

**The Ohio State University
Freshman Seminar Program
Course Proposal**

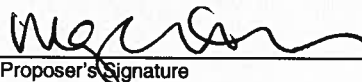
Course Information.

1. Attach a sample syllabus that includes the following. (Sample syllabi can be found at <http://freshmanseminars.osu.edu>).
 - the course goals
 - a brief description of the content
 - the distribution of meeting times
 - a weekly topical outline
 - a listing of assignments
 - grade assessment information (A-E or S / U)
 - required textbooks and / or reading list
 - the academic misconduct and disability services statements (sample statements can be found at <http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/currofc/resources.cfm>)

2. Attach a brief biographical paragraph that includes the current research interests, teaching awards and honors, and undergraduate courses taught by the participating instructor(s). The paragraph will be included in materials for first-year students.

Mary Thomas, WGSS

Proposer's Name and Academic Unit



Proposer's Signature

thomas.1672

Proposer's e-Mail Address

2-9866

Contact Phone Number

April 27, 2016

Submission Date



Signature Department Chair of Academic Unit

Please indicate the semester you would like to offer the seminar: AU' SP'

This form and any attachments should be mailed to Freshman Seminar Program, 100 Denney Hall, 164 Annle & John Glenn Avenue, ATTN: Dawn Nolen or e-mailed to nolen.2@osu.edu. For additional information, please call 614/292-4680.

The Heroes of Cli-Fi
Arts & Sciences 1138, Freshman Seminar
1 Semester-hour Credit
Autumn Semester

Professor Mary Thomas
308E Dulles Hall
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-2pm
thomas.1672@osu.edu

Course Description

Cli-fi stands for climate fiction. It is a genre of writing, TV, and film that portrays futuristic ideas about what the world will be like after climate change or massive global upheaval occurs. In this course we will consider how examples from cli-fi rely on human characters that play heroic roles in overcoming, persevering or surviving climate change and societal collapse. We will consider how these example reinforce an assumption that humans, through their ingenuity or tough attitudes, can counter planetary forces. We will also think about the age, gender, nationality, and race-ethnicity of these heroes, in order to analyze how these social categories affect our assumptions about human capacity for action and survival. Finally, the course challenges you to analyze the effects of hero-emphasis on the political and social movements related to climate change.

The course requires you to read one book of fiction and watch one full-length film (feature film or documentary) outside of class, and then do a creative assessment of the works in class presentations. Otherwise, being in class every week, doing readings to prepare for class, and engaging in conversation with your peers is all you need to do to pass the course.

Texts

You do not need to purchase any texts for the course. Readings will be uploaded to the course webpage or linked in this syllabus, and the other material required (the book and film) should be easily accessible through the library system or online streaming services. (You may need to pay \$6-10 to stream a film, however, depending on what you choose!) I will provide a list of suggested books and films the first week or two of class.

Course Policies

- You may miss one class only and still pass the course. You may NOT miss any student presentation classes. These are mandatory for everyone to attend.
- Contributing to class discussion will be a core aspect of our course's success. I will do my best to create a lively and engaging classroom that is friendly and informal for class discussion. I expect you to match my energy and interest with your own!
- There are no written assignments for this class. You will do two creative, 3 minute presentations (of one book and one film) over the course of the semester. I will distribute instructions about the format and purpose of the presentations by the second week of class. I will also provide a list of possible titles for you to read/watch.

Grading

This course has a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grade. You must attend class (only one absence allowed, but not during class presentations when attendance is mandatory), come prepared by reading ahead of time, and bring your voice to our conversations. If you do these three things, you pass the class!

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 (http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf).

Students with Disabilities

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; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Weekly Schedule

Please read the assigned titles before coming to class, so that we may have a lively and informed conversation about them.

Week 1 – Introducing Cli-Fi

Rodge Glass, "Global warning: the rise of 'cli-fi'" in *The Guardian* (Friday, May 31, 2013)
<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/may/31/global-warning-rise-cli-fi>

David Holmes and Dan Bloom, "'Cli-fi': could a literary genre help save the planet?" *The Conversation* (February 20, 2014)
<http://theconversation.com/cli-fi-could-a-literary-genre-help-save-the-planet-23478>

Week 2 – Is Cli-Fi always dystopian?

Laura Miller, "Fresh Hell: What's behind the boom in dystopian fiction for young readers?" *The New Yorker* (June 14 & 21, 2010)
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/06/14/fresh-hell-2>

In class viewings

Week 3 – Who is a hero? What does it have to do with hope?

Raffaella Baccolini, “The Persistence of Hope in Dystopian Science Fiction” *PMLA* 119(3): 518-521 (May 2004)

Week 4 – Who is a hero? What does it have to do with politics?

Adam Trexler, “Chapter Three: Politics: Opposition, Bureaucracy, and Agency,” in his *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change* (University of Virginia Press, 2015)

Week 5 – Thinking about age, gender, sexuality, race-ethnicity and nationality

A.O. Scott and Manohla Dargis, “A Radical Female Hero from Dystopia” *The New York Times* (April 4, 2012)

In class viewings

Be sure you are starting your novels!

Week 6 – Class presentation prep: how to give a three minute thesis

No new reading

Week 7 – Students present their novels

Attendance is mandatory for all students

Week 8 – Students present their novels

Attendance is mandatory for all students

Week 9 – Class discussion of novels

Let’s dig in a little deeper on all the novels you read! Think about common themes, common characteristics of the heroes of the books, and the location of the action

No new reading

Week 10 – Can film educate the public about climate change?

Maria Sakellari, “Cinematic climate change, a promising perspective on climate change communication,” *Public Understanding of Science* 24(7): 827-841

Week 11 – Personal loss and heroic overcoming in climate film

Philip Hammond and Hugh Ortega Breton, “Bridging the political deficit: loss, morality, and agency in films addressing climate change” *Communication, Culture & Critique* 7(3): 303-319

Week 12 – Students present their films

Attendance is mandatory for all students

Week 13 – Students present their films

Attendance is mandatory for all students

Week 14 – Class discussion of films and course wrap-up!

Mary E. Thomas is Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State University. She loves teaching a range of classes and recent examples include courses on the following themes: girlhood in the US, the experiences of women and girls in prison, Native American feminist theory, and global sexual politics. She is eager to teach this class on climate change, because her new research examines fossil fuel extraction in North Dakota's Bakken. She is also writing a book with friends about the Anthropocene, the proposed new geologic epoch.

Her first book, *Multicultural Girlhood: Racism, Sexuality and the Conflicted Spaces of American Education*, came out in 2011 with Temple University Press. She is also a coeditor of *A Companion to Social Geography* (Wiley, 2009) and an author of an undergraduate textbook with Andrew Jonas and Eugene McCann, *Urban Geography: A Critical Introduction* (Wiley, 2015). She is also currently writing a second monograph based on extensive research at a juvenile detention facility with teenage girls in central Ohio.