



# Science Fiction

ENG 2420, E255

W 6:00PM-8:30PM

N605

Professor Ellis

Office/Hours: N520, MW 4:00-5:00PM

[jellis@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:jellis@citytech.cuny.edu)

<http://dynamicsubspace.net>

## Course Description

We will endeavor to locate the emergence of the Science Fiction (SF) genre and unravel how SF came to be the preeminent literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. To accomplish this, we will read and watch significant examples of SF from its long history beginning with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. To demonstrate what you have learned, you will have brief, daily writing assignments, three non-cumulative exams, and a research essay. In addition to the readings, viewings, and lectures, students are strongly encouraged to add their SF knowledge to our discussions. Please note that this is a writing intensive course, and it is a reading intensive course. If you give this course the time and attention that it deserves, you will find that it pays tremendous dividends in your life and professionalism. *The catalog course description, objectives, and prerequisites are attached.*

## Required Texts

All readings available online. See links to readings on the tentative schedule.

## Required Resources

Computer access, word processing software, and a means of saving your work securely.

Access to your City Tech email.

Access and account at [openlab.citytech.cuny.edu](http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu).

## Grading

Assignment	Description	Percentage of Final Grade
Midterm Exam	This essay and short response exam covers the material discussed before it.	20%
Final Exam	This essay and short response exam covers the material discussed after the midterm exam.	30%
Essay Project	Introduced early in the semester and due on the last day of class, students analyze a cultural work through a science fictional lens using SF definitions and terminology.	25%
After Class Summaries	After each class, students write at least 250-words summarizing that day's reading, lecture, and discussion. A	25%

	week's worth of summaries is due on OpenLab before the beginning of the next week.	
--	--	--

### Attendance and Lateness Policy

The expectation for successful and respectful college students is to arrive on time and attend all classes. The college permits students to miss 10% of a class (three absences) for whatever reason. In our class, each additional absence will reduce your final grade by 10 points (equivalent of a full letter grade). An absence does not excuse you from any assignments or exams. Use your absences wisely. Arriving late or leaving early will, depending on the specific situation, count as a full or partial absence.

### Required Format for Papers

While there will be exceptions that we will discuss in class, all writing submitted online or on printed paper should follow MLA professional style. In particular, your writing should always include a "name block," a title, and your writing. If you quote or cite writing by others, it should be properly cited and included as an entry on a concluding "Works Cited" list. Search Google for "Purdue OWL MLA" for guidelines and sample papers.

### Policy for Late Papers

Assignments submitted late or exams taken late will incur a 10-point reduction for each day that they are late. However, no assignments will be accepted after the last day of class. If a student knows that work cannot be completed on time, he or she should contact me or visit my office hours to discuss.

### College Policy on Academic Integrity

Students who work with information, ideas, and texts owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in CUNY and at New York City College of Technology, and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

### Tentative Class Schedule

Week	Day	Date	Activities and Due Dates
1	W	Aug 30	Introduce course. Discuss: What is Science Fiction? Lecture: Mary Shelley and her novel <i>Frankenstein</i> .
2	W	Sep 6	<i>Frankenstein</i> , <a href="http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/42324">http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/42324</a> Introduction, Preface, and Volume I (Opening Letters and Chapters 1-8) and <i>Frankenstein</i> Volume II (Chapters 9-17)
3	W	Sep 13	<i>Frankenstein</i> Volume III (Chapters 18-24)
4	W	Sep 20	No Class
5	W	Sep 27	H.G. Wells, <i>The Time Machine</i> (abridged),

			<a href="http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks13/1302961h.html">http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks13/1302961h.html</a> E.M. Forster, “The Machine Stops,” <a href="http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html">http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html</a> or <a href="http://manybooks.net/titles/forstereother07machine_stops.html">http://manybooks.net/titles/forstereother07machine_stops.html</a>
6	W	Oct 4	Edgar Rice Burroughs, <i>A Princess of Mars</i> (Chapters I, II, III, IV, X, XI, XIX, XXIV-end), <a href="https://archive.org/details/princessofmars00burriala">https://archive.org/details/princessofmars00burriala</a>  C. L. Moore, “Shambleau” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Weird_Tales_v22n05_1933-11_ELPM-SliV">https://archive.org/details/Weird_Tales_v22n05_1933-11_ELPM-SliV</a>  In-Class Video: <i>Flash Gordon</i>
7	W	Oct 11	Midterm Exam during first half of class  Continue lecturing during second half of class
8	W	Oct 18	Isaac Asimov, “Reason” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Astounding_v27n02_1941-04_dtsg0318">https://archive.org/details/Astounding_v27n02_1941-04_dtsg0318</a>  Ray Bradbury, “The Fireman” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Galaxy_v01n05_1951-02">https://archive.org/details/Galaxy_v01n05_1951-02</a>
9	W	Oct 25	Robert Heinlein, “—All You Zombies” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v016n03_1959-03_PDF">https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v016n03_1959-03_PDF</a>  Tom Godwin, “The Cold Equations” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Astounding_v53n06_1954-08_Sirius-Starhome">https://archive.org/details/Astounding_v53n06_1954-08_Sirius-Starhome</a>
10	W	Nov 1	In-class Video: <i>Forbidden Planet</i>
11	W	Nov 8	Harlan Ellison, “Repent, Harlequin, Said the Ticktockman!” <a href="https://cunycomposers.wikispaces.com/file/view/Ellison,+Harlan+--+Repent,+Harlequin+Said+the+Ticktockman.pdf">https://cunycomposers.wikispaces.com/file/view/Ellison,+Harlan+--+Repent,+Harlequin+Said+the+Ticktockman.pdf</a>  Philip K. Dick, “The Electric Ant” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v037n04_1969-10_PDF">https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v037n04_1969-10_PDF</a>
12	W	Nov 15	In-class video: <i>Star Trek</i> , “The City on the Edge of Forever”
13	W	Nov 22	Samuel R. Delany, “Aye, and Gomorrah” <a href="http://strangehorizons.com/fiction/ay-and-gomorrah/">http://strangehorizons.com/fiction/ay-and-gomorrah/</a>  James Tiptree, Jr., “The Women Men Don’t See” <a href="https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v045n06_1973-12">https://archive.org/details/Fantasy_Science_Fiction_v045n06_1973-12</a>
14	W	Nov 29	Ursula K. LeGuin, “Nine Lives”

			<p><a href="http://www.baen.com/Chapters/9781625791405/9781625791405__2.htm">http://www.baen.com/Chapters/9781625791405/9781625791405__2.htm</a></p> <p>Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds"  <a href="https://archive.org/details/Asimovs_v07n13_1983-12-Mid">https://archive.org/details/Asimovs_v07n13_1983-12-Mid</a></p>
15	W	Dec 6	<p>William Gibson, "Burning Chrome,"  <a href="http://www.housevampyr.com/training/library/books/omni/OMNI_1982_07.pdf">http://www.housevampyr.com/training/library/books/omni/OMNI_1982_07.pdf</a>  or  <a href="http://mith.umd.edu/digitalstorytelling/wp-content/uploads/GibsonW_Burning_Chrome.pdf">http://mith.umd.edu/digitalstorytelling/wp-content/uploads/GibsonW_Burning_Chrome.pdf</a></p> <p>Video: <i>The X-Files</i>: "Kill Switch"</p> <p>NB: Today is the Science Fiction Symposium held in Namm N119. If you attend at least one session and write a 250-word summary about it, you will receive extra credit applied to an exam grade. Email your summary to Prof. Ellis before the last day of class. Also, students who want more extra credit, might have an option to present their final paper during the symposium on a special panel. We will discuss this in the weeks leading up to the symposium.</p>
16	W	Dec 13	<p>Final Paper Due before class.</p> <p>Final Exam during class.</p>