

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. **COURSE ID:** LIT. 156 **TITLE:** Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature
Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; and 96.0-108.0 Homework hours
Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only
Prerequisite: Eligibility for ENGL 100 or ENGL 105

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**
Degree Credit
Transfer credit: CSU; UC
AA/AS Degree Requirements:
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2b. English, literature, Speech Communication
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2c. Communication and Analytical Thinking
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5c. Humanities
CSU GE:
 CSU GE Area C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: C2 - Humanities (Literature, Philosophy, Languages Other than English)
IGETC:
 IGETC Area 3: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: B: Humanities

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
Catalog Description:
 Study of representative works from the genres of Science Fiction and Fantasy, examining their roots, twentieth-century rise, and contemporary status. Focus is on how the genres interact with mythology, philosophy, and a broad range of creative media both present and past. Reading, discussion, and analysis.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
 1. Demonstrate familiarity with a variety of representative works from the genres of Science Fiction and Fantasy, identifying major literary, cultural, and historical themes.
 2. Present a critical, independent analysis of themes in one or more Science Fiction and/or Fantasy novels in the form of a project, paper, or presentation.

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
 1. Identify and analyze major themes across a range of representative texts from the genre of Science Fiction and Fantasy literature
 2. Explain the philosophical and mythological content of works within the genre.
 3. Develop independent critical responses to one or more Science Fiction and Fantasy literature
 4. Explain the role of Science Fiction and Fantasy literature in the development of English language and literature and its influence on a broad range of media, art, and cultural works
 5. Identify and analyze literary and genre specific techniques
 6. Place Science Fiction and Fantasy literature within a historical and literary context, noting in particular their thematic and stylistic responses to scientific discoveries and technological developments in their respective eras.

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**
Lecture Content:
 1. Genre Foundations:
 - A. Völsunga saga
 - B. The Nibelungenlied
 - C. Beowulf
 - D. Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
 - E. The Time Machine, H. G. Wells
 2. The Gothic
 - A. Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole
 - B. The Mysteries of Udolpho, Ann Radcliffe
 - C. The Monk, Matthew Gregory Lewis

3. Utopias and Dystopias:
 - A. Herland, Charlotte Perkins Gilman
 - B. The Man In the High Castle, Philip K. Dick
 - C. The Female Man, Joanna Russ
4. The Neo-Gothic to Modern Fantasy
 - A. The Beetle, Richard Marsh
 - B. Dracula, Bram Stoker
 - C. The Wood Beyond the World, William Morris
 - D. "At the Mountains of Madness," H.P. Lovecraft
5. Robots:
 - A. I, Robot, by Isaac Asimov
 - B. Alien (film)
 - C. "Who Goes There," John W. Campbell
 - D. Lilith's Brood, by Octavia Butler
6. High Fantasy
 - A. The Worm Ouroboros by E. R. Eddison
 - B. The Hobbit, J. R. R. Tolkien
 - C. Titus Groan, Mervyn Peake
7. Space Travel:
 - A. Triplanetary, E.E. "Doc" Smith
 - B. Downbelow Station, C.J. Cherryh
 - C. The Sparrow, Mary Doria Russell
8. Postmodern Fantasy
 - A. Elric of Melniboné Saga, Michael Moorcock
 - B. Deryni Rising, Katherine Kurtz
 - C. Anansi Boys, Neil Gaiman
 - D. Last Call, Tim Powers
9. Science Fiction as Political Philosophy:
 - A. Orlando, Virginia Woolf
 - B. Stranger In A Strange Land, Robert Heinlein
 - C. Dhalgren, Samuel Delany
 - D. The Dispossessed, Ursula Le Guin
10. Writing of critical papers

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Discussion

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Students might independently research, specific topics related to the influence or relationship between Science Fiction and Fantasy literature and twentieth-century cultural and political dialogues or topics related to the segregation or secondary status of Science Fiction and Fantasy literature through the lens of race, class, gender, and sexuality or in agreement with/opposition to traditional arbiters of literary merit. Research will serve as material for in-class presentations and/or background for critical essays.

Reading Assignments:

Guided reading: Comparing original texts with film, television, and video game versions of stories.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Homework
- C. Papers
- D. Projects

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Silverberg, Robert. *The Science Fiction Hall of Fame*, ed. New York: Orb, 2005

- B. Thomas, Sheree. *Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction from the African Diaspora*, ed. New York: Aspect-Warner, 2000
- C. Wells, H.G.. *The Time Machine*, ed. New York: Penguin Classics, 2005
- D. Ellison, Harlan. *Dangerous Visions*, ed. London: Gateway, 2012
- E. Butler, Octavia. *Lilith's Brood*, ed. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1999
- F. Dick, Philip K.. *The Man in the High Castle*, ed. New York: Mariner Books, 2012
- G. Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus: The 1818 Text*, ed. London: Oxford, 2009

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Course Originator: Mitchell Smith