

LIT 4188, Section 019F

**World English Language Literature:
Literary and/as Science Fiction**



**Professor Phillip Wegner
MWF 4 (10:40 -11:30 a.m.)
MAT 0115**

**Office: Turlington 4115
Office Hours: Wednesday, 12:30 -2:30 p.m.,
& by appointment
(Zoom meetings also available by appointment)**

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In this course we will explore the increasingly prominent place of science fiction within global English language literature of the early twenty first century. For many years, there was an implicit divide between what was understood by some critics and readers to be “serious” literature and genre fiction, including science fiction. However, a growing number of the most prominent writers of the last two decades or so have drawn more and more upon the figures, tropes, and devices of science fiction; and some have even produced works that would be identified by most readers as science fiction. At the same time, established writers previously enjoyed only by fans of science fiction have garnered wider and more diverse audiences as their work begins to move into new territories. The result has been a tremendous revitalization of contemporary world English language literature, as it has been able to respond in ever more productive ways to the rapidly changing realities of our increasingly planetary lives.

Readings

Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life” (1998)
 David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)
 George Saunders, *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* (2005)
 Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006)
 Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2006)
 Charles Yu, *How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe* (2010)
 Colson Whitehead, *Zone One* (2011)
 Emmi Itäranta, *The Memory of Water* (2014)
 N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* (2015)
 Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* (2017)
 John Lanchester, *The Wall* (2019)
 Hanya Yanagihara, *To Paradise* (2022)

Other essays, short stories, and novellas, recommended and required, will be available in Canvas files. Students will also be responsible for viewing on their own four film adaptations: *Arrival* (2016) (from “Story of Your Life”), *Cloud Atlas* (2012), *The Road* (2009), and *Never Let Me Go* (2010).

As we will be engaging in a good deal of close analysis in class, which you will be responsible for in your papers, I strongly advise that you get copies of the editions ordered for this class. Please note that while electronic editions are also permitted, you will be required to have the readings available and open during the class meetings in which they will be discussed, and will be asked to refer to, read from, and discuss specific passages in class. Supplemental readings will be made available on Canvas.

Aims and Methods

1. Because of a series of state-mandated policies—currently under legal challenge—we will be facing some unique challenges this fall. I sincerely hope that through honesty, open communication, and a willingness to do what is the best for every member of our little “interpretive community,” we can create an environment of trust and respect that will enable this course to achieve the high levels of excellence that have been in the past hallmarks of all of my courses as well as undergraduate education more generally at the University of Florida.

2. One of the central aims of this course is to expand your horizons to encompass new approaches and new questions. However, for such a journey to have any meaning, you first need an intellectual home, a disciplinary base, from which to begin. This means there are some basic requirements for participation in this course. This is an *upper-division* English major course, and thus assumes you have completed, at least, the requirements for a lower-division composition and *English* major courses. During the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate, in both your oral *and* written contributions to the class, proficiency in the kinds of critical, analytical, writing, and reading skills expected of advanced literary and cultural studies majors. The readings themselves are drawn from a range of different national traditions and disciplines, and they will offer a number of different kinds of challenges. You will be required to keep up with them, and to respond to them in a variety of oral and written forms. Finally, I expect on the part of each and every student an open-mind and a willingness to carefully and seriously engage with the works we will be discussing: this means cultivating the readerly stance that has been described in a number of different traditions as *deep listening*, bracketing aside assumptions, opinions, and judgments and demonstrating an openness to the voices addressing you, even, and especially, if these offer challenges.

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief.

If you have any questions about whether this course is right for you, please speak with me soon.

3. Readings should be completed before the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. This means that from our first meeting, you should be reading continuously, getting well ahead of our discussions. Moreover, I do expect lively participation on everyone's part in the class discussion. If conversation lags, expect occasional quizzes or other short in-class writing assignments.

4. Attendance and participation in class discussion are indispensable parts of our work. It is vitally important that you arrive on time and attend the entire course

meeting. If you will have any difficulty in so doing, or have an obligation that will force you to miss, be late, or depart early from any class meeting, I ask that you speak with me in advance. Any student who misses more than 4 class meetings—with the exception of documented emergencies, waivers, and absences cleared in advance by me—will result in a lowering of the final course grade. Moreover, if you miss an excessive number of class hours, for whatever the reason, you will have been considered not to have completed the requirements of the course, and hence will not receive a passing grade. Finally, late arrivals and/or early departures from class meetings will be counted as absences. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with [university policies that can be found here](#).

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- 0-2 unexcused absences: (A)
- 3 unexcused absences: (A-)
- 4 unexcused absences: (B+)
- 5 unexcused absences: (B)
- 6 unexcused absences: (B-)
- 7 unexcused absences: (C+)
- 8 unexcused absences: (C)
- 9 unexcused absences: (C-)
- 10 or more unexcused absences: automatic failure of the course

If you have any questions please speak with me soon.

5. Students may use computers or other electronic platforms for accessing readings and/or taking notes. However, Wi-Fi connections should be turned off unless otherwise instructed, and students are not allowed to surf the web, work on other assignments, read novels, play games, view other pages, or engage in any other such activities during course discussion. Cell phones also should be turned off or silenced as soon as class begins. Violations of this policy will be counted as unexcused absences for that class meeting. While according to a recent state mandate (please see [UFF statement](#)) students can record course meetings, I expect that you will speak with me in advance about so doing. This is necessary if we are to keep a positive working environment in the class room. If you have any questions about appropriate use of these devices, please speak with me.

6. Readings should be completed before the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. This course will require you to do a good deal of reading, some of which you may find challenging in that they may lead to questions about deeply ingrained assumptions and uninterrogated “common sense” expectations. If you approach these works with an open mind, a spirit of adventure, and a willingness to expand your horizons, I think you will find the effort required well worth it. However, this will also mean that you need to work on developing in your reading skills new levels of attentiveness, concentration, and listening.

The first step in becoming a stronger critical reader is to become a more active, engaged one. If you do not already do so, start reading with a pencil or pen in hand, marking passages that seem especially important or intriguing to you, and jotting insights and questions in the book's margins or on a near-by note pad. At the same time, you should try as much as possible to inhabit the intellectual and cultural contexts of the work's author. Ask yourself these questions of the readings: What are the writer's goals? What things does she or he challenge or call into question? What are the writer's expectations and assumptions? How does she or he work to achieve both their stated and implicit goals? And most importantly, in what ways does this work enable you to think in new ways?

7. Throughout the semester, I will be asking you to prepare short written responses to questions we will address in class. These responses will be picked up at the beginning of the meeting and may be used by me to help open up our conversation. You may also find it very useful to keep a reading journal where you jot down your thoughts and questions, and where you indicate passages that strike you as particularly interesting or significant. Finally, on occasion I will ask to review your in-class notes to determine your grasp of the material and our discussions.

8. The major writing assignment will consist of three formal papers, ranging in length. Presentation will count toward the grade of the paper: for example, each paper is expected to be double-spaced, with one-inch margins, printed in a reasonable 12-point or smaller font, and use a consistent bibliographic and reference format. You will also be required to present specific supporting evidence for your claims, in the form of citations from the work, page numbers included. Each paper will focus on the course readings and will address a set of questions, issues, and themes we develop together in our class discussions. These papers will be your best opportunity to demonstrate your skills as an advanced prose writer and your grasp of both the readings and our discussions in class. Approximately two weeks before each paper is due, I will provide you with questions that will help frame your discussion, and you will be required to develop each of your papers in response to them. Any paper that does not meet the basic requirements listed above—including, but not limited to, using a consistent format; meeting at least the minimum length requirement; including specific citations from the readings; and making explicit connections to and engaging specifically with the prompts and class discussions—will be seen as not fulfilling the assignment, and will be returned for revision and a late grade.

Papers are due on the dates noted; late papers, including any returned to the student for revision, will receive lowered grades, unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

9. No final or midterm examinations.

10. Grades will be based on the conscientious completion of all of the above requirements. Please feel free to ask any questions in class or on an individual basis.

Information on [current UF grading policies](#) for assigning grade points can be found [here](#).

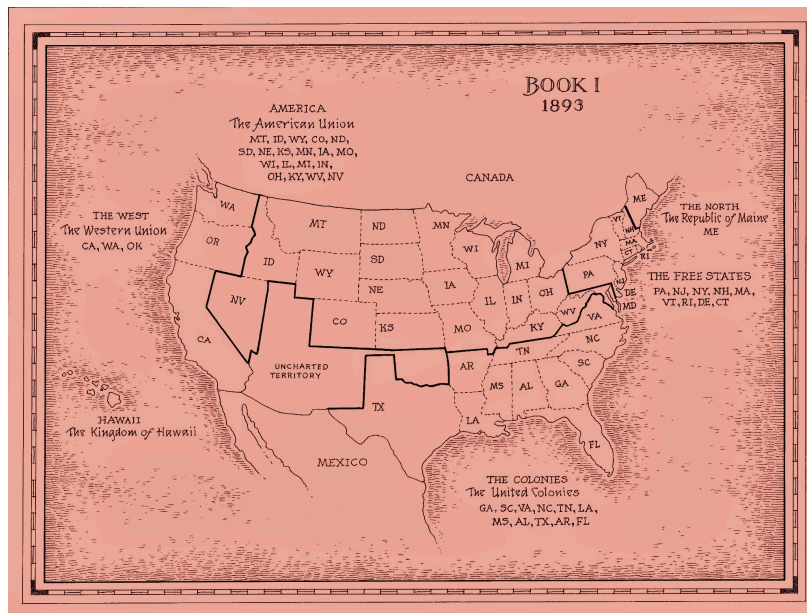
10. Finally, communication is crucial to everything we are going to do in the next four months. Thus, if you are unsure about any of these course requirements, or run into any kind of difficulty, academic or otherwise, as the semester progresses, please speak with me as soon as you can. I will try to be as accommodating as possible, but I cannot help you if you do not convey to me what is going on. Also if you have any general questions, or even just feel like continuing the discussion begun in class, I encourage you to make an appointment to see me. Once again, welcome – I look forward to an exciting and rewarding semester!

Grading Scale

A 4.0 94-100 940-1000	C 2.0 73-76 730-769
A- 3.67 90-93 900-939	C- 1.67 70-72 700-729
B+ 3.33 87-89 870-899	D+ 1.33 67-69 670-699
B 3.0 83-86 830-869	D 1.0 63-66 630-669
B- 2.67 80-82 800-829	D- 0.67 60-62 600-629
C+ 2.33 77-79 770-799	E 0.00 0-59 0-599

Grading Criteria

- Attendance (see #4 above)
- Participation and any response papers: 30%
- Formal papers: 70%



UF Policy Statements

Covid Policies

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated. As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor. Students needing accommodations should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students are required to review the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> Plagiarism or any other violation of the Student Honor and Conduct Code will result in an automatic failure of the assignment. A report will be filed with the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “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 Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions, and can be accessed at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful

manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend are in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu / <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Career Resource Center: Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.)

Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>



2022 Midterm Election Voting Information

All eligible students are urged to exercise their right to vote. You must be registered in order to vote. You have a right to register to vote at the address you consider the place where you live, whether that is your family's home or the place where you attend school. You should make sure you are registered at the voting address you prefer. You may only be registered and vote in one location.

- Register by October 11 to vote in the November 8 General Election
- Early voting for the general election is October 24-November 5th. All Alachua County voters can early vote at the Reitz Union.

Make a Plan to Vote. Register, check your registration status, or update your address here: [TurboVote](#). You can also register in person or get assistance with voting-related matters at the [Bob Graham Center for Public Service](#), 220 Pugh Hall M-F 8:30 AM-4:00 PM.

Key 2022 Mid-Term Dates

August 13: Deadline to Return Vote-By-Mail Primary Ballot

August 13-20: Primary Early Voting

August 23: Florida Gubernatorial Primary

September 29: Vote by Mail for General Election begins

October 11: FINAL DAY TO [REGISTER TO VOTE](#) IN GENERAL ELECTION

October 29: Early Voting Begins*

October 29: Deadline to Return Vote-By-Mail Ballot

November 5 : Early Voting Ends*

Election Day: November 8th

Tentative Discussion Schedule

1.) August 24 – Course requirements and policies

August 26 – Introduction: why SF? Why now?

Darko Suvin, “Estrangement and Cognition” from *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979)

Fredric Jameson, “Progress versus Utopia; or, Can We Imagine the Future?” from *Archaeologies of the Future* (2005)

2.) August 29-September 2

Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life” (1998) (in Canvas)
and Denis Villeneuve, director, *Arrival* (2016)

3.) September 5 – NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Sept. 7-9

David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)

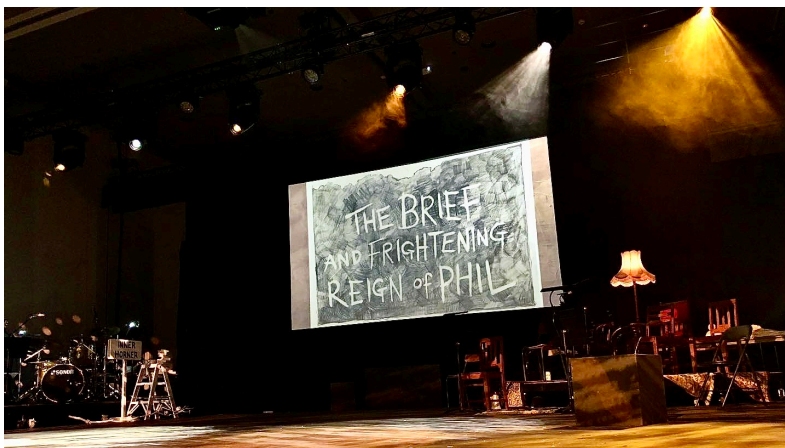
4.) September 12-14

David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)
and Wachowskis/Tom Tycker, directors, *Cloud Atlas* (2012)

September 16 – NO CLASS

5.) September 19-23

George Saunders, *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* (2005)



6.) September 26-30

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006)
and John Hillcoat, director, *The Road* (2009)

- 7.) **October 3-5**
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2006)
and Mark Romanek, director, *Never Let Me Go* (2010)

October 7 – NO CLASS (Homecoming)

- 8.) **October 10-12**
Colson Whitehead, *Zone One* (2011)

PAPER #1 Due October 10, by 5 p.m.

October 14 – NO CLASS

- 9.) **October 17-21 –**
Colson Whitehead, *Zone One* (2011)
- 10.) **October 24-28**
Emmi Itäranta, *The Memory of Water* (2014)
- 11.) **October 31 - November 4**
N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* (2015)
- 12.) **November 7-11**
N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* (2015)
- 13.) **November 14-18**
Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* (2017)

PAPER #2 Due November 14, by 5 p.m.

- 14.) **November 21**
John Lanchester, *The Wall* (2019)

November 23-25 – NO CLASS (Thanksgiving break)

- 15.) **November 28-December 2**
Hanya Yanagihara, *To Paradise* (2022)
- 16.) **December 5-7**
Hanya Yanagihara, *To Paradise* (2022)

FINAL PAPER DUE Saturday, December 10, by 11:59 p.m.