) succinctly describe the project of this part of the text; (2) articulate a brief critical response to the material; and (3) direct our collective attention to one or two problems in, questions about, or particularly

important moments in the text. I expect this introductory role to take approximately five to ten minutes.

A signup sheet for this role will be distributed in class.

QUIZZES

I do not like to give reading quizzes; I think they infantilize the college-level scholar. However, this is by necessity a very reading-intensive class; if it seems to me that people are not keeping up with the reading, pop quizzes may become necessary despite my philosophical objections. You have been warned.

FORMAT OF WRITTEN WORK

Much of your written work in this course is published using D2L's forums. You should compose your work in a word processing programming, not in your browser, and then copy and paste it into the appropriate discussion forum when the post is finished. Composing your work in a word processing program will make it easier for you to save a copy of the work on your own hard drive, as well as prevent you from losing your work if your browser crashes, resets, or otherwise fails to successfully upload the material.

All papers should be typed in twelve-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins, saved in a format Microsoft Word can open. Your filename should contain *your name* in it, for example, yourlastname-firstpaper.docx.

I expect you to *edit* and *proofread* all written work.

Please give each piece of writing an original title, and include your name, the name of the assignment, and the due date in a header on the first page. **All sources relied upon for the writing of your paper, including the primary text, must be appropriately cited.**

PAPER SUBMISSION

The final paper should be submitted via D2L Dropbox by 5:30 PM on Friday, December 17. **Because this is a final exam, late final papers cannot be accepted.**

Your other written work will be submitted via D2L Dropbox or via the D2L forums. These papers will have variable due dates driven by your own interests and responses, as well as whether you have chosen to write three smaller papers or one larger paper. **It is thus your responsibility to make sure you are properly keeping up with this portion of the course in a timely fashion.**

Except in very unusual circumstances, work will not be accepted by email.

EXTENSIONS

Although the work in this course have a sufficiently long timetable to allow you to plan and complete all assignments in a timely manner, I nonetheless recognize that emergencies do happen, especially in the context of the pandemic. **If you find that you will not be able to make a deadline, please contact me as soon as you can to arrange an alternative due date.** There is

no need to concoct an elaborate story to justify this, or to lie to me; simply tell me the truth about what's going on and we can work out an alternative that works for you. We have several spillover slots at the end of the semester to give us at least a little bit of wiggle room.

TECHNOLOGY IS TERRIBLE: PLAN AHEAD!

The Internet goes down. Files become corrupted. Computers crash. These are predictable facts of twenty-first century life, not emergencies. For this course, for all your courses, for the rest of your career and your life in this world you need to develop work habits and strategies that take into account the basic, inescapable unreliability of computers. Start your assignments well in advance of the due date; save them often, while they are still in process; save backup copies of essential documents like your papers, including copies off-site using a service like Carbonite, Dropbox, or Google Drive. Even just periodically emailing your papers-in-process to yourself will prevent you from losing your paper to a computer crash at the last minute.

SANDBOX POSTS AND D2L

Over the course of the semester I will ask you to post a freeform response in the designated “sandbox” forum once per major author/era/text. This does not have to be a formal written post, but can also take the form of a podcast, short video, a work of art or music, a short story or fan fiction, a comic, or more; any response of any sort is fine, provided it is thoughtful and substantial. These can even be done collaboratively. By the end of that weekend, I will ask you to respond to at least two other sandbox posts. The idea is to respond collectively to the material we are studying together in a way that is not stifling, anxious, or overstructured by academic expectations that cannot really apply to this odd and altered educational context; my hope is to strip away grading strictures that can only be dysfunctional in the current moment and foster instead more multifaceted, more generous, and hopefully richer intellectual encounters, driven by your interests.

The sandbox posts are an excellent place for people who may feel inhibited by in-class discussion to share their opinions and responses with the class. I will be reading it before every meeting of the course and I ask you do the same. You may choose either to begin a discussion thread on a new topic or to respond to a post composed by one of your classmates.

Before class on Thursday, every student is required to take the following actions:

- * **upload a picture either of their face or a representative symbolic image to their D2L profile;**
- * **take the entrance survey;**
- * **post an “About the Author” about themselves in the designated forum.**

As noted above, students will post one sandbox response each week for each major author, era, or text we study in the course, missing two of the seven without penalty. You may do the other two for extra credit. Additional posts beyond that number, and posts that respond substantively to other students' arguments, will be looked upon very favorably when I calculate your final grade.

LAPTOP POLICY

As Marquette moves towards a paperless learning environment, in-class use of laptops, Kindles, iPads, etc. becomes ever more important for access to electronic versions of our texts and for notetaking. However, students *must* refrain from non-class-related computer use, including email, instant messaging, Facebook, Twitter, and the like. **Please do not abuse this privilege or distract your fellow students.** I reserve the right to ban individual technological devices if this becomes a problem. Except in unusual cases of personal emergency, cleared with me at the start of class, no use of cell phones will be permitted during class time; please turn off your ringers and put them out of sight.

EMAIL

Students in this class are required to check their official Marquette email account—whatever account D2L sends its emails to—at least once the evening before a scheduled class meeting, in case there are any last-minute announcements or disruptions. I endeavor to respond to all emails within 24 hours, usually much less—but please do not send me urgent emails regarding your assignments on the night before they are due and expect an immediate reply.

CONFERENCES

All students are asked to meet with me in at least two short one-on-one conferences in my office, via Zoom, or at an appropriately socially distanced outdoor location, once before Fall Break and once after. Weekly signups will be available on D2L.

Please know I am very happy to meet with you individually to discuss either graded work or work-in-progress in excess of this requirement as many times as you like. Simply come to my weekly office hours, or email me to set up an appointment.

OUT-OF-CLASS SCREENINGS

Regrettably we do not have time to watch any films during our scheduled class hours; I will arrange for evening viewings of the relevant films on campus at times and locations to be determined. Students who are not able to attend the screenings are advised to watch the films on their own as possible.

FLEXIBILITY

If it will benefit the class, changes may be made to any of the above.

WRITING CENTER

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Center, located in Raynor Library Room 240, at any stage of the writing process.

Please visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.marquette.edu/english/writingcenter/> to find out how to schedule an appointment and to access the studio's online resources.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who believe they may require accommodations in this course should contact me early in the semester so your learning needs can be appropriately met. I am of course more than happy to work with you to make sure you are successful in this course and to make

this course most accessible for you. However, without documentation, I am limited in what I am able to do. Therefore, in order for me to help you most effectively, I need you to be proactive in contacting the Office of Disability Services (located on the fifth floor of the 707 Building). ODS can be reached by phone at (414) 288-1645 or by email at ods@marquette.edu.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are expected to abide by the academic honesty policy outlined in your undergraduate bulletin. I urge you all to examine this material and consult me with any questions you may have about plagiarism or academic integrity *before* it becomes an issue. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism. **Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course.** No exceptions or special dispensations will be made.

Marquette students now sign an Honor Pledge, which states:

- *I recognize the importance of personal integrity in all aspects of life and work.*
- *I commit myself to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, by which I earn the respect of others.*
- *I support the development of good character, and commit myself to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity as an important aspect of personal integrity.*
- *My commitment obliges me to conduct myself according to the Marquette University Honor Code.*

Full details of Marquette's academic integrity policy are available on the Internet at <http://www.marquette.edu/provost/academic-integrity.php>.

On a personal level, I (like everyone) hate being lied to. Please, do not feel you need to concoct elaborate excuses. Simply be honest with me about whatever is going on and we will work it out.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

We all enter this classroom with preexisting political, ethical, philosophical, and intellectual commitments. You are all required to engage the material—but you are absolutely *not* required to agree either with any of the writers we will discuss, or with me, in whole or in part.

RESPECT

This classroom is a community. It is crucial that we treat each other with the appropriate level of courtesy and respect. No one should be made to feel unwelcome here. Failure to treat other students with the respect they deserve will **severely** impact your class participation grade.

KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN!

I want this class to be a meaningful and valuable experience for you, both in its own terms and in service of the development of your larger college experience. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or concerns about the way things are going, my door is always open. I put this statement on every syllabus, but I think it is especially important in a semester that is likely to be as chaotic and disorienting as this one. Please, keep me in the loop about what is going on with you in the world outside our classroom, and help me to make this class as successful as it can be.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class as they become necessary.

Students should come to class prepared to discuss the listed texts or chapters.

T	Aug 31	FIRST DAY OF CLASS A Brief History of Science Fiction
Th	Sep 2	1956 Isaac Asimov, “The Last Question” [D2L] in class: How SF Works and Some Ways to Talk About SF
T	Sep 7	1969 Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> , chapters 1-3
Th	Sep 9	Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> , chapters 4-6
T	Sep 14	Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> , chapters 7-8
Th	Sep 16	Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> , chapters 9-10 <i>optional</i> : George Roy Hill (dir.), <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> (1972) <i>very optional</i> : <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> episodes of <i>Grad School Vonnegut</i>
T	Sep 21	1972-1975 Joanna Russ, “When It Changed” [D2L] Joanna Russ, <i>The Female Man</i> , Part One
Th	Sep 23	Joanna Russ, <i>The Female Man</i> , Parts Two through Four
T	Sep 28	Joanna Russ, <i>The Female Man</i> , Parts Five through Seven PAPER #1 WORKSHOP / PITCH WORKSHOP
Th	Sep 30	Joanna Russ, <i>The Female Man</i> , Parts Eight and Nine Andrea Grimes, “A Feminist Literary Classic Gets a Timely Reissue, and it’s Still Maddeningly Relevant” [web] Lee Mandelo, “Queering SFF: The Female Man by Joanna Russ (+ Bonus Story, ‘When it Changed’)” [web] Cheryl Morgan, “Joanna Russ” [web] Stephen B, “Joanna Russ 1937-2011” [web]
T	Oct 5	1979 Octavia E. Butler, <i>Kindred</i> , “Prologue,” “The River,” and “The Fire” PAPER #1 DUE
Th	Oct 7	Octavia E. Butler, <i>Kindred</i> , “The Fall”
T	Oct 12	Octavia E. Butler, <i>Kindred</i> , “The Fight”
Th	Oct 14	Octavia E. Butler, <i>Kindred</i> , “The Storm”
T	Oct 19	Octavia E. Butler, <i>Kindred</i> , “The Rope” and “Epilogue” upcoming <i>Kindred</i> adaptation <i>optional</i> : Gerry Canavan, <i>Octavia E. Butler</i> (excerpt)
Th	Oct 21	FALL BREAK—NO CLASS

T	Oct 26	1981 William Gibson, “The Gernsback Continuum” (D2L) <i>optional: “Preface to Mirrorshades”</i> PAPER #2 WORKSHOP / PROSPECTUS WORKSHOP
Th	Oct 28	1980s SF Tournament Winner TBD
T	Nov 2	1980s SF Tournament Winner TBD PAPER #2 DUE
Th	Nov 4	1991 Ted Chiang, “Understand” (in <i>Stories of Your Life and Others</i>)
T	Nov 9	1998 Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life” (in <i>Stories of Your Life and Others</i>) <i>optional: Denis Villeneuve (dir.), Arrival (2016)</i>
Th	Nov 11	2001 Ted Chiang, “Hell Is the Absence of God” (in <i>Stories of Your Life and Others</i>)
T	Nov 16	2002 Ted Chiang, “Liking What You See: A Documentary” (in <i>Stories of Your Life and Others</i>) <i>optional: “Liking What You See: A Documentary” (audiobook) (D2L)</i>
Th	Nov 18	2008-2015 Ted Chiang, “Exhalation” (D2L) Ted Chiang, “The Great Silence” (web) <i>optional: “Ted Chiang Explains the Disaster Novel We All Suddenly Live In”</i>
T	Nov 23	2015 N.K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , “Prologue,” chapters 1-3
Th	Nov 25	THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS <i>Forgive me, but please bring your copy of The Fifth Season home with you and try to read it over break! It’s quite a bit longer than the other novels we have read in this course and it would be a shame to fall behind.</i>
T	Nov 30	N.K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , chapter 4-8 and “Interlude” FINAL PAPER/PROJECT WORKSHOP
Th	Dec 2	N.K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , chapters 9-14
T	Dec 7	N.K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , chapters 15-19 and “Interlude”
Th	Dec 9	N.K. Jemisin, <i>The Fifth Season</i> , whole book Joshua Rivera, “N.K. Jemisin Is Trying to Keep the World from Ending” Raffi Khatchadourian, “N.K. Jemisin’s Dream Worlds” upcoming <i>The Broken Earth</i> trilogy film adaptation LAST DAY OF CLASS
F	Dec 17	FINAL PAPER/PROJECT DUE BY 5:30 PM

FOLLOW FAME: FRIENDS AND ALUMNI/AE OF MARQUETTE ENGLISH

On Facebook (page): www.facebook.com/marquettefame

On Facebook (group): www.facebook.com/groups/496438583889194

(search for “Undergraduate English at Marquette”)

On Twitter: @MarquetteENGL

While our ability to see each other in person is still somewhat constrained this semester, there will be opportunities for department events and virtual meetups that will be advertised through these outlets. I hope you can attend!

MARQUETTE LITERARY REVIEW

I hope all students in the class, especially those working on creative projects, will consider getting involved with the *Marquette Literary Review*, a truly excellent outlet for student creative work on this campus. Stay tuned for updates from me and from Professor Sorby for details on how to submit as an author and how to get involved as an editor.

FURTHER READING

Students interesting in continuing their study of science fiction might be interested in some of the following critical texts:

Raymond Williams, “Utopia and Science Fiction”

Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*

Samuel Delany, “On Triton and Other Matters”

Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Language of the Night*

Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future*

Tom Moylan, *Demand the Impossible* and *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*

Carl Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction*

Tom Moylan and Raffaella Baccolini (eds.), *Dark Horizons*

Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*

Margaret Atwood, *Learning from Other Worlds*

Adam Roberts, *The History of Science Fiction*

Mark Bould and China Mieville (eds.), *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction*

Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson (eds.), *Green Planets: Ecology and Science Fiction*

Sherryl Vint, *Science Fiction: A Guide for the Perplexed*

Roger Luckhurst (ed.), *Science Fiction: A Literary History*

John Rieder, *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction*

John Rieder, *Science Fiction and the Mass Cultural Genre System*

Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, *The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction*

Sherryl Vint, *Science Fiction*

The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction

The Cambridge Companion to American Science Fiction

The Cambridge History of Science Fiction

The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction

The Routledge Guide to Science Fiction

and so on.

For fiction or journal recommendations, just ask!

ENGLISH 4716 ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST (THREE PAPERS)

Discussion Leader Date / Topic _____

Sandbox Posts

- Sandbox 1
- Sandbox 2
- Sandbox 3
- Sandbox 4
- Sandbox 5
- Extra Credit Posts

These sandbox posts are intended to articulate some substantive critical or creative response to some element of the work under discussion. They should be approximately 250-400 words long, and may overlap with your discussion inauguration presentation and/or your final project. Additional posts will count towards extra credit.

First Paper/Project (4-6 pages; workshop Sep. 28, due Oct. 5; 15% of final grade)
suggested texts: “The Last Question,” *Slaughterhouse-Five*, “When It Changed,” and/or *The Female Man*

Second Paper/Project (4-6 pages; workshop Oct. 26, due Nov. 2; 15% of final grade)
suggested texts: any of the above plus *Kindred* and/or “The Gernsback Continuum”

Final Paper/Project (4-6 pages; workshop Nov. 30, due Dec. 17 by 5:30 PM; 20% of final grade)
suggested texts: any of the above plus 80s SF Tournament Winner, Ted Chiang’s short stories, and/or *The Fifth Season*

I cannot stress enough how open I am to your personal interests and approaches; I am genuinely open to any topic, any method, and any form that seems urgent and interesting to you (provided of course that it is the intellectual-labor equivalent of a 4-6-page scholarly paper, more or less). I sincerely want these papers to be something you are excited about and enjoy writing, *not* an unpleasant chore. I can’t wait to read them.

ENGLISH 4716 ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST (ONE PAPER)

Discussion Leader

Date / Topic _____

D2L Posts

- Sandbox 1
- Sandbox 2
- Sandbox 3
- Sandbox 4
- Sandbox 5
- Extra Credit Posts

These sandbox posts are intended to articulate some substantive critical or creative response to some element of the work under discussion. They should be approximately 250-400 words long, and may overlap with your discussion inauguration presentation and/or your final project. Additional posts will count towards extra credit.

Final Project “Pitch” (due in-class on Sep. 28; ungraded)

For September 28 all I ask is that you have a basic idea for what you think you might want to write your seminar paper on.

Final Project Prospectus (due in-class on Oct. 26; 10% of final grade)

The prospectus is a formal, half-page anticipation of the major thrust of your final project as you anticipate it taking shape. Generally speaking, it should lay out the aspect of science fiction that you plan to discuss, and articulate a *central claim* which clearly and succinctly describes your planned scholarly intervention. It should also provide five-to-ten primary or secondary sources you expect to draw on for your project.

Creative or curational projects still need to be “pitched” and still need to provide a prospectus.

Final Project (due to D2L Dropbox by Dec. 17 by 5:30 PM; 40% of final grade)

I cannot stress enough how open I am to your personal interests and approaches; I am genuinely open to any topic, any method, and any form that seems urgent and interesting to you (provided of course that it is the intellectual-labor equivalent of a 12-to-18-page scholarly paper, more or less). I sincerely want this paper to be something you are excited about and enjoy writing, *not* an unpleasant chore. I can’t wait to read them.