

LIT 120
M W 4:30-6:20
McGregor 118
Winter 2017

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LITERATURE AND SCIENCE: CLIMATE FICTION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This particular iteration of the course focuses on climate fiction, a relatively new genre. Dubbed cli-fi by Dan Bloom in 2008, climate fiction comprises literary texts that address climate change in some way. Many cli-fi texts fall into the genre of speculative fiction.

In this course, we will be evaluating the possibilities and challenges of using literature to disseminate information about climate change, to engage readers in scientific and literary debate, and to promote climate activism. The course emphasizes practical connections between the study of literature and science as well as with institutions in our daily lives. There will be field trips and collaborations with SCI 370 (Climate Change Biology), the Antioch Farm, the Antioch Kitchens, the Glen Helen Nature Preserve, and the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center.

COURSE AND LIBERAL ARTS LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- explain the basic mechanisms and consequences of climate change. (*Knowledge and Inquiry*)
- evaluate the effectiveness of climate fiction in imparting information, engaging readers, and promoting climate activism. (*Written Communication, Critical Thinking*)
- create a text, event, or project that brings climate fiction to a wider audience. (*Written and Oral Communication, Social Engagement*)

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Climate Changed: A Personal Journey Through the Science, Philippe Squarzoni
The Parable of the Sower, Octavia Butler
The Windup Girl, Paolo Bacigalupi
Flight Behavior, Barbara Kingsolver

All other materials will be available as handouts or through Canvas as pdfs or links.

REQUIREMENTS

- Daily course readings and discussion
- Reading quizzes
- Presentation of current events article
- Five reviews of course texts
- Mid-term essay (4 pages minimum)
- Final project

Readings, quizzes, and discussion participation

Participation doesn't involve just talking in class. Among other things, it also means coming to class with all reading and writing assignments prepared, actively listening, asking pointed and relevant questions, completing in-class writing exercises and group work, and generally being respectful to all members of the class. Also keep in mind that the quantity of what you say is balanced by the quality.

Quizzes will be given unannounced on course readings approximately once per week.

Once per quarter, you will share information about a current events article related to climate change. This will be part of your participation grade.

Reviews of course texts

You will evaluate the major course texts based upon a set of criteria determined the first day of class. The reviews should be approximately two pages long.

Mid-term essay

You will write an essay of approximately four pages on the theme of climate in one of the texts.

Final project

Your final project will address literature and climate change in some substantive way. The nature of the project is up to you, but must be approved by me after a consultation. You might choose to write a traditional scholarly essay, to write your own piece of climate fiction, write a guide to cli-fi, plan a community event, etc. Creativity is welcome.

BASIS OF EVALUATION

The various parts of the course will be assigned the following weight in determining your final grade:

Participation	22.5%
Reading quizzes	10%
Reviews of course texts	30%
Mid-term essay	15%
Final project	22.5%

GRADE SCALE

I will use the following percentage scale in determining your final grade:

93 – 100	A
90 – 92	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 – 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-
67 – 69	D+
63 – 66	D
60 – 62	D-
59 and below	F

Grades are not rounded. For example, 89.9% is a B+.

Antioch College uses the standard 4.0 plus/minus grading system. Each letter grade is associated with a grade point, which is established to determine a student's grade point average, which is officially calculated at the end of each quarter. The conversion between letter grades and grade point averages can be found in the Curriculum Catalog.

The grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ and C are considered passing grades at Antioch College. Credit is earned for courses in which they are awarded letter grades with the exception of the F grade. If a student receives a grade below a C, the course will need to be retaken or substituted for an equivalent course. If a course needs to be repeated, the calculation of the first grade earned will be excluded (E) from the student's GPA and the grade earned during the repeat will replace the initial grade and be included (I) in the calculation of the GPA. A repeat of a course can only occur once. Students may not repeat a course for credit when a grade of C or higher is earned.

It is the responsibility of every student to read the Curriculum Catalog for more details about grades, including other grade indicators, which may/may not be included in GPA calculations. In addition, students are expected to understand the policy in relation to repeating a course.

POLICIES

Attendance

You may miss two classes without penalty. Save it and use it wisely. Subsequent absences will reduce your final participation grade by 3% per absence. More than five absences without grave reason will result in failing the course. Excused absences require documentation from a member of Student Life staff or a doctor. You are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed and any assignments you need to complete. Notifying me of an absence ahead of time is appreciated whenever possible.

Late Work

I will negotiate extensions, no questions asked, as long as you contact me about it *before* the assignment is due. If you do not contact me in advance, late work will be marked down 3% (one grade step) for each day past the deadline. Any work turned in more than a week late, when an extension has not been negotiated, can still earn the lowest passing grade (73%) as long as it is of adequate quality.

If you are suffering distress that interferes with your ability to attend and complete your work, please let me know immediately so we can determine the best means of support for your well-being and your success in the course.

Electronics Policy

You may use electronic devices to access readings and other course-related material during class time. The use of electronic devices for any other reason—especially texting, facebooking, and emailing—is not permitted. Even if there seems to be a lull in activity (you're in a group that finishes before others), resist the urge to get out your device. You can expect to be called out if you are on your phone during class, and you may be asked to leave if it happens repeatedly. Please let me know if you have an urgent situation and need to be on call.

Communication

I prefer that you communicate with me in person or by email. I will check my email daily and ask that you do the same. I will normally respond to emails within 24 hours, but if you write in the evening, expect to receive a reply the following day. If you are having an emergency (medical, family, etc.), deal with it first, contact me later. Don't worry: we will make arrangements for making up work or class time afterwards.

ADA Policy

Antioch College Faculty are committed to supporting the learning of all students in my class. If you are encountering barriers to your learning that your faculty member can mitigate, please bring them to the attention of the faculty member privately to discuss specific needs. If you need disability related accommodations please contact the Center for Academic Support Services at 937-319-0093 or internally at ext. 3303 in room 209 of McGregor Hall located within The Writing Institute to coordinate applicable academic adjustments. It is helpful if students have their VISA's turned in within the first two weeks of the term. Antioch College abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Adding and Dropping a Class

All students are able to add and drop classes during a specified period of time during each term. Students should refer to the Curriculum Catalog and the academic calendar to understand the policies and conditions for adding and dropping.

Incomplete Policy

An "incomplete grade" is a temporary indicator assigned when a written request has been initiated and submitted by the student and approved by the faculty member. Verbal approvals for incompletes are not acceptable. The faculty approval of the request indicates that requirements

have not been completed by the student for good cause or some other circumstance beyond their control that prevented the student from completing the work during the term. An incomplete is not automatic or appropriate for students who have not managed to complete coursework in a timely manner. A student should be passing the class before a faculty considers approving an incomplete grade. No faculty member is required to issue an incomplete. It is the student's responsibility to request an incomplete in writing, complete any work or expectations identified by the faculty member, and ensure that the grade has been changed. Requests for Incomplete Grade Forms are available in the registrar's office.

Academic Honesty Policy

The college expects high standards of behavior and that all community members act responsibly and honestly. For a full description of the college's Academic Honesty Policy, refer to the curriculum catalog.

DATE	IN CLASS	WORK DUE
W Jan 11	Course introduction	
M Jan 16	<i>NO CLASS – MLK DAY</i>	
W Jan 18	Lecture with Kim Landsbergen (SCI 370) Meet in ASB 202	
M Jan 23	<i>Climate Changed</i>	
W Jan 25	<i>Climate Changed</i>	
F Jan 27		Review of <i>Climate Changed</i>
S Jan 28	FIELD TRIP Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center	
M Jan 30	<i>Parable of the Sower</i>	
W Feb 1	<i>Parable of the Sower</i>	
M Feb 6	<i>Parable of the Sower</i>	
T Feb 7	<i>Interstellar</i> film screening, time TBD	
W Feb 8	<i>Interstellar</i>	
F Feb 10		Review, <i>Parable of the Sower</i>
M Feb 13	<i>Interstellar</i>	
W Feb 15	<i>Windup Girl</i>	
F Feb 17		Review of <i>Interstellar</i>
M Feb 20	<i>Windup Girl</i> Excerpt of <i>This Changes Everything</i>	
W Feb 22	<i>Windup Girl</i> Collab with Antioch Farm and Kitchens	
M Feb 27	<i>Windup Girl</i>	
T Feb 28		Mid-term essay
W Mar 1	Short stories from <i>Everything Change</i> Collab with SCI 370	
M Mar 6	<i>Flight Behavior</i>	Review of <i>Windup Girl</i>
W Mar 8	<i>Flight Behavior</i>	
this week		Final project meetings
M Mar 13	<i>Flight Behavior</i> Excerpt from <i>The Great Derangement</i>	
W Mar 15	<i>Flight Behavior</i> Collab with Glen Helen Nature Preserve	
F Mar 17		Review of <i>Flight Behavior</i>
M Mar 20	TBD	
W Mar 22	Course debriefing: what now? Collab with SCI 370	
F Mar 24		Final project

Guide to Book and Film Reviews

Your review should address the following five areas. Depending on the text, some sections will be shorter or longer. The purpose of a review is not only to present your opinion but to persuade others that your opinion is compelling, or at least reasonable. With that in mind, each section of your review should include concrete examples and references to specific things in the text to support your evaluation. Use page numbers to cite all references, whether or not it is a direct quote. You may put the sections in any order you like. Please use Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced with 1 inch margins and no extra spacing between paragraphs. You only need to put your name at the top, no other information. The review should be at least 2 pages.

Reader engagement and response

Does the text provoke and hold the reader's interest? Does it generate strong emotions? Does it inspire the reader to take some action (or not)?

Accuracy and relevance of the science

Does the text present the relevant scientific information in an accessible and comprehensible way? Is the science presented accurately, or at least accurately according to scientific advances at the time it was written? Does the text make the science feel relevant to the reader's own life and world?

Clarity and believability of the text-world

Is the text-world fully imagined and imaginable? Given the internal logic of the text, do the things that happen in the text-world seem logical and possible? If applicable, does the text offer an engaging and complete symbology or mythology?

Quality of execution (literariness)

Does the text exhibit a high level of craft? Does it create a compelling narrative? Does it make use of literary techniques such as figurative language, provocative word choice, engaging style? Does the text include compelling characters?

Creativity, originality

Does the text do the above things in a unique or original way? Does it rely on clichés that seem common to its genre? Does it inspire new ways of reading, looking, and thinking?