

Sample Syllabus: English 372, Science Fiction and/or Fantasy
Other Bodies/Other Worlds
Professor Elizabeth Hewitt
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Office hours: M W 1³⁰-2³⁰, and by appointment

Course Description: This course will focus on science fiction's abiding interest in the large topic of "otherness." From its very beginnings, science fiction has been interested in varieties of human (and extra-human) difference. We will read some of the crucial texts invested in the inquiry: fiction that depicts future worlds; that which describes racial and sexual differences in imaginary spaces; that which describes aliens and monsters as allegories for human difference; and that which asks that we radically re-imagine what the body and the person looks like. As we will see, despite the reputation of science fiction as a "boy's club," or, as Brian Aldiss describes, "an all male escapist power fantasy," many authors have used the genre as an ideal literary form to explore and interrogate the politics of difference and identity.

GEC: English 372 applies to the following GEC category: 2. Breadth; C. Arts and Humanities; (1) Literature. Students evaluate significant writing and develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience. English 372 introduces students to speculative writing, i.e., science fiction and/or fantasy and provides the opportunity to examine works of science fiction and/or fantasy comparatively and apply this knowledge to the understanding of the tradition and practice of speculative writing.

Human and Monsters

Week 1: Mary Shelley, Frankenstein

Week 2: Octavia Butler, Fledgling

Race in a Different Time

Week 3: Octavia Butler, Kindred
Delany, "Sex, Race, and Science Fiction"

Week 4: Samuel Delany, Trouble on Triton

The Future of Sex

Week 5: James Tiptree Jr., "The Women Men Don't See"
Allucquère Rosanne Stone, "Farewell to the Artifacts"
Le Guin, "Is Gender Necessary"

Week 6: Ursula Le Guin, Left Hand of Darkness

Week 7: Joanna Russ, The Female Man

Radical Difference: the Post-Human

Week 8: Theodore Sturgeon, More than Human

Week 9: John Sladeck, The Complete Roderick

Week 10: Greg Bear, Blood Music

Examinations, Quizzes & Papers:

- ◆ There will be **weekly quizzes**, which will be on-line (at our Carmen site) and will cover both reading and course lectures/discussions. I will tell you in class when the quizzes are available and you will have 48 hours to complete. The quizzes will be worth 20% of your final grade, and I will drop your lowest grade.
- ◆ The **final examination** will be cumulative and will consist of short essays asking you to synthesize your knowledge of the texts we have read. It is also worth 20% of your final grade, and it is scheduled for **XXXX**.
- ◆ There will be **two writing assignments**. The first (4 pages) will be due **XXXX**; and the second (which will be a longer 8 page research paper) will be due at the end of the term. Each is worth 20% of your final grade.

Participation & Attendance:

I expect you to come to class with issues and questions to discuss: your participation and intellectual engagement is essential and will constitute a portion (20%) of your grade. I also expect you to bring the text to class – if you don't have your book, I will assume that you are unprepared. Needless to say, attendance is mandatory. After two absences, your grade will drop one full grade for every class you are absent. I will also count late arrivals and/or early departures (unless you offer a valid excuse) as absences. If you have commitments (travel plans, doctor visits, work schedules) that will cause absences or tardiness, then you should not take this class.

Disability Services:

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact me to make appropriate arrangements. You should also contact the Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, which offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; [OSU Office for disability Services Web Site](#).

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with University rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#).