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### ENG 3903B-001: Women Literature and Language Post-1800

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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**ENG 3903B – WOMEN AND LITERATURE**  
**Women's Speculative and Science Fiction**

Professor: Dr. Marjorie Worthington  
Office: Coleman Hall 3321  
Email: mgworthington@eiu.edu

Class: Coleman Hall 3160, MWF 11:00-11:50am  
Office Hours: MWF 12-1pm or by appt.

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** May focus on roles of women in literature, on literature by women or on women's relation to language, post-1800.

Identity & Culture; Genre, Form & Poetics; Education & Society; Media, Technology & Popular Culture

**FALL 2022 DESCRIPTION:** Science fiction, until very recently, was usually perceived as a predominantly male domain. This was the case, despite the fact that Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* is widely considered to be the first science fiction text. In this course, we will trace the development of science fiction and speculative literature from the perspective of women writers. This will include exploring elements of speculative fiction and Afrofuturism. We will start with *Frankenstein* and move from there to writers like: Ursula LeGuin, Joanna Russ, C.L. Moore, Alice Sheldon (James L. Tiptree, Jr.), Marge Piercy, Pat Cadigan, Melissa Scott, Octavia Butler, N.K. Jemisin, Nalo Hopkinson, Nnedi Okorafor, Malka Older, Karen Russell, Claire Vaye Watkins. Requirements will include short essays, a longer essay and a presentation.

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*  
Octavia Butler, *Bloodchild*  
Nnedi Okorafor and Tana Ford, *LaGuardia*  
Marge Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time*  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** In this course, students will:

- further develop their skills in reading thoughtfully and critically in multiple literary genres, including critical analyses of literature;
- use their writing and speaking skills to demonstrate understanding of the ways culture, society, and artistic ideas shape literary works;
- express in written and oral forms how different literary works portray complex cultural concerns, such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality;
- analyze literary themes and forms in ways that reflect sensitivity to the cultural and historical contexts of specific primary texts;
- strengthen their technological and electronic skills and use them for effective learning.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Short Essays:** You will have five short discussion-board assignments due (dates can be found both on the syllabus and in the file called "Short Essay Assignment"). For each of these, write a

one-page, single-spaced essay and upload it to the proper Discussion Board in the Communications section of D2L. Read and comment on your classmates' responses if you like.

**Author Profile & Presentation:** You will write an *interesting* essay and provide a presentation about one of the authors from our course.

**Analytical Essay:** You will write a longer essay that delves into a deeper analysis of one or more of our course texts.

**Final Exam:** This will be a cumulative, essay exam taken *in class* during exam period.

#### **POLICIES:**

**Attendance:** I take attendance every day (even if you do not see me doing it). You are permitted no more than three unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence after three will lower your final grade by thirty points (3%). If you are ill, please do not come to class; during these COVID days, absences due to illness will not count against your grade. Just email me and keep me posted.

**Office Hours:** I encourage you to come see me whenever you like. Come to ask questions, discuss problems or just to chat. Additional office hours can be held via Zoom and we can meet this way at times that are convenient for you.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be re-reported to the Office of Student Standards.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as appropriating words or ideas that are not your own without giving proper credit. The temptation to plagiarize can be great, particularly in the advent of extensive computer technology and the collaborative nature of our class. However, the consequences of plagiarism are dire and can result in a grade of F for the assignment and even for the course. It will also result in a report to the Judicial Affairs Office.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by MacAfee Hall 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

**Writing Center:** EIU's Writing Center provides free one-to-one conferences with writing center consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, documenting your papers, and working with sentence-level concerns. To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the center (3110 Coleman Hall) or you can call 581-5929 or click here: <https://www.eiu.edu/writing/>

**The Student Success Center:** Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance

with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to MacAfee Hall 1301.

**Student Wellbeing:** I will try to bring snacks to class every day. Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact your RA for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to help you access the help you need. These are weird and trying times. I know that. I also know that these times can take their toll in unexpected ways and your schoolwork can suffer because of it. You should know that I want you to be successful and will work with you to help you become so. In other words, don't drop out or blow off our class; talk to me about your situation.

For a list of resources for student wellbeing, click here:

[https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20 Well-Being\\_26-July-2022.pdf](https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf)

### **Grade Breakdown:**

<b>Short Essays (5 @ 40 points each)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Author Profile</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Author Profile Presentation</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Analytical Essay</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>30%</b>

### **SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

August	22 M	Introduction
	24 W	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Part I, Chaps. 1-3
	26 F	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Part I, Chaps.4-7
	29 M	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Part II, & Chap. 1 of Part III
	31 W	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Part III. Chaps.2-5
Sept.	2 F	<i>Frankenstein</i> , Chaps.6-end, <b>Short essay 1 due</b>
	5 M	<b>LABOR DAY – NO CLASS</b>
	7 W	<i>Herland</i> (1915) excerpt (Chaps. 4-6)
	9 F	<i>Swastika Night</i> (1937), excerpt (Chaps. 1 & 2 and pp. 85 to the end of Chap. 4)
	12 M	C.L. Moore, “No Woman Born” (1944) (D2L)
	14 W	Margaret St. Claire, “Short in the Chest” (1954) & Joanna Russ, “When It Changed” (1972) (D2L)
	16 F	Tiptree, “Screwtape Fly” + “The Girl Who Was Plugged In” (D2L)
	19 M	Tiptree, “Women Men Don’t See” & “And I Awoke” (D2L), <b>Short essay 2 due</b>
	21 W	Piercy <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chaps. 1-2
	23 F	Piercy <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chaps. 3-6

- 26 M Piercy *Woman on the Edge of Time*, Chaps. 7-12  
 28 W Piercy *Woman on the Edge of Time*, Chaps. 13-17  
 30 F Piercy *Woman on the Edge of Time*, Chaps. 18-end, **Short essay 3 due**
- Oct. 3 M LeGuin, "Walk Away from Omelas," (1973) (D2L)  
 5 W Jemisin "The Ones Who Stay and Fight" (D2L) **Author Profile due**  
 7 F **FALL BREAK – NO CLASS**
- AP 10 M Butler, "Bloodchild" and "Positive Obsession"  
 AP 12 W Butler, "Speech Sounds" and "Amnesty"  
 AP 14 F McHugh, "Virtual Love"(1994) & Cadigan, "Rock On" (1986), **Short essay 4 due**
- AP 17 M Article on Afrofuturism (D2L)  
 AP 19 W McDonnell, "Lingua Franca" (2004) (D2L)  
 AP 21 F Shawl, "Deep End" (2004) (D2L)
- AP 24 M Hopkinson, "Ganger" (2000) (D2L)  
 AP 26 W Lai, "Rachel" (D2L), clips from *Blade Runner*  
 AP 28 F major, "Trade Winds" (2004) (D2L)
- AP 31 M Amberstone "Refugees" (2004) (D2L)  
 AP Nov 2 W Owomoyela "Tides of War" (2015) (D2L)  
 AP 4 F Listen to Jemisin "Trojan Girl" as a class (2011), **Short essay 5 due**
- AP 7 M Jemisin "Evaluators" & "Too Many Yesterdays" (2018) (D2L)  
 AP 9 W Karen Russell "Reeling for the Empire" (2013) (D2L)  
 11 F Jennifer Egan "Great Rock and Roll Pauses by Alison Blake" (2011) & "Black Box" (2013) (D2L) **Analytical Essays due**
- AP 14 M Okorafor, *LaGuardia*  
 AP 16 W Okorafor, *LaGuardia*  
 18 F Okorafor, *LaGuardia*

### THANKSGIVING BREAK

- 28 M *Handmaid's Tale*, Chaps. 1-28  
 30 W *Handmaid's Tale*, Chaps. 29-38  
 Dec. 2 F *Handmaid's Tale*, Chaps. 39-end
- 5 M *Advantageous*, film by Jennifer Phang (2015)  
 7 W *Advantageous*, film by Jennifer Phang (2015)  
 9 F *Advantageous*, film by Jennifer Phang (2015) **LAST DAY OF CLASS**

**Wednesday, December 14, 10:15am-12:15pm: In-class cumulative essay exam**