

Bergen Community College  
Division of Humanities  
Department of English

## LIT-207 Science Fiction

Date of Most Recent Syllabus Revision: New Course 2-12-22  
Course Typically      Spring                      Summer                      Every Semester  X      Other   
Offered: Fall

### Basic Information About Course and Instructor

Semester and Year:  
Course and Section Number: LIT-2XX  
Meeting Times and Locations:

Instructor:  
Office Location:  
Phone:  
Departmental Secretary:  
Office Hours:  
Email Address:

### Course Description

#### Official Catalog Course Description

**Science Fiction provides a survey of the genre through the analytical study of short fiction, novels, and other media ranging from the 19th to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Students will explore the dominant themes of the genre as a whole, including its use as a vehicle to challenge existing social attitudes and structures, to interrogate the relationship between humankind and emerging technology, and to speculate on the nature of humanity in relation to the wider cosmos.**

3 lectures, 3 credits

Prerequisite: WRT-101  
General Education Course - Humanities

**Student Learning Objectives:** As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify major works and figures in the history and development of science fiction.
2. Engage in close analysis of works of science fiction in various forms, including novels, and short stories.
3. Examine, interpret, and compare and contrast specific themes, motifs, and trends in works of science fiction.
4. Analyze the role of science fiction as a means of responding to and shaping social and historical trends.
5. Produce a properly formatted written evaluation of selected works; demonstrate competency in both research methodologies and literary analysis.

### **Means of Assessment**

Students in this course will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of material by completing short writing assignments such as summaries, journals, reading responses, reading comprehension questions, quizzes, etc.
2. Write at least two multi-paragraph, academic critical response essays of at least 1000 words that analyze science fiction works by authors from various historical and cultural contexts.
3. Complete a midterm examination and a final examination in class.
4. Participate actively in class discussions necessary for the understanding of key themes and concepts.
5. Write an 8-10 page, multi-source research paper that adheres to proper MLA documentation style and best practices of academic research.

### **Course Content**

Literature courses at Bergen Community College foster in students the ability to read, analyze, and write about literary texts. In this course, students can expect to do a great deal of reading in preparation for each class discussion. This course is an exploration 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Science Fiction as a diverse literary genre. Through a close examination of the literature, students will examine both traditional and emerging themes in the genre through a humanistic lens and will demonstrate an understanding of these themes through class discussion, research, essay writing, and examination.

## **Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials**

### **Sample List of Required Texts**

Shelley, Mary *Frankenstein*. Norton, 2021. ISBN 978-0-393-64402-9  
Wells, H. G. *The War of the Worlds*. Penguin, 2005. ISBN 978-0-141-44103-0  
Stanislaw Lem, *Solaris*. Faber & Faber, 2016. ISBN 978-0-571-31157-6  
Clarke, Arthur C. *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Penguin, 1993. ISBN 978-0-451-45273-3  
Butler, Octavia. *Dawn*. Grand Central, 2021. 978-1-538-75371-2  
Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Random House, 1996. ISBN 878-0-345-40447-3  
Le Guin, Ursula. *The Left Hand of Darkness*. Penguin, 1987. ISBN: 978-0-441-47812-5  
Chiang, Ted. *The Stories of Your Life and Other Works*. Vintage, 2016 ISBN 978-1-101-97212-0  
Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *The Yellow Wallpaper, Herland, and Selected Writings*. Penguin, 2009.  
ISBN 978-0-143-10585-5  
Okorafor, Nnedi. *Who Fears Death*. DAW, 2020. ISBN 978-0-756-41710-9  
Jemisen, N. K. *The Fifth Season*. Orbit, 2015. 978-0-316-22929-6

## **Research, Writing, and/or Examination Requirement(s)**

### **Essays**

Papers must be typed, double spaced, 12pt Times New Roman, with last name and page number in the upper right corner, a header in the upper left and a title in the center. All paraphrases and quotations must include in-text citations and a Works Cited page. Papers missing any of these elements will be marked down.

### **Research Paper**

All students will write a final research paper of 8-10 pages in length on a topic of the student's choosing related to the course material. Papers might focus on a single author, a movement or trend within the science fiction genre, a recurring theme that crossed time periods and works, or anything else of scholarly significance to the study of science fiction. Topics will be developed in concert with the instructor. Research papers must include at least 4 scholarly secondary sources.

### **Quizzes, Short Writing Assignments**

At times there will be short writing assignments and/or quizzes. Guidelines for these assignments will be determined by the instructor.

### **Midterm and Final**

The midterm and final will be objective identification essays meant to demonstrate comprehension of the course material. Students will be expected to identify the title and the author of excerpts, and to explain the thematic significance of the passage to the work as a whole.

## **Grading Policy**

### **Recommended Grade Structure**

2 Short Essays	30%
Research Paper	20%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Participation	10%

Participation will be defined by the instructor but may include activities such as Workshopping, Class Discussion, Quizzes, or Shorter Writing Assignments.

### **Recommended Policy for Late Papers:**

For every day an essay is late the student's grade will be lowered  $\frac{1}{2}$  a grade. For example, for an A paper one day late, you receive a B+, for a B+ paper a day late, you receive a B. For a B paper a day late you receive a C+, and so on. **Late papers will not be accepted after one week.**

## **Attendance Policy**

### **BCC Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

### **Attendance Policy for this Course.**

To be determined by the instructor.

## **Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements**

### **Accommodations for Disabilities:**

Bergen Community College aims to create inclusive learning environments where all students have maximum opportunities for success. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Specialized Services at 201-612-5269 or via email at [ossinfo@bergen.edu](mailto:ossinfo@bergen.edu) for assistance.

### **Statement on Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. Bergen Community College has licensed Personal Counselors available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

You can learn more about the confidential mental health services available on campus via the Health and Wellness Center at [www.bergen.edu/personalcounseling](http://www.bergen.edu/personalcounseling)

**BCC Statement on Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and may be a violation of U.S. Copyright laws. Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's words, opinions, or ideas and claiming them as one's own.

Examples of plagiarism include instances in which a student:

- knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own
- represents previously completed academic work as current
- submits a paper or other academic work for credit which includes words, ideas, data or creative work of others without acknowledging the source
- uses another author's exact words without enclosing them in quotation marks and citing them appropriately
- paraphrases or summarizes another author's words without citing the source appropriately

Instructors may define their own policies regarding plagiarism. See the Academic Regulations section of the college catalog for college policies.

#### Available Online and On-Campus Resources

Office of Testing and Tutoring at the Meadowlands LYN 202 <https://bergen.edu/tutoring/tutoring-testing-center-at-the-meadowlands/>

The Writing Center and Tutoring Center L-125 <https://bergen.edu/tutoring/writing-center/>

OWL (Online Writing Lab) <http://www.owl.english.perdue>

The English Language Resource Center (ELRC) C-212 <https://bergen.edu/tutoring/english-language-resource-center/>

The Library <https://bergen.edu/library/>

MLA Formatting Guides <https://bergen.libguides.com/citationguides/mla>

Library Research Guides <https://bergen.libguides.com/index.php?b=s>

Free Time Computer Labs <https://bergen.edu/technology-assistance/computer-lab-availability/>

The Center for Student A-118 (Academic, Career, International, and Transfer Counselors)  
<https://bergen.edu/center-for-student-success/>

Academic Support <https://bergen.edu/academics/pathway-scholars-program/academic-support/>

Personal Counseling HS-100 <https://bergen.edu/health-wellness-and-personal-counseling/personalcounseling/>

#### Sample Course Outline

Week	Topic/Activity	Assignments/Events
------	----------------	--------------------

1	<b>Unit 1: The Origins of Science Fiction</b>  Gothic fiction and science skepticism Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
2	<i>Frankenstein</i> , cont.	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
3	Alien Antagonists and Earthly Geopolitics  Wells, <i>War of the Worlds</i>	Discussion  Essay #1 Due
4	<b>Unit 2: Imagining Extra Terrestrials</b>  Extra-terrestrial benefactors or Alien invaders?  Butler, <i>Dawn</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
5	Imagining first contact.  Chiang, "The Story of Your Life" Menosky, "Darmok"	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
6	What E.T. can teach us about ourselves.  Lem, <i>Solaris</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
7	<i>Solaris</i> , cont.	Midterm
8	<b>Unit 3: Man or Machine: Robots, Androids, and A.I.</b>  Asimov, "Satisfaction Guaranteed" Mintzer, "Tomorrow is Waiting"	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
9	Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i>	Essay #2 Due

10	<b>Unit 4: Future (Im)perfect: Envisioning Utopian and Dystopian Futures</b>  Le Guin, <i>The Dispossessed</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
11	Okafor, <i>Who Fears Death</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
12	<i>Who Fears Death</i> , cont.	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
13	<b>Unit 5: Humanity Amongst the Cosmos</b>  Clarke, <i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i>	Discussion/Quiz or Short Writing Assignment
14	Robinson, <i>Aurora</i>	Discussion Research Paper Due
15	<i>Aurora</i> cont.	Final Exam

**Note to Students:** This Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.