

## *Course Syllabus*

### **Course Information**

### **The Literature of Fantasy and Science Fiction**

LIT 3311.

Room: JO 4.614

Monday 7 – 9:45 p.m.

### **Contact Information**

Lecturer: **Tony Daniel**

E-mail: darkestcoffee@gmail.com

Cell: (214) 677-5750

Office: JO 4.622

Hours: 6:15 to 6:45 Mondays

Teaching Assistant: **KYLE SIMMONS**

Kyle's e-mail: kbs072000@utdallas.edu

### **NOTES:**

- Per university policy, **all** e-mail **must** come to me from your **UTD account**. You can cc your other address if you want me to reply to both. Figure out how to use your UTD e-mail or you may miss important assignments and information!
- *Try to let me know, preferably by e-mail, if you are coming by the office.*

### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

Three hours of lower-division literature or HUMA 1301.

### **Course Description**

The course will focus on science fiction and fantasy as genres melding literary art, scientific and philosophical speculation, and the evocation of the peculiar emotion often characterized as the “sense of wonder.” It will survey the history of the genre and then delve into representative themes, rhetoric, and methods of storytelling in texts, films and other media. In addition, we’ll examine the composition of science fiction and fantasy from a writer’s standpoint and an individual student *may* elect to try his or her hands at a story in lieu of a paper.

## Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

### Learning Objective and Outcome Overview

The class will be organized *thematically* rather than, say, historically. Classes will usually revolve around one or two important themes of the genre explored in depth. We'll use the reading as a starting point, and occasionally view a film or examine SF use in another medium, then discuss it.

By the end of the course, a student will be able to:

- Express in writing a sound knowledge of the historic development of science fiction and fantasy into their modern forms as literary genres and modes of entertainment and art.
- Describe and analyze common science fiction and fantasy themes, tropes, and modes of expression.
- Place representative works of science fiction and fantasy in a larger cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic context.

Grades will be based on weekly quizzes, a mid-term, a final and a paper of 5-7 pages. A short story can be substituted for one of the papers, provided you attend workshops that will be held *in addition to class*.

Here's an overview of the grading:

25% quizzes & class exercises  
25% midterm (60% essay)  
25% critical paper or story  
25% final (60% essay)

### Required Textbooks and Materials

*Modern Classics of Science Fiction*, Gardner Dozois, editor.

*The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien

*Random Acts of Senseless Violence*, Jack Womack

*Metaplanetary*, Tony Daniel

Various stories placed on-line in PDF format.

Suggested for short story option folks: *Creating Short Fiction*, Damon Knight

## Assignments & Academic Calendar

- Underlined stories are available on-line on the course's WebCT page.
- **ADDITIONAL STORIES MAY BE ASSIGNED.**
- **Subject to changes and additions.**

**8/25 Introduction / The Rope of Time / Group Minds**

**NO CLASS ON LABOR DAY 9/1**

**9/8 SF as social thought experiment / alternate history**

"The Country of the Kind"

"Kirinyaga"

"The Last Article"

"Nobody's Home"

"The Ugly Chickens"

**9/15 Aliens & Significant Others**

"Hardfought"

"Blood Music"

"Think Like a Dinosaur"

"Bloodchild"

NOTE: longer reads! Greg  
Bear's two paradigm-shifting  
"hard SF" novellas

**9/22 Classical Mass**

"Nightfall"

"There Will Come Soft Rains"

"Lenny"

"Arena"

**9/29 Machine Dreams / Po-Mo and Magic Realism**

"The Winter Market"

"Salvador"

"Dori Bangs"

"We Can Remember It For You Wholesale"

**10/6 Midterm**

**10/13 The End of the World As We Know It**

"A Dry, Quiet War"

"The Worm That Flies"

"Her Smoke Rose Up Forever"

"The Nine Billion Names of God"

**10/20 Lord of the Rings**

**10/27 *Lord of the Rings***

**11/3 Watch and discuss *2001: A Space Odyssey* in class**

**11/10 *Random Acts of Senseless Violence***

**PAPERS DUE 11/10**

**11/17 Lyricists & Visionaries**

"Mother Hitton's Littul Kittons"

"The Moon Moth"

"How the World Was Saved"

**11/24 Watch and discuss *Bladerunner***

**12/1 *Metaplanetary***

**12/8 Creep Out! / Review for final**

"The Father Thing"

"The Other Celia"

Watch *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*

**12/15 FINAL**

***HOW TO DO THIS***

Although this is only a moderate reading load (you might be reading 10 novels in a 19<sup>th</sup> century novels class, for instance), it will seem to be a lot to read for some of you. *Get started early and stay ahead. No matter how slow a reader you are, you are quite capable of doing this reading.* The key is to keep at it steadily and according to a schedule. Do not try to do this all at once. Set aside 30 minutes to an hour a day to read and take notes. If your life is very busy, then I suggest you GET UP EARLY or STAY UP LATE every day of the week but one and read. That will easily provide even the slowest reader enough time to finish the assignments.

**YOU CAN DO THIS READING, AND DO IT ON TIME! Ad Astra!**

## Course & Instructor Policies

- Attendance is mandatory. Absence and lateness counts against your grade.
- There will be no make-ups for weekly quizzes.
- Make-up for midterm and final only will be given under extraordinary (e.g. medical) circumstances.

## Student Conduct & Discipline

***Students who plagiarize will be referred to the Student Judiciary. Recommendation will be for an F in the course.***

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the

required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

## **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***