Fall 8-15-2010

ENG 4300-4390-001-099: Science Fiction

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I. TEXTS:

- *Alien* (movie—1979)
- *Blade Runner* (movie—1982)
- Pat Cadigan, *Synners* (1991)
- *The Matrix* (movie—1999)
- *District 9* (movie—2009)

II. ASSIGNMENTS (with appropriate grade % for each):

1. **Critical Papers:** Two papers (5-7 pages), due on October 22 and December 10. Both papers shall be an analytical argument in which you examine the primary text(s) in order to prove the point(s) you are making. You will not use secondary sources. Topics and assignments will be discussed more specifically in class. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins to allow for comments. (25% each)

2. **Journal:** This will be a log of your responses to the texts we will be reading and viewing throughout the semester. This is a place to explore the texts, address questions raised by them, consider ideas for papers and to prepare for the final exam. These entries are not simply emotional responses such as, “This book sucks. It was too long. It was confusing and boring.” And they should not be plot summaries. They should be analytical, thoughtful and insightful investigations of ideas about the text, where you consider issues (such as treatment of heroism, gender, race, religion, sex, politics, society, etc.), themes (such as what it means to be human, to love, to fear, to be an individual, to distrust the other, to merge with cyberspace), scientific concepts (such as virtual reality, space travel, cyborgs, etc). (15%)

3. **Class Participation:** Discussion is a very important part of this course. Expressing your reactions to the literature will help you to think critically about the texts, and that just might make writing the papers less intimidating. So, you will be expected to voice your thoughts. (10%)

4. **Final Exam:** This will be a comprehensive, open-book exam given during final exam week. (25%)

III. ATTENDANCE: Without regular attendance, you will probably not know enough about how the course readings have been examined and explained. A significant part of test questions will be based on lectures and discussions. Without knowing about these, you may well be unable to cope with the papers and final exam. Therefore, you are responsible for all of those parts of the classroom experience. In addition, having more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a failing class participation grade, which is 10% of your grade.

IV. LATE WORK: All assignments are due on the dates specified. Late papers will be graded down. If you cannot complete an assignment on time, you must see me before it is due.

V. FINAL NOTE: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disabilities Services (6583) as soon as possible.
English 4300

**Course Calendar:**

**Aug.**
- 23 Introduction: Interpreting the Genre; *Self vs. Other: Sex, Faith, Love*
- 25 Heinlein: *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Part One, pp. 1-68
- 27 Heinlein, Part Two, pp. 71-226
- 30 Heinlein, Part Three, pp. 229-315

**Sept.**
- 1 Heinlein, Part Four, pp. 319-370
- 3 Heinlein, Part Five, pp. 373-438
- 6 Labor Day—NO CLASS
- 8 LeGuin: *The Left Hand of Darkness*, pp. 1-71
- 10 LeGuin, pp. 72-148
- 13 LeGuin, pp. 149-end
- 15 *Blade Runner* (movie)
- 17 *Blade Runner*

**Oct.**
- 1 *District 9* (movie)
- 29 *Alien* (movie)
- 4 *Land of the Dead* (movie)
- 6 *District 9* (movie)
- 8 Fall Break—NO CLASS

**Nov.**
- 4 *Land of the Dead*: JOURNALS DUE (6 entries)
- 6 *District 9* (movie)
- 8 Anderson, *Feed*, Parts 1&2 pp. 1-72
- 10 Anderson, Part 3, pp. 75-203
- 12 Anderson, Part 4, pp. 207-end
- 17 Misha, pp. 69-153
- 19 Misha, pp. 154-end
- 22 Thanksgiving Break
- 24 Thanksgiving Break
- 26 Thanksgiving Break

**Dec.**
- 29 Brown, *Helix*, pp. 7-114
- 1 Brown, pp. 115-272
- 3 Brown, pp. 273-452
- 6 Brown, pp. 453-end
- 8 PAPER #2 DUE; JOURNALS DUE (3 entries)