Writing About Worlds to Come (Fall 2020)
ENC 1145
ENC 1145 – Topics for Composition (Section 3337, Class #13323), Fall 2020

Instructor Name: T.D. Jordan
Course meeting times & locations: Tuesdays Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM); Thursdays Periods 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 3:50 PM) – All classes will be synchronous and take place over Zoom. The link and password will be provided by email and over Canvas prior to the first day of classes.
Office Location and Hours: All office hours will be held over Zoom on Tuesdays 11:00 – 1:00 or by appointment
Course website: Canvas
Instructor Email: tdanielle.jordan@ufl.edu

Course Description:

Stranded polar bears, apocalyptic fire-storms, and tree-hugging hippies. These are just a few of the cliché images often used to tell stories of climate change. But why do we rely on these over-simplifications? Representing our environment is no simple task. Climate change is not only abstract, it is taking place over a large amount of space and time, making it impossible to convey its magnitude, causes, and effects in a single work of art. Still, a rich body of literature and film has arisen and continues to emerge around this pressing global issue.

During this course we will look at a number of novels and films that seek to represent the potential futures of a world impacted by climate change and ecological issues. Each unit will pose a specific focus, allowing us to think through the various strengths and limits of different representational strategies. To think through dystopia and climate catastrophe, we will read *The Lathe of Heaven* (1971) by Ursula K. Le Guin and *The Parable of the Sower* (1993) by Octavia Butler. We'll follow with a unit on utopia including Kim Stanley Robinson's "ecotopia" novel, *Pacific Edge* (1990)*,* and Duncan Jones's post-oil film *Moon* (2009). Finally, we will turn to *Annihilation* (2014)*,* the first book from Jeff VanderMeer's widely read Southern Reach Trilogy, and Shane Carruth's marvelous film *Upstream Color* (2013) to analyze texts that rely on extreme abstraction and strategies of the "weird" to convey changing ecologies.

Throughout this course we place a heavy emphasis on the importance of representing the future. Our aim will be to better understand how our notions of the future impact how we engage in the present. Assignments will include discussion posts/responses, analytical essays, one short creative writing project, and a final research paper.

COVID Statement

This class was originally scheduled to meet in-person. In the light of the ongoing public health crisis, this course shall be offered entirely through synchronous online class sessions.

Additionally, I am aware and sensitive to the ways in which current events have had different and disproportionate effects on all of us and those close to us. As your instructor, my role is to introduce you to our class material, help you understand it, and support you in the successful completion of the term as you develop your own insights and arguments. Please reach out to me if there are ever any outside circumstances impacting your work in this class and we will work together on finding a solution.

Regarding Online Aspects of the Course

- Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:
- **Content**: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication**: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts

Novels: It's best to purchase physical copies if you are able, as it will allow us to keep our pages in alignment during our discussions. However, e-books are fine, given the ongoing circumstances. If you

choose this option, please keep in mind that you will want to pay close attention to and mark chapters/sections as you prepare for class discussion so we can all follow along.

> Butler, Octavia. *Parable of the Sower.*
> Robinson, Kim Stanley. *Pacific Edge.*
> Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Lathe of Heaven.*
> Schweblin, Samanta. *Fever Dream.*
> VanderMeer, Jeff. *Annihilation.*

Films: you are not required to purchase these films, unless you wish to do so. They are available for rental/streaming online. However, if you rent these films, it will behoove you to take good notes, as you will be required to write an analysis on each and you may choose to discuss them in your final project.

> *Moon* (2009) dir. Duncan Jones.
> *Upstream Color* (2013) dir. Shane Carruth.

Recommended Texts

N/A – all additional materials will be provided via Canvas

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Participation 50 points
Participation is important to your success. Attendance is the first step. It's important that you contribute to conversations and ask questions.

Discussion Posts 10 points each x 5 = 50 points
These posts made on our Canvas page will be addressing prompts related to our readings and viewings. Please pay attention to the prompts as there will be a required word count for each post, although this will not count towards your 6,000 words for the course.

Peer Review and Response 100 points x 2 = 200 points (600 words each)
These response essays will require you to respond to the work of your peers. These should be written in a respectful manner. Please be respectful of your partner's work and professional in your response. Even if you do not agree with the overall argument, you should use this a chance to critically reflect on both strengths and limits of the author's work and insight. I will assign everyone a partner, and you will be required to submit your essay to this person at the same time you submit it to the Canvas page. You will then be responsible for providing me and your partner with the response by the deadline specified on the syllabus below.

Close Reading / Analysis 150 points x 3 = 300 points (800 words for #1 and 1,000 words each for #2 and #3)
These (3) essays will require you to complete and close reading and critical analysis of one work from each unit. These essays should focus on a specific scene or scenes that you find relevant to the argument you would like to make. I will require you to submit a draft to me prior to the due date, but I will not accept late submissions for feedback after this deadline.

Annotated Bibliography: 50 points

The annotated bibliography will allow you the chance to critically engage with and reflect on your sources before you begin the writing process for your final research paper. Each sources should be followed by a brief description of the article and its relevance to your project (between about 3-5 sentences). You will be required to submit a working bibliography prior to the submitting the final version, where I will be able to provide feedback on source credibility and formatting.

Research Paper: 200 points (2,000 words)
The final assignment for this semester is a research paper. You will research a text of your choice from the course and shape an extended, original argument with credible supporting (peer reviewed) evidence. You will be required to submit a working thesis and draft prior to completing the assignment, and you are encouraged to attend office hours for additional feedback on your project.

Assignment	Word Count	Point Value	Percentage of Grade
Participation	n/a	50	5%
Discussion Posts	n/a	50	5%
Peer Review Report /Response #1	600	100	10%
Peer Review Report /Response #2	600	100	10%
Close Reading / Analysis #1	800	150	15.00%
Close Reading / Analysis #2	1000	150	15.00%
Close Reading / Analysis #3	1000	150	15.00%
Annotated Bibliography	n/a	50	5%
Research Paper	2000	200	20%
Total	**6000 words**	**1000 points**	**100%**

Course Policies

1. *Course Credit:* You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.

2. *Attendance:* Attendance is mandatory and essential to your success. Please review the UF-wide policies regarding attendance here: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/

   The DGST recommends a lowered course grade after **three** 50-minute absences (or equivalent) + automatic failure if a student misses **2 weeks** of class (failure *at* the sixth 50-minute absence).

   Double-period classes count as 2 absences. *For example*: Like all lecture-discussion courses, this one needs you! Use your allotted absences wisely (for emergencies, major illness) as you would for any job. You will fail the course if you accrue **six** 50-minute absences. You will earn a lowered course grade if you accrue **four** absences. Note that missing a *double* session counts as 2 absences.

   Only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are exempt from this policy. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

When you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed and come to the next class prepared; contact a classmate or the instructor to find out what work you've missed. It is also your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates.

3. ***Tardiness:*** Please be courteous by arriving to class (logging into Zoom) on time. I will take roll at the beginning of each class, and late arrivals (more than five minutes late) will count as partial absences. **If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to check in with me at the end of class so that I can change your attendance from absent to tardy.** If you do not do so, I have no way of knowing if you attended and will be unable to revise the marked absence. **Being tardy 3 times will result in 1 absence.**

4. ***Classroom Behavior:*** Please keep in mind that UF is composed of students of diverse backgrounds. It is important that you remain considerate of difference and treat your peers with the utmost respect. Unruly or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and will result in your dismissal from class. Should this occur, you will be marked absent for the day.

5. ***Paper Format & Submission:*** Paper format and Submission: All papers should be formatted per MLA 8th edition standards (Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced, one-inch margins, MLA header, and MLA citations) and submitted to the assignment portal on Canvas as a .doc or .docx file. Please note that failure of technology is not an excuse for missing or late assignments, **so plan your time accordingly, and communicate to me early if an issue arises.**

6. ***Late Papers/Assignments:*** Communication is crucial, and I will not accept late papers for full credit unless there is an extenuating circumstance. This means that papers not submitted into the Canvas submission portal by the deadline will not be accepted for full credit. Papers submitted late will lose 10% off of their final grade for each day that they are late. After two days, I will not accept late papers. Discussion posts will not be accepted after the deadline and cannot be made up unless you communicate to me an extenuating circumstance.

7. ***Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.*** Be sure to keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over. I will be grading all assignments in the Canvas portal to ensure there is a digital trail of when assignments were submitted, but it is a good idea to keep track of your files.

8. ***Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:*** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

   UF Student Honor Code:
    A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
   a. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
   b. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.

c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
d. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

9. **Students with *disabilities*** who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.

10. ***Students who are in distress*** or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: https://counseling.ufl.edu/

11. ***UF's policy on Sexual Harassment*:** The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/

12. For information on UF **Grading policies**, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

13. ***Grade Appeals*:** In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Please contact Ms. Blount at cblount@ufl.edu Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

14. ***Course Evaluations:*** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx

SYLLABUS

Wk	Date	Read/View for Class	DUE
		Introductory Week	
1	9/1	• Introductions • Review syllabus/course expectations	
	9/3 1:55-3:50	• **Lecture:** On climate history / U.S. environmentalism • **Discuss:** Vox video: Why are humans so bad at thinking about climate change. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkZ7BJQupVA And Naomi Klein's Ted Talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_Sc7hYKstI • **Review:** Frontline timeline on climate change: https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/timeline-the-politics-of-climate-change/ • Tips on reading and preparing for class discussions	**Introduction discussion post on Canvas**
		Unit 1: Dystopia	

2	9/8	• **Lecture:** Dystopia in fiction and film – limits and strengths • **Discuss:** "Critical Dystopia" from Tom Moylan's *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*	
	9/10	• **Discuss:** *The Lathe of Heaven*	
3	9/15	• **Discuss:** *The Lathe of Heaven*	**Discussion Post #1**
	9/17	• **Discuss:** *The Lathe of Heaven* • **Q&A:** Close readings / shaping a thesis	
4	9/22	• **Lecture:** What is environmental justice? • **Discuss:** "Dumping on Houston's Black Neighborhoods" by Robert Bullard	
	9/24	• **Discuss:** *Parable of the Sower*	**By Midnight Draft of Close Reading/Analysis #1 submitted through in Canvas (at least half, 400 words)**
5	9/29	• **Discuss:** *Parable of the Sower*	**Discussion Post #2**
	10/1	• **Discuss:** *Parable of the Sower*	
6	10/6	• **Discuss:** Peer review report: expectations and examples • Article share and critique	**By midnight: Close Reading / Analysis #1**
Unit 2: Utopia			
	10/8	• **Lecture:** What is Utopia? */* Re-thinking the future • **Discuss:** excerpt from *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* by Mark Fisher	
7	10/13	• **Discuss:** *Pacific Edge*	**Discussion post #3**
	10/15	• **Discuss:** *Pacific Edge*	**Peer Review Report/Response #1**
8	10/20	• **Discuss:** *Pacific Edge*	
	10/22	• **Discuss:** *Pacific Edge* • **Lecture:** Writing about film	
9	10/27	• **Lecture:** Life after oil	**Draft of close reading/analysis #2 (at least 500 words)**
	10/29	• **Discuss:** *Moon* • **Lecture:** Shaping a research thesis and the annotated bibliography	**Discussion post #4**

10	11/3	• **Lecture:** Research project tips, expectations, and more examples	**Thesis proposal and draft annotated bib (3 sources not from class)**
		**Unit 3: The Weird / Horror**	
	11/5	• **Lecture:** The weird, horror, and other strange methods • **Review:** Selection from Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*	**Close Reading/Analysis #2**
11	11/10	• **Discuss:** *Annihilation*	**Discussion post #5**
	11/12	• **Discuss:** *Annihilation*	
12	11/17	• **Lecture:** Global environmental justice	**Peer Review/Response #2**
	11/19	• **Discuss:** *Fever Dream*	**Annotated bibliography**
13	11/24	• **Discuss:** *Fever Dream* • Critical discussion – article share • Research Q&A	**By midnight: Draft of final research paper**
	11/26	Thanksgiving Holiday – No class	
14	12/1	• **Lecture:** Writing for the Public • **Discuss:** NYT piece -- "It's 2059 and the Rich Kids are Still Winning" by Ted Chiang	
	12/3	• **Discuss:** *Upstream Color*	
15	12/8	Course reflections and final questions about research papers	**Close Reading/Analysis #3**
	12/10	Reading Days	
	12/14	Final Papers Due on Canvas by noon (12 pm)	**Final Research Paper**

Grading Scale

Grading for this course will be rigorous. If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will be failed. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts.

The writing assignments for this course are designed to meet the minimum requirements of the University Writing Requirement credit. To satisfy this requirement, every assignment's word count must be fulfilled. Submitted assignments short of the minimum word count will receive zero credit.

Additionally, please note that I grade for the quality of the arguments you make. Personal opinion is of little relevance. Your perspective may indeed be informed by your own experiences and vantage points,

and that's fine. However, you should be able to shape a fully formed idea/argument that is informed and adequately supported by the texts you cite. In your papers, I will be looking for a consistent, clear, and logical argument that is supported by examples from the primary text and (where necessary) peer reviewed evidence.

University grading scale:

A	4.0	93-100	C 2.0 73-76
A-	3.67	90-92	C- 1.67 70-72
B+	3.33	87-89	D+ 1.33 67-69
B	3.0	83-86	D 1.0 63-66
B-	2.67	80-82	D- 0.67 60-62
C+	2.33	77-79	E 0.00 0-59

My grading rubric:

A range	Work exceeds expectations. Papers and essays in this range demonstrate strong, compelling, and clear arguments supported by evidence from the text(s) you are analyzing. They demonstrate an adept use of language with very few or no grammatical errors. Work is complete, well-organized, and critiques are thoughtful. Ideas demonstrate consistent social/political significance. These essays make good use of the primary text and provide supporting evidence where necessary. Meets the stylistic requirements of MLA format.
B range	Work is above average. The argument is clear, logical, and consistent. Grammatical errors are rare. Work is complete and there is a logical flow of information. **Valid** supporting evidence is used and ideas demonstrate social/political relevance. Almost all stylistic requirements of MLA format are met.
C range	Work meets expectations. The assignment is complete, but there are inconsistences in the argument/thesis. Supporting evidence is rarely used or is not always credible/peer reviewed and analysis is unclear at times. Grammatical errors occur. Ideas do not demonstrate much or any socio-political relevance. Does not meet the majority of MLA formatting requirements.
D range	Work does not meet expectations. Work is largely disorganized, filled with grammatical error, and the argument is either unclear or not consistent. Ideas are not connected to larger socio-political topics/issues or supported with evidence. Paper is either not in MLA format or does not follow many MLA formatting requirements.
E range	Work is either incomplete or was not turned in on time. Work that does not demonstrate any understanding of topics discussed in class or fails to provide a logical argument related to texts from class.