

Fantasy and Science Fiction

English 22 Fall 2012

Instructor: Dr. Julie Sparks

Office: FO 128

Email: julie.sparks@sjsu.edu

Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/julie.sparks/>

Class meets: MW 9-10:15

Phone: 924-4434

Office Hours: MW 3-4, TTh 11-12

Course Description and Goals: Welcome to the outer reaches of the human imagination! In this class we will, according to the English Department's official course description, "examine works of literary fantasy and science fiction to understand them as expressions of human intellect and imagination; to comprehend their historical and cultural contexts; and to recognize their diverse cultural traditions. Both contemporary and historical works will be studied." See below for course objectives.

Required Texts: *Metamorphoses: A Play* by Mary Zimmerman, *Norse Gods and Heroes* by Padraic Colum, *Kingdom Come* by Alex Moss and Mark Wade, *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman, *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card, and *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells. *Gilgamesh* (select your own edition or print out the online version: <http://www.aina.org/books/eog/eog.pdf>)

Note: There will be other readings that are not on this list, but you will not have to buy them.

Course Format: Lecture, discussion, brief in-class writing, small-group work.

Learning Objectives: The benefits of studying literature are as profound and varied as they are hard to define. For this class, though, the official Learning Objectives are as follows: "1) recognizing how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns; 2) responding to significant works by writing research-based critical analyses and personal responses; 3) writing clearly and effectively in correct and concise prose; 4) examining significant works of the human intellect and imagination; 5) understanding the historical and cultural contexts in which specific texts were created; and 6) recognizing the accomplishments of and issues related to women and diverse cultures reflected in such texts."

Learning objectives 1 and 4 will be part of everything we do in the class: reading, discussing and writing about the literature. Lecture and discussions will be designed to maximize LO 5 and 6, as well. LO 6 will be particularly important in reading works written by or about women and people of non-Western cultures. Almost all of these works examine how societies respond to the "Other," whether that category is defined by race, class, gender, ethnicity, species, or even planet of origin.

Assignments:

Midterm #1 (in class)	150 points (15 % of semester total)
Midterm #2 (take home)	150 points (15 % of semester total)
Research Proposal	100 points (10 % of semester total)
Annotated Bibliography	150 points (15 % of semester total)
Book Club Project	150 points (15 % of semester total)
Small assignments	150 points (15 % of semester total)
Final Exam	150 points (15 % of semester total)

Grading: The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = adequate; D = needs improvement; F = failure. For this class you just need a D to pass, though I hope you’ll aim higher!

Extra Credit: To help soften the blow when homework is late (and thus not accepted), I do offer a limited amount of extra credit (30 points total for the semester). This can be earned by attending readings sponsored by the Center for Literary Arts (or other culturally enriching events) and writing about the experience. You might also watch movies related to the course themes and write about it (details about this are on a separate assignment sheet). These options are subject to approval, though, so check with me before you start.

Academic Integrity: I take cheating seriously, and so should you, as the penalties can be severe at SJSU. For this and every course at SJSU, be familiar with the “Policy on Academic Integrity,” which can be found at <http://sjsu.edu/senate/F06-1htm>. By now you should all know that plagiarism means presenting the ideas or writings of another as one’s own. A related form of cheating is submitting work you have written for another class. Either of these offences will result in automatic failure on the assignment and probably failure in the course. Ignorance of the policy and penalties will not help you in a dispute! Of course, cheating on the homework and/or tests also constitute an integrity lapse and will also be penalized.

Turnitin.com: One measure I take to discourage and detect cheating is to **require** all take-home essays to be submitted to Turnitin.com, so you will need to set up an account. If necessary, I might require that other assignments, such as homework or even in-class tests, also be submitted. **Work not submitted to Turnitin will not receive credit. Work submitted to Turnitin late will be penalized.**

Attendance and Participation: It is very important that students come to class regularly and come prepared to participate. This means that both reading assignments and homework should be finished before the class period when they will be discussed, and that students should arrive at on time. **Note: If the student is absent or late, the homework due that day will not be accepted, not even over email, not even with an excuse.** Furthermore, there will be frequent in-class writing, and these assignments cannot be made up by students who miss class. Poor attendance and weak participation will significantly reduce your learning experience and your grade, and it is the chief cause of failure.

Professionalism: Perhaps this should go without saying, but I will expect students to treat each other and their professor with courtesy and respect. This includes the little things--getting to class on time, turning your cell phones off in class, refraining from eating in class, refraining from toying with electronic devices, and dressing appropriately--as well as the more serious matter of avoiding rude or hostile remarks. Students who show serious weaknesses in this regard might be asked to leave the classroom.

Late Work: I recognize that there are perfectly legitimate reasons for good people to miss deadlines on occasion. However, because I think it is important to treat college students like adults, **I will penalize late papers by 10% each day they are late (including weekends), and I will not accept a paper after one week from the due date. Late homework (small assignments) is not accepted at all.** If you do miss a deadline for a major project, you will harm your case further if you also fail to contact me about it, as that is your responsibility. Late work, in addition to poor attendance, is the primary reason for student failure.

Email rules:

- 1) I use MySJSU to send important announcements, so **please read what I send**. It will be your responsibility to be sure your SJSU email account is functional so you get and read these messages.
- 2) All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class when they are due. **No assignments will be accepted over email**, although in special cases, with prior permission, a late penalty can be reduced with a preliminary email submission.
- 3) I respond to all emails as promptly as I can, but don't expect 24/7 access. **PLEASE use a subject line, sign your name, and tell me what class you are in**. I will have 115 students in four classes, and it takes me a while to learn that many new names. Also, please use good grammar and punctuation, not "textspeak." (It pains an English major to see the language mistreated.)

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.

Students with disabilities that require special accommodations must be registered with the SJSU Disability Resource Center.

Office Hours: Please feel free to drop by my office hours if you want to discuss your ideas for an assignment, get my advice on a draft, or get clarification on my grading. If my office hours don't work for you, we can arrange an appointment. I really don't mind! Note: I do share an office with two other professors, so even though I am usually on campus all day M-Th, I can't be in my office the whole time. Email is the best way to contact me about this.

English 22 Fantasy and Science Fiction Fall 2012 Schedule

Note on the readings: Please get the books as soon as possible. To succeed in this class, you should always bring the work we will discuss to class with you, and ideally you should have read the whole thing by the time we start discussing it, unless page numbers are given. For instance, by 8/29, you should have read *Metamorphoses: A Play*, and then you should bring the hard copy to class with you.

Discuss/Read

W 8/22 Introduction to the Course , in-class writing

M 8/27 Introduction to Speculative Fiction, Some key themes

W 8/29 Introduction to Epic, *Metamorphoses: A Play*

M 9/3 *****Labor Day, no class

W 9/5 *Metamorphoses: A Play*

M 9/10 *Gilgamesh* (available online: <http://www.aina.org/books/eog/eog.pdf>)

W 9/12 *Gilgamesh*

M 9/17 Scenes from *Arabian Nights* (movie)

Discuss book groups, Midterm #2

W 9/19 Nordic Gods and Heroes

Read: Asgard's Beginnings, Iduna's Apples pp. 3-26, "Odin the Wanderer" 79-84

M 9/24 Nordic Gods and Heroes
Read: “The Dwarf’s Hoard” pp.141-160, “Baldur’s Doom” pp. 187-204
Due: topic proposal for midterm 2

W 9/26 Nordic Gods and Heroes, film snippets, book club time
Read: Ragnorak and rebirth pp.276-282
Due: (by the end of class) book club sign up

M 10/1 Modern Superheroes *Kingdom Come*
W 10/3 *Kingdom Come*

M 10/8 Review for midterm, book club time
W 10/10 **Midterm #1 in class** Due: **formal proposals for book groups**

M 10/15 discuss Ursula le Guin’s “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” (on website)
W 10/17 discuss Paul McAuley’s “The Invisible Country”

M 10/22 Intro to theme: Utopia and Dystopia
begin film: *Harrison Bergeron*
Due: topic proposal for research
W 10/24 finish film *Harrison Bergeron* Due: **Midterm #2** (take-home essay)

M 10/29 Introduction to Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*
W 10/31 *The Graveyard Book*

M 11/5 *The Graveyard Book*
W 11/7 Intro to Orson Scott Card, *Ender’s Game*

M 11/12 *Ender’s Game*
W 11/14 *Ender’s Game*

M 11/19 Introduction to H.G. Wells’ Time Machine, begin *The Time Machine* film
W 11/21 finish *Time Machine* film

*****THANKSGIVING!*****

M 11/26 *The Time Machine*: synthesis of course themes (likely quiz!)
W 11/28 Review for the final exam Due: **Book Club Project, written part**

M 12/3 Book Club Presentations
W 12/5 Book Club Presentations

M 12/10 Book Club Presentations Due: **Annotated bibliographies**

Final Exam: Monday, December 17 7:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. (I know that is an unreasonable hour—sorry! It isn’t up to me.)