



ENGLISH 204-W01
GREAT BOOKS
SYLLABUS – WINTER 2007

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Meeting Place & Time

150 Dwyer | TTh 12:20-2:00

Course Description

English 204 provides an introduction and framework for the study of science fiction literature in its formal, stylistic and thematic characteristics. It also aims to introduce students to the critical and theoretical issues raised by science fiction such as the limits of the genre, its engagement with desire and the body, its exploration of gender and sexuality, and its speculations on scientific innovation and media technologies. The objective of the course is not only to present a broad selection of core literary texts and media from the field, but also to produce an intellectual versatility in students by encouraging them to approach texts from a range of different viewpoints.

Texts

Bester, Alfred. *The Demolished Man*. 1st Vintage Books Edition. 1996.

Clarke, Arthur C. *2001: A Space Odyssey*. 1st Roc Mass Market Edition. 2000.

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* 1st Ballantine Books Trade Paperback Edition. 1996.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Norton Reissue Edition. 1996.

Venditti, Robert and Brett Weldele. *The Surrogates*. 1st Edition. 2006.

Wells, H. G. *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Bantam Classic Reissue Edition. 2005.

Grading Scale

Course grades will be based on the following percentages:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Assignments & Quizzes	15%
Minithemes	30%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	30%

Attendance

Attendance is an essential part of this course. It is expected that you will come to each class period prepared for the day's activities; when you do not show up, or when you show up unprepared, the quality of the class's labor suffers. As we only meet twice a week, it is important that you attend class, barring any unforeseen illnesses, family emergencies, religious observances, etc. More than TWO unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. Should you miss a class, you are responsible for all assignments given during that class period.

Participation

This includes in-class speaking, activities, and responsive listening. Participation is crucial. Simply showing up for class does not constitute participation. You are expected to present your informed ideas and show respect for others in the classroom. Participation is mental attendance. You will be graded on how much you contribute to the learning environment of each class session.

Assignments & Quizzes

Throughout the semester, you will be given a number of assignments to be completed both in and out of the classroom. In-class assignments will generally not be given ahead of time; they will be issued during class and are to be completed during that class session. If you have an unexcused absence from class, you will not be able to make up those assignments. Quizzes will be given periodically to ensure that the reading schedule is being followed. They will usually be administered at the beginning of class. If you have

an unexcused absence or are tardy on a day that a quiz is administered, you will not be able to make it up.

Minithemes

A minitheme is a one page, double-spaced work in which you will be required to engage with the reading material for the class. The purpose of writing a minitheme is to develop your skills as a critical thinker and reader. In order to write a successful minitheme, you should keep a reading journal. As you read the course texts, look for recurring symbols, images and ideas and write them down in your journal along with anything else that seems interesting, disturbing or provocative. Then amass the information you have collected. Take one of the themes you have been focusing on in your reading journal and flesh it out with details, citations, and page numbers. Minithemes should exhibit four primary things: 1) evidence of attentiveness to the text under consideration; 2) strong textual support for your argument; 3) an explanation of the significance of the theme you have chosen to focus on; 4) questions or concerns for further investigation.

Minithemes serve as models for the sort of process that should be undergone when you write longer essays. In short, you must first read a given text, taking notes and underlining important phrases and passages. Then gather and sort out your notes, making sure your focus is clear and sufficiently narrow. Finally, develop a meaningful and interesting reading of the text.

A total of SIX minithemes will be due at the beginning of our discussion sessions for each major written text. Your first minitheme, for instance, will be on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and is due on the first day we discuss that novel.

Exams

The midterm exam will consist of short answer questions regarding textual study and discussions. The final exam will be a 5 page essay that is written in accordance with MLA standards and that synthesizes the material covered in the course.

Withdrawals & Dropping

You may withdraw from the course with a full refund no later than **January 9**. The last day to drop the course without a grade is **January 22**. The last day to drop the course with a grade of **W** is **February 19**.

Writer's Hotline

This service is available for quick or one-time questions that can be answered over the phone and usually involve grammar or writing mechanics. The phone number is 937.775.2158. The hotline is open daily until 4 p.m.

Class Calendar

Week	Schedule
1	Introduction to the Course <i>Metropolis</i> (Film)
2	<i>Frankenstein</i> Due: Minitheme #1
3	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (Film)
4	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i> (Novel) Due: Minitheme #2
5	<i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i> Due: Minitheme #3
6	Midterm Exam
7	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</i> Due: Minitheme #4
8	<i>Blade Runner</i> (Film)
9	<i>The Demolished Man</i> Due: Minitheme #5
10	<i>The Surrogates</i> Due: Minitheme #6
E	Final Exam

(NOTE: This schedule is subject to changes.)