

English 389R: Special Topics—Myth, Fantasy, Science Fiction
Professor Gretchen Schulz
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Texts:

Frankenstein. Mary Shelley.
Dracula. Bram Stoker.
The Fellowship of the Ring. J.R.R. Tolkien.
That Hideous Strength. C.S. Lewis.
The Martian Chronicles. Ray Bradbury.
The Mists of Avalon. Marion Zimmer Bradley.
The Left Hand of Darkness. Ursula LeGuin.
Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep. Philip K. Dick.
Dune. Frank Herbert.
The Eye of the World. Robert Jordan.
The Year's Best Science Fiction. Ed. Gardner Dozois.

Jan. 17 introduction to the course
Jan. 19 introduction to the course

Jan. 22 Frankenstein
Jan. 24 Frankenstein
Jan. 26 Frankenstein

Jan. 29 Dracula
Jan. 31 Dracula
Feb. 02 Dracula

Feb. 05 The Year's Best Science Fiction
Feb. 07 The Year's Best Science Fiction; possible essay 1 due (Frankenstein,
Dracula)
Feb. 09 The Year's Best Science Fiction

Feb. 12 The Fellowship of the Ring
Feb. 14 The Fellowship of the Ring
Feb. 16 The Fellowship of the Ring

Feb. 19 That Hideous Strength
Feb. 21 That Hideous Strength
Feb. 23 That Hideous Strength; possible essay 1 due (Frankenstein, Dracula,
The Fellowship of the Ring, That Hideous Strength)

Feb. 26 The Martian Chronicles
Feb. 28 The Martian Chronicles
Mar. 02 The Martian Chronicles

Mar. 05 The Year's Best Science Fiction
Mar. 07 The Year's Best Science Fiction
Mar. 09 The Year's Best Science Fiction; possible essay 2 due (The Fellowship
of the Ring, That Hideous Strength, The Martian Chronicles)

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SPRING BREAK: MARCH 12-16

Mar. 19 The Mists of Avalon

Mar. 21 The Mists of Avalon

Mar. 23 The Mists of Avalon

Mar. 26 The Left Hand of Darkness

Mar. 28 The Left Hand of Darkness

Mar. 30 The Left Hand of Darkness; possible essay 2 due (That Hideous Strength, The Martian Chronicles, The Mists of Avalon, The Left Hand of Darkness)

Apr. 02 Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep

Apr. 04 Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep

Apr. 06 Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep

Apr. 09 Dune

Apr. 11 Dune

Apr. 13 Dune

Apr. 16 The Year's Best Science Fiction; possible essay 3 due (The Mists of Avalon, The Left Hand of Darkness, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, Dune)

Apr. 18 The Year's Best Science Fiction

Apr. 20 The Year's Best Science Fiction

Apr. 23 The Eye of the World

Apr. 25 The Eye of the World

Apr. 27 The Eye of the World; possible essay 3 due (The Mists of Avalon, The Left Hand of Darkness, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, Dune, The Eye of the World, The Year's Best Science Fiction)

Apr. 30 last class and final discussion

May 02 reading day; possible make-up essay due by 5:00 p.m.(on any work or works you have not already written about)

May 04 final exam: Friday, 9:00-12:00 a.m.

Course Requirements:

The successful completion of English 389R will require the following of each student enrolled in the course:

1. close reading of the literary texts assigned
2. numerous brief reading quizzes on these texts
3. frequent intelligent contribution to in-class discussion of these texts
4. facilitation of in-class discussion of these texts
5. regular participation in the class conference on Learnlink
6. preparation of three essays on these texts
7. completion of a comprehensive final exam

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, you should have developed your ability to read closely and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write persuasively, in critical or creative modes, selecting, organizing, and presenting evidence sufficient to support meaningful theses about the texts in clear, correct, and effective prose, while acknowledging any sources used with appropriate documentation. You should also have developed your ability to facilitate class discussion and to contribute meaningfully to conversation about the texts during class discussion. Finally, you should end the semester familiar with some of the best mythic material in the genres of fantasy and science fiction.

Policy on Attendance:

You may have two absences with no penalty (though you will be considered responsible for work done or due in class on any day you miss for any reason and responsible for informing yourself about any assignments or announcements made on days which you miss). Absences three and four will count 1 point each off of your final grade in the course. Absences five and six will count 2 points each off. Further absences will count 3 1/3 points each off. Only significant illness, major emergency, or required religious observance will excuse an absence. And you should inform the instructor of the latter ahead of time. Students who come to class late are responsible for asking me to correct the attendance record right after class. I will not change that record at a later date. Frequent tardiness will result in penalty, too.

Policy on Late or Missing Work:

Only significant illness or major emergency will excuse late essays. Essays whose lateness is unexcused will lose one letter grade for each calendar day they are late. After four days, unexcused late essays will not be accepted at all. Furthermore, essays undone or done too late to count may not be made up by means of the make-up essay. Only an essay which has been done and properly submitted (in time to count) may be made up. Missed quizzes may not be made up at all-- unless the absence is excused. Quizzes missed during an unexcused absence will receive a zero.

Determination of Final Grade:

three essays @ 20% each	60%
class participation (including regular participation in and occasional facilitation of discussion)	20%
Learnlink contributions	05%
reading quizzes	05%
final exam	10%

You will be graded (in part) on three essays (of a minimum of 1000 words each). Each of the three essays may be submitted on one of two possible due dates for the essay. See the syllabus for the possible due dates. In each case, the texts you may deal with in an essay submitted on a possible due date are indicated (in parentheses, on that date). Topics for each due date will be distributed well ahead of time. The instructor will be available to advise you well ahead of time, too. Each of these three essays will be worth 20% of your final grade in the course.

Should you be dissatisfied with your performance on any one of these essays, you may submit a fourth essay, a make-up essay, on any course text or texts about which you have not already written an essay. If the make-up essay receives a higher grade than an earlier essay, the higher grade will be substituted for the lower one. The make-up essay will be due on reading day, May 2, as indicated on the syllabus. Please note that only an essay which has received a grade earlier in the semester may be replaced with a make-up essay. An undone/ungraded essay may not be made up in this way.

Another 20% of your grade will reflect the quantity and quality of your regular contributions to the in-class discussion of the texts and topics of the course as well as the success with which you facilitate the class discussion on the occasions when you are expected to do so.

Another 5% of your grade will reflect the quantity and quality of your contributions to the on-line discussion of the texts and topics of the course in the 389R conference on Learnlink. See the additional sheet for further information on our on-line discussion policies.

You will also be graded on a series of short-answer reading quizzes, usually given on the first day a particular text (or, in the case of long texts, part of a particular text) is to be discussed. Your average on these reading quizzes will constitute another 5% of your grade in the course.

The final exam for the course is scheduled for Friday morning, May 4, between 9 and 12. It will be a comprehensive exam involving identification of and commentary upon passages from texts we have read and one or more longer essays, pulling together the reading and thinking we have done during the semester. The exam will be worth 10% of the final grade.

You may also earn up to 3 points of extra credit in the course by seeing videos and films of the texts we are reading-- or of closely related texts. We will schedule a few course-related videos and films for (optional) group viewing as we go along. Versions of Frankenstein and Dracula, Excalibur, Dune (both the film and the recent TV mini-series), and Bladerunner come to mind as do the new versions of The Lord of the Rings and The Mists of Avalon which should be in theaters soon. And, of course, you may attend or rent things on your own. You will earn 1/2 point for each item seen. Just keep track of what you see and report it to me at the end of the term.

I will be grading the work you submit to me-- and assigning your final grade in the course-- using the plus/minus grading system.

Please note that all work for the course must be done in accordance with the dictates of the Honor Code of the College. Your name on any work you do for the course constitutes an Honor pledge.