

English 4665, Online: Science Fiction in American and British Culture (1871-2022)

Summer 2023

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Office Hours: Video conferencing available Tuesdays, Noon-1, or by appointment

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Science fiction has long been recognized as a form which, far from being escapist, is actually intensely concerned with the social, political, economic, and ethical landscapes of contemporary society. Indeed, its concern with society as it is and as it may evolve through technology is one feature which distinguishes it from fantasy or horror, two related and at times overlapping forms. The readings we will do in this section of the course focus on different social concerns, such as environmental collapse (Shiel, Ekpeki), the mid-century anxieties over the family (Bradbury, Aldiss, Padgett), disability (MacLean, Anderson), the conception of the human with the encroachment of AI (Asimov, Kosmatka), and deeper ethical questions about fate and the limitations of existence (Carruth's film *Primer*, which was shot mainly in Carrollton TX, also Chiang's "Story of Your Life," was made into the Villeneuve film *Arrival*). In addition to the smaller-scale concerns of human culture, we can also easily see the Victorian obsession with cultural hierarchy in Bulwer-Lytton carry over into *Things To Come* and "The Roads Must Roll," each of which struggle to find a place for human-scale values in a technologically-defined society.

Course Structure

This course takes place 100% online. I will be available for online chats at various times throughout the semester. Other than that, your interaction with me and with your fellow students will take place in Canvas.

Course Objectives

Students who complete the course successfully will be able to

1. Write short responses that demonstrate an ability to identify key elements in each text that relate to important critical questions.
2. Participate in online discussion threads in ways that reveal both comprehension of major themes and an ability to ask questions about the literature.
3. Write short essays that explore key issues regarding matters of societal or technological import in one of the works read up to that point in the semester.

4. Write a final essay that presents a persuasive argument about a key critical question found in the texts.

Prerequisites

There are no required prerequisites for this course. However, in order to be successful in this course you will need to:

- Demonstrate strong writing composition skills.
- An ability to read deeply and consistently across the semester. Most texts will require around 3 hours of reading/viewing per week.
- Reliable access to a secure online portal.
- An ability to engage in online Discussion threads with courtesy as well as insight.

In addition to Primary texts, students will also be assigned one or two outside journal articles to supplement course readings. These will be included via links to Willis Library on Canvas.

Reading Schedule

Once you understand how I've set up the course, you'll see that it follows a fairly consistent pattern on most weeks. In general, each course module will have two tasks;; a Discussion Project; and a Weekly Writing. Deadlines are usually at midnight.

Week 1 (May 22) W.E.B. DuBois, "The Comet" (1920)

Week 2 (May 29) Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, *The Coming Race* (1871)

Week 3 (June 5) M.P. Shiel, *The Purple Cloud* (1901)

Week 4 (June 12) conclusion of M.P Shiel, *The Purple Cloud*

Things to Come (dir. Menzies, 1936)

Week 5 (June 19) Robert A. Heinlein, "The Roads Must Roll" (1940)

Isaac Asimov, "Runaround" (1942)

Damon Knight, "Ticket to Anywhere" (1952)

Week 6 (June 26) Sherwood Anderson, "A Man of Ideas" (1919)

Ray Bradbury, "Mars is Heaven!" (1948)

Lewis Padgett, "Mimsy Were the Borogoves" (1943)

Brian W. Aldiss, "Super-Toys Last All Summer Long" (1969)

Week 7 (July 3) Katherine MacLean, "The Missing Man" (1971)

Poul Anderson, "Call Me Joe" (1957)

Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki, "O2 Arena." (2022)

Week 8 (July 10) James Tiptree Jr., "Love Is the Plan, the Plan Is Death" (1973)

Joanna Russ, "When It Changed" (1972)

Octavia Butler, "The Evening and the Morning and the Night" (1987)

Ted Kosmatka, "The Beast Adjoins" (2020)

Week 9 (July 17) *Primer* (dir. Shane Carruth, 2004)

Ted Chiang, "Story of Your Life" (2004)

Week 10 (July 24) Finals week

Course Requirements

Weekly Writings:	30 percent/ 30 points max
Discussion Thread Participation	20 percent/ 20 points max
Short Essay	20 percent/ 20 points max
Final Essay, 1800-2400 words	30 percent/ 30 points max

General CLEAR Course Policies

Normally, I will return feedback on all written assignments within a week of the due date.

Rules of Engagement

While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.

Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.

Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.

Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.

Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.

Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”

Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.

Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.

Proofread and fact-check your sources.

Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these Engagement Guidelines (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information.

Essay Grading Rubric

A-Range Essays:

These essays are well written and persuasively argued. They are original in approach and content and demonstrate a command of bibliographic style (either MLA or Chicago) and research methods. Furthermore, they reveal a student who is able to not only understand key concepts in literary analysis, but use them to create new insights, new knowledge.

B-Range Essays:

These essays are well written and persuasively argued with a clearly defined thesis.. They will reveal a student understanding key concepts, and a strong command of bibliographic style and research methods. The difference between these and A papers, is that B papers will not push the boundaries toward the creation of new knowledge through an original, creative approach to the topic at hand.

C-Range Essays:

These essays will be marked by writing problems of various degrees, such as grammar and syntax problems, the lack of a clear thesis, an inability to support a claim with literary evidence, and/or the lack of relevant research content to support key claims. They will, however, still be cogently written. The essay will still indicate a student's basic comprehension of the literary works in question.

D-Range Essays:

These essays have many of the faults of C papers, but they are further marked by writing that prevents comprehension or understanding of a key idea. They may also fail to show an understanding of course readings. They may also fail to include or to properly cite outside research sources.

F-Range Essays:

These essays suffer from all the faults of D papers, but they indicate a student with severe writing and comprehension issues which need to be addressed, usually through a tutorial intervention.

Grading Policies

Late Work: If you're having trouble turning things in, let me know.

Turn-around Time: I aim to return graded work to you within a week of the due date. When this is not possible, I will send an announcement to the class.

Grade Disputes: You are required to wait 24 hours before contacting me to dispute a grade. Within that time, I expect that you will review the assignment details and reflect on the quality of the work you turned in. If you would still like to meet, email me to set up a meeting (I cannot discuss grades over email). You should come to our scheduled meeting with specific examples that demonstrate that you earned a higher grade than you received. If you miss your scheduled meeting, you forfeit your right to a grade dispute. If you do not contact me to schedule a meeting within seven days of receiving your grade, you also forfeit your right to a grade dispute.

Essay Policies

- 1. All Writing and Essays must be original work. Note that I typically use the Turnitin plagiarism check on all essay assignments.
- 2. All Essays and Short Writings should always be properly formatted with a correct bibliography (MLA style is preferred).
- 3. Must be at least the minimum page or word-count length.
- 4. There are no rewrite options for papers.

General Course Policies

Attendance — As in most literature courses, you must be “in” class to participate. In an online course, students must be regular and active participants in any online projects.

Statement on COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to attend/participate in class because you are ill, or due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance and participation is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

Class Materials for Remote Instruction

Remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. In this course, students will need access to a computer to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Additional required classroom materials for remote learning include a webcam and microphone. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn>.

Statement on Face Covering Policies for In-Person Classes

Face coverings are required in all UNT facilities. Students are expected to wear face coverings during in-person classes. If you are unable to wear a face covering due to a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Access to request an accommodation. UNT face covering requirements are subject to change due to community health guidelines. Any changes will be communicated via the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

I am always very happy to accommodate any student with any special needs. Simply advise me of any such situations at the start of the course.

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, the instructor will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Classroom Etiquette:

I expect courtesy and respect from, and for, all students. This is simply common sense. Students who interfere with the learning process or violate university policies will be suspended from course activities. Students may be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities in cases where such behavior has violated the Code of Student Conduct. (<http://conduct.unt.edu>

[Links to an external site.](#)

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General University Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws

and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources

available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

University of North Texas | 9

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class, and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

The work is used only once.

The work is not used in its entirety.

Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.

The student is not identified.

The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Class Recordings & Student Likenesses

Synchronous (live) sessions in this course will be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Academic Support & Student Services

Student Support Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center
(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)

- Counseling and Testing Services
(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- UNT Psychiatric Services
(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- Individual Counseling (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- UNT Records
- UNT ID Card
- UNT Email Address
- Legal Name

**UNT eulDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*

Pronouns

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can add your pronouns to your Canvas account so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- o What are pronouns and why are they important? How do I use pronouns?
- o How do I share my pronouns?
- o How do I ask for another person's pronouns?
- o How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?

Additional Student Support Services

- Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

- Student Legal Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- Career Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- Multicultural Center (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- Counseling and Testing Services
(<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- Academic Resource Center (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- Academic Success Center (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- UNT Libraries (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- Writing Lab (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)
-