LCC 3214 GBL: Global Science Fiction

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Prerequisite: English 1102                            Core Area fulfilled: C, Humanities

Course Overview
This class will focus on science fiction (SF) as a global literature that enables people to talk about their experiences with science and technology across centuries, continents, and cultures. In the first unit, we will explore the history and critical vocabulary of SF as it has developed in Europe and the United States over the past two hundred years. In the second unit, we will examine the transition from nationally- to globally-oriented SF through a case study of "black speculative fiction," beginning with nineteenth-century African American alternate histories and extending to present-day African SF. Finally, we will explore SF from around the globe, including tales from South America, India, Russia, China, Japan, and the middle East, while creating podcasts for the Sci Fi Lab radio show on WREK.

Learning Outcomes

• Science and Technology Knowledge Construction: Students will be able to recognize how society influences science and technical discourses.
• Textual/Visual Analysis: Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media.
• Interpretive Frameworks: Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative texts.
• Communication Skills: Students will be able to gather, organize, and express information clearly and accurately by using traditional and new media.
• Historical Analysis: Students will examine science fiction texts from the last 200 years to show how they reflect ambiguous reactions to change.
• Ethical Analysis: Students will learn how science fiction can be a powerful metaphor for examining and revealing our own cultural biases, expectations, and potential.

Required Texts (at Engineer’s Bookstores)

• Lavie Tidhar, ed. The Apex Book of World SF

Assignments and Grading: You will take two in-class exams, give one multimedia presentation, and write one final paper for this class. All assignment instructions will be posted on T-Square and handed out to you in class at the appropriate times in the semester. You will have ample opportunity to discuss all assignments with me and with your peers before they are due; thus, ALL GRADES FOR THIS COURSE ARE FINAL. Additionally, failure to complete any major component of the course will result in failure of the course as a whole. If you are having difficulties meeting class requirements, talk to me immediately; I will not listen to arguments after the fact. The following are the percentages for each assignment:

• Paper 1 20%
• Paper 2 20%
• Podcast Project 50%
• Participation 10%

Participation: This is a mixed lecture/discussion class. Generally speaking, I will lecture for the first hour of each class meeting and then we will spend the rest of that unit talking together about how we might apply the class concepts we learn in lecture to the assigned stories or films for that day. In other words, I teach you half the time, and then you teach me.
You must show up to class on time on a regular basis. I will allow you one free absence, but you need to use it wisely: beginning with your second absence, your overall final grade will be lowered by 100 points for each absence. For example, a 920 (A) would become a 820 (B) if you are absent twice. If you miss three or more classes, I reserve the right to fail you in the course as a whole. If you miss a class for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed before the next class meeting.

There are three kinds of absences that will NOT be counted against your participation grade PROVIDED THAT you provide appropriate documentation within one week of the absence:

- A family emergency for which you provide a note from the proper authority
- A GT extracurricular activity for which you provide a note from your coach or advisor
- An interview for which you provide documentation from the company in question

Overall, your participation grade is based on your ability to be a good citizen in class. This includes

- Doing all readings and assignments
- Bringing all readings and assignments to class on the days we are scheduled to discuss them
- Actively participating in class discussions (as both a speaker and a listener)

Your participation grade will be negatively affected by disruptive behavior including

- Failure to do the readings
- Failure to be courteous to others when talking in class
- Disrupting class in nonverbal ways

Please note that I don’t expect us to experience chronic participation problems but that if they do arise, I also reserve to the right to institute pop quizzes and similarly annoying tasks.

**Students with Disabilities** should self-report to ADAPTS at
220 Student Services Building
Atlanta, GA 30332-0285
404.894.2564 (voice)/404.894.1664 (voice/TDD)
[www.adapts.gatech.edu/guidebook.html](http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/guidebook.html)

**Scholastic Dishonesty and Academic Misconduct:** All of the writing you submit for this course must be your own. If I suspect you of plagiarizing any part of a project, (passing off someone else’s writing as your own), I will submit your name and the particular project to the Dean of Students, who will then take the appropriate disciplinary action. The Georgia Tech honor code (at [www.honor.gatech.edu/honorcode/honorcode.html](http://www.honor.gatech.edu/honorcode/honorcode.html)) defines academic misconduct as:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay... or other assignment included in an academic course;
- Unauthorized collaboration with a student in the commission of academic requirements;
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant;
- Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a member of the faculty so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any institute document relating to the academic status of a student.

**Miscellaneous:** Ultimately this is your class, so if you have suggestions for readings, films or activities that you think might supplement our studies, please do share them with me. Every semester I try to shape the course in accordance with the needs of that particular class, so I really do value your input.
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Spring 2014 Assignment Schedule

W 1/08  
- Introductions; review syllabus.  
- Discussion: What is science fiction? What is globalization?  
- Lecture on the roots of globalization and modern science fiction  
- In-class viewing and discussion: Georges Méliès, *A Trip to the Moon* (1902); Thomas Edison, *A Trip to Mars* (1910).

**Unit 1: A Brief History of Eurowestern SF**

W 1/15  
- Lecture on globalization and classic SF (Pulp Era and Golden Age; 1880s-1960).  
- Discuss Stanley Weinbaum, “A Martian Odyssey”; Lilith Lorraine, “Into the 28th Century”; Isaac Asimov, “The Evitable Conflict”; Judith Merril, “That Only a Mother” (T-Square)  
- Recommended extra reading: Garrett P. Serviss, *Edison’s Conquest of Mars*  
(http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/19141)  
- Essay assignments discussed in class today (T-Square).

W 1/22  
- Lecture on globalization and modern SF (New Wave, Cyberpunk and World SF; 1960-present).  
- Recommended extra reading: John Brunner, *Stand on Zanzibar*  
(http://www.pdfarchive.info/pdf/B/Br/Brunner_John_-_Stand_on_Zanzibar.pdf)

W 1/29  
- **Essay #1 due at the beginning of the class hour.**  
- In-class screening TBD

**Unit 2: From Nation to World: the Case of Afrofuturism**

W 2/5  
- Lecture on U.S. Afrofuturism  
- Recommended extra reading: Sutton E. Griggs, *Imperium in Imperio*  
- In-class screening, Sun Ra, *Space is the Place*

W 2/12  
- Lecture on Black Atlantic Afrofuturism  
- Nalo Hopkinson, “Ganger (Ball Lightning)”; Tobias Buckell, “Manumission”; Nnedi Okorafor “Hello Moto”  
- Recommended reading, Minister Faust, *The Coyote Kings, Book 1: The Space Age Bachelor Pad*

W 2/19  
- Lecture on African Afrofuturism  
- Please remember to attend the Susana Morris lecture on “Androids, Shape Shifters, and Vampires: Black Women’s Afrofuturist Feminist Cultural Productions.” Ferst Room (7th floor Library), Thursday, 2/20.

W 2/26  
- Class runs 1-3 pm today  
- In-class reading from and discussion of steamfunk with Milton Davis and Balogun Ojetade
• Milton Davis, “The Delivery”; Balogun Ojetade, “Rite of Passage”; return to Jones’s “Benjamin’s Freedom Magic”

W 3/5
• Essay #2 due at the beginning of the class hour
• In-class screening, John Sayles, Brother From Another Planet (1984)
• In-class screening, Wanuri Kahui, Pumzi (2009)
• Discuss Final Podcast Assignment (T-Square)

Unit 3: SF Around the World
W 3/12
• Global SF: Readings from the Apex Anthology of World SF TBD
• Podcast background material (summarizing and contextualizing your artist/text/subgenre) due in class today.

W 3/19
• No class: Spring Break!

W 3/26
• Global SF: Readings from the Apex Anthology of World SF TBD
• Research bibliography due in class today

W 4/2
• Global SF: Readings from the Apex Anthology of World SF TBD
• Annotated bibliography due in class today

W 4/9
• Global SF: Readings from the Apex Anthology of World SF TBD
• Continue working on annotated bibliographies in class

W 4/16
• First draft of your podcast due in class today
• Workshop drafts
• In-class screening TBD

W 4/23
• Final draft of your podcast due in class today
• Workshop drafts
• Class wrap-up: come to class ready to discuss three things you learned about global science fiction this semester.

W 4/30
• All final projects due to professor by email at 2:30 pm today.