DIVISION COURSE SYLLABUS

Division  Humanities  Course Prefix and Number  ENGL 2153

Course Title  Fantasy and Science Fiction Literature

Semester and Year Submitted  Revised Spring 2016  Credit Hours  3

Prepared by  Kevin Caliendo

Hours Per Week:  Class 3  Lab 0

Course Description (as it appears in Catalog)
A survey of the best fantasy and science fiction literature, including epics, utopian novels, and gothic tales that are the seeds of modern imaginative literature. Classical literary criteria will be stressed and applied to the various literary genres.

Prerequisites  ENGL 1213 or equivalent

Text(s):  Title  Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction
          Author  Evans, Arthur B.
          Publisher  Wesleyan UP
          Copyright Date  2010
          ISBN#  9780819569554

Reading Level
Title  The Lord of the Rings
Author  Tolkien, J.R.R.
Publisher  Houghton Mifflin
Copyright Date  2003
ISBN#  9780618343997

Supplemental Materials: (other books, audio visual aids, etc.)
Used at instructor's discretion, but may include appropriate supplemental reading, films, and web content on individual authors or literary phenomena as well as lectures, oral reports and discussion.
RATIONALE:

The course will focus on science fiction and fantasy as genres melding literary art, scientific and philosophical speculation, and the evocation of the peculiar emotion often characterized as the “sense of wonder.” It will survey the history of the genre and then delve into representative themes, rhetoric, and methods of storytelling in texts, films and other media.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

The assessments in this course include discussion boards, quizzes, essays, a presentation and a final exam. These activities are structured to measure your progress in achieving our course objectives. Upon completion of ENGL 2153, students will be able to

1. Express in writing a sound knowledge of the historic development of science fiction and fantasy into their modern forms as literary genres and modes of entertainment and art.

2. Describe and analyze common science fiction and fantasy themes, tropes, and modes of expression.

3. Place representative works of science fiction and fantasy in a larger cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic context.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Methods of instruction may vary with individual instructors. Instructors are encouraged to explain their methods at the beginning of each course. The following methods of instruction may be used in order to accomplish the stated objectives: Lectures, and audio-visual presentations, quest lecturers, individual research and library work, oral and/or written reports, class discussion, individual conference, investigating cross-disciplinary resources, journals or other written responses to literature, exams and quizzes.

EVALUATION:

Student evaluation methods vary with instructor and may include the following:

1. Objective and essay quizzes and exams.
2. Written work such as discussion boards, reports, research papers, journal and response writing.
3. Oral work such as class participation and reports.
4. Research project
5. At least 20 pages of credited writing for assessment, inquiry, learning, thinking, and/or communication. (These pages may include but are not limited to the following: journals, exploratory writing, and discussion board postings, etc.)

Learning Objectives:

Unit 1 – Introduction to the Science Fiction genre (Expected Outcomes 1 and 2)

1. Identify course rationale, objectives and procedures for evaluation.
2. Discuss means and methods of literary analysis.
3. Assess salient characteristics of science fiction evident in the works of major early authors (e.g. Jules Verne and H.G. Wells).
Unit 2 – Robots and Artificial Intelligence (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, and 3)
1. Analyze works of science fiction that depict interactions between robots and humans.
2. Relate fears and concerns in literature about the potential dark future of robotics to contemporary anxiety of automation and artificial intelligence.
3. Explore connections between self-aware robots in Asimov’s “Reason” and Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein.

Unit 3 – Space and Time (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, and 3)
1. Analyze works of science fiction that depict space travel, time travel, and/or alien life.
2. Discuss time travel as a plot device and trope in literature and compare how authors address its illogical and paradoxical consequences.
3. Analyze the thematic significance of alien encounters in science fiction as a commentary on human history and experience.

Unit 4 – Post-apocalyptic Landscapes (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, and 3)
1. Analyze representative examples of post-apocalyptic literature (e.g. “Speech Sounds)
2. Compare post-apocalyptic science fiction with earlier accounts in medieval and Early Modern theological texts.
3. Compare post-apocalyptic science fiction with contemporary zombie fiction

Unit 5: Tolkien and Fantasy (Expected Outcomes 1, 2, and 3)
1. Assess Tolkien’s role as a pioneer in fantasy literature
2. Explore connections between Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings trilogy and medieval literature and folklore.
3. Compare themes and characterization in Lord of the Rings with contemporary fantasy works such as Game of Thrones.