



DEPARTMENT Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE OUTLINE – Fall 2026

EN1220(C2): Texts and Contexts: Science Fiction – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Anna Lapointe	PHONE:	780-539-2992
OFFICE:	C420	E-MAIL:	alapointe@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	By request – email me for a time!		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course will explore a specific issue (to be determined by the instructor) using a variety of genres and media. Instruction will include essay writing skills. Because the course content will vary among instructors, it is strongly recommended that students consult an academic advisor or the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences for more specific descriptions regarding the course focus.

PREREQUISITES: none

COREQUISITES: none

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Important: Students are required to have **PRINT** copies of the required texts, and must bring those copies to class on each date that that text is taken up. Digital texts are **NOT** acceptable substitutes (except for students with documented accommodations).

- Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Dispossessed*.
- Vandermeer, Ann and Jeff eds. *The Big Book of Science Fiction*.
- Writing paper (loose pages, able to be submitted) and writing utensils, to be brought to every class.

Note: other materials are provided digitally on myClass. Some will need to be printed and brought to class. Please read the notes accompanying these documents carefully.

DELIVERY MODE: On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe a variety of science fiction subtypes
- Articulate in outline the history of the science fiction genre
- Critically analyze texts with reference to symbolic language, structure, and patterns of language
- Make connections between different texts in terms of both specific content and genre evolution
- Write academic literary analysis essays using science fiction texts as primary sources

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.alberta.ca/>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Attendance	5%
In-class activities (quizzes, note-taking, class discussions)	12%
Documentation project	8%
In-class essay	15%
Out-of-class essay scaffolding assignments	5% (total)
Out-of-class essay	20%
Final exam	35%

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59

B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

A detailed course schedule is posted to our myClass page. Please consult it regularly. Any changes will be posted to myClass, dated, and announced in class. Due dates of assignments are also posted on myClass, along with assignment details.

General Overview:

September – early-mid 20th century short stories, writing instruction

October – late 20th century & 21st century short stories, writing instruction

November – Ursula K. Le Guin

December – review and final exam

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Device ban:** Students are **not permitted** to use or access digital devices (phones, tablets, chromebooks, laptops, smartwatches, Meta AI glasses, etc.) in class. Exceptions are made for students with legitimate disabilities documented through [Accessibility Services](#). (Accommodations will not result in blanket device permission, and must be discussed in person with the instructor outside of class time.) In all other cases, students are not permitted to use devices or have them open during class time.
- **Note-taking:** To reduce student reliance on AI and other digital tools, and to facilitate learning, students are required to take notes during class. Notes should encompass lecture material, group discussions, and other ideas that emerge during class time. While PowerPoint slides are used in this class, they do not represent the whole of the class' content. They instead offer a guiding outline which students are expected to fill in.
 - Notes must be taken on paper. (Students with device accommodations should discuss alternatives with the instructor.) You may use pen or pencil, at your preference. Notes must be legible.
 - Intermittently, the instructor will ask students to hand in their notes at the end of class. These will be used as a form of attendance-taking. Notes will be returned the following class. If students need information contained in their notes before the next class, they are permitted to use their phones to photograph their notes before submitting them. (This serves as an exception to the device ban.)
 - Notes are not accepted on other dates, or after the end of class. They must be submitted before you leave the room at the end of the class.
 - **Notes should include your name and course number/section on each page!** Your instructor will provide a stapler to attach the pages together.



- The class includes instructions on good note-taking practices in university.
 - **The notes grade includes one component for completion and another for level of detail and accuracy.** (See detailed explanation on myClass.)
 - Students are welcome and encouraged to share their notes with classmates. A forum on myClass is available for students to share scans of their hand-written notes.
- **Attendance:** Showing up and being present in class (the whole class, not just the first 5 minutes) is worth 5% of the course grade. Students are required to “sign in” by initialing a circulated class list. (Remind the professor if she forgets to circulate it!) Students who forget to “sign in” will be treated as absent. Corrections to the attendance record cannot be made after the fact, so make sure to sign in!
 - **Only sign in for yourself!** Signing in for someone else constitutes academic dishonesty and may result in academic penalties.
 - **Participation:** Students are expected to attend class during class times. Attending class, engaging with classmates in discussions and projects, and completing in-class activities makes up a significant grade component of the course.
 - In order to participate effectively, you must complete each class’s reading **before** the date on which it is taken up. You should take notes on your reading (bring these with you to class), identify and articulate questions you have about the reading (again, write these down and bring them to class), and be prepared to speak to details of the text being studied. **You must also bring a print copy of the text with you to class, so that you can refer to it during in-class activities.**
 - Students who have clearly not done the readings, and/or who routinely do not bring the readings with them to class will receive a reduction in their participation grades.
 - In the case of the novels, you must finish reading the **entire novel** before the first class in which that book is discussed.
 - In-class activities and writings cannot be “made up” outside of class.
 - **Excused absences:** If your absence is for a legitimate reason (illness or family crisis), let the instructor know by e-mail. In your e-mail, please indicate your **course number and section**. (Your instructor needs this information every single time you e-mail her.) Please send a new e-mail for each class missed for a legitimate reason, or else clearly state which days will be missed. E-mailed notices of absence do not automatically “roll over” for future missed dates.
 - **Use of AI, Chat-GPT, and other large language models:** This class is oriented to developing your writing and critical thinking skills. AI is an active impediment to

that learning. It is imperative that in this course you do your own work without use of or reference to AI, Chat-GPT, or any other large-language model/bot. (Hereafter, the term "AI" is used to refer to all of these.)

- **ANY use of AI in this course is a violation of academic integrity, and is not acceptable.** (This class will include detailed discussion of academic integrity and how to maintain it.)
- **Assignments found to have been created using AI will not be graded.** Whether students are permitted to rewrite/resubmit these assignments is at the instructor's discretion. AI-written papers may be subject to further penalties under the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy. Additional penalties may also be applied to your participation grade.
- In cases in which submitted work exhibits concerning patterns or raises questions for the instructor about its creation and the student's intellectual effort involved, students may be required to submit to an oral examination regarding the work at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to participate in the oral examination will result in an assigned grade of 0 for the assessment. If, following the oral examination, the instructor still has concerns about the work, the academic misconduct provisions of the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy (linked elsewhere in this outline) may be applied.
- Papers which do not meet the basic assignment requirements will not be graded. Before such a paper can be resubmitted (subject to significant deductions for both lateness and resubmission), the student in question must complete the following steps:
 - E-mail the instructor to make an appointment for an in-person meeting (either at office hours or at another time), and then actually come to this meeting.
 - At the meeting, show a plan for completing the assignment appropriately. For essays, the plan (which should be neatly hand-written and presented to the instructor) has these parts:
 - An appropriate thesis statement which meets course requirements.
 - An outline of each body paragraph
 - Quoted evidence to include in each paragraph
 - A timeline for completion
 - Please note that the professor's approval is not automatic. This process is intended to assist students in actually completing assignments. Use of AI, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty are all unacceptable, and will result in the process being suspended, no new paper being accepted, and, potentially, application of the academic misconduct provisions of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy.

- **Missed Material:** Students are responsible for all missed material, including material missed due to legitimate/excused absences. Slideshows are posted to myClass, and notes can be obtained from classmates. If, after you have reviewed the class materials, you have questions, please contact me and I'll be pleased to help you.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- **In-class assignments** must be submitted before you leave class on the date in which they are written. Assignments which have been removed from the classroom or produced elsewhere will not be accepted or graded.
- **Out-of-class assignments** are due at 4:00pm Alberta time on the due date. At 4:01pm, they become late, so you might as well take a few hours and polish your work to offset the penalty.
 - Assignments must be submitted via myClass. Assignments must be typed, in pdf format, and double-spaced. Improperly submitted work will not be accepted/graded. If myClass will not accept the assignment, check whether it meets all formatting requirements.
 - **Late Papers:** late out-of-class assignments are penalized at the rate of 3% per day, to a maximum deduction of 30%/10 days. After 10 days (ending at 4:00pm), late papers will no longer be accepted, and missing assignments will receive grades of 0%. Students with extenuating circumstances (illness, family crisis) for critically late papers must question must complete the following steps:
 - E-mail the instructor to make an appointment for an in-person meeting (either at office hours or at another time), and then actually come to this meeting.
 - At the meeting, show a plan for completing the assignment appropriately. For essays, the plan (which should be neatly hand-written and presented to the instructor) has these parts:
 - An appropriate thesis statement which meets course requirements.
 - A timeline for completion
 - Please note that the professor's permission to submit a critically late paper is not automatic. This process is intended to help students with good-faith crises to complete the course.
 - **No assignments will be accepted after 9 December 2026 at 4:00pm**, even if the 10-day window has not elapsed. Assignments not received by that date and time receive grades of 0%.



- **Extensions:** Students must contact the instructor directly regarding extensions. I grant extensions for the following reasons: technological failure (may be used only once), sick children/family crisis, illness or injury of student, alien abduction (documentation required). Extensions are not open-ended; rather, we will agree on a new deadline, after which late penalties apply.
 - Extensions are not given because of workload. Due dates across classes tend to come in clusters. Plan ahead and be prepared to deal with the schedule.
- **Parents and Caregivers:** If you are a parent or caregiver (not a paid sitter), please let me know. I'm aware that childcare comes with responsibilities which supersede the requirements of university classes. (Keeping human beings alive is a major responsibility!) I am happy to work with you to help you keep up in the course/manage your course requirements.
- **Children in the Classroom:** If your childcare fails, you are welcome to bring your child/children to class, provided that they can be reasonably quiet. (Providing them with entertainment will help with this. If their entertainment is an electronic device, please provide them with headphones or turn off sound generation.) Exclusively breast-fed infants are welcome in class as often as necessary.
- **Office Hours:** I am primarily available by e-mail. Send me your questions and concerns! During the week, I try to answer e-mails within 24 hours. (I do not answer e-mails on weekends, but will respond to them on Monday.) If you'd like to talk in person, e-mail me and make an appointment. Let me know 2-3 times that work for you, and I'll look at my schedule, and let you know when we can meet. I meet with students in my office (C420).
 - Asking me for an appointment in person isn't terribly useful, because I don't carry my schedule around in my head. Please do e-mail me.
 - If you're not going to be able to make an appointment, please e-mail me to let me know so that I'm not left sitting sadly by myself.
 - When you make an appointment to meet with me, bring specifics questions you want answered or specific concerns you want addressed, so that we can make the most of our time together.
 - I will not look at, read through, or pre-grade your assignment during office hours, or at any other time. Bring me instead specific questions about how to do some element of the assignment.
 - Please don't feel you're imposing my making an appointment. This is your time as much as class time is, and I'm happy to meet with you.
 - Where's my office: Take the glass elevator to the top. Walk forward. Veer slightly to your right. My door is highly decorated and has my name on it.
- **Pre-Assessments:** Students often request that I "look over" an assignment and offer feedback before the assignment is due. I regret that I cannot do this, simply because of the time commitment involved, and the number of students I teach.
 - Thesis statements for out-of-class essays are an exception to this policy. I am always pleased to review your thesis statement, and even to review several drafts of it. Please send your thesis statement for feedback by email, pasted into the body of the e-mail.
 - Thesis statements are not reviewed in person, because I need time to consider and give you the best feedback I can.

- Unfortunately, I'm unable to review thesis statements for other instructors' courses due to time constraints. You are encouraged to contact the Academic Success Centre in the Learning Commons for help in these cases.
- **Re-Submissions and Extra Credit:** There is no extra credit offered in this course. Students are not permitted to re-do/re-submit assignments for a better grade. The course grade is based only on the evaluation elements listed on page 2 of this outline. Ensure you complete all course work well the first time to earn the best possible grade!
- **Preferred Names & Pronouns:** At the course's outset, my list of students' names is based on the register. If you would prefer to be called something else, please let me know, and I will adjust my list accordingly, and use your preferred name from that point on. You should feel free to use your preferred given name on all essays and submitted assignments. If your preferred surname varies from the name under which you are registered, I may need occasional reminders.) If you want to tell me your pronouns, you should feel free to do so. I will respect your pronouns.
- **Crisis Management:** I'm not a monster, but I'm not psychic, either. If something goes wrong in your life, I won't automatically know. If you let me know, I will work with you to help you keep up/catch up in the course. You are human, and entropy affects us all: crises happen. I will happily work with you to ensure they don't derail your academic career.
- **Important Note:** How you do in the class has no effect on how much I like and respect you. If you submit an assignment late, I will not be ashamed of you or look on you with disgust. If your work is imperfect, it's a sign that there are things you need to learn/I need to help you with; it is not a sign that you are a bad, lazy, or unworthy person.