

## Application for General Education and/or Gordon Rule Writing Certification

A.) Course Number and Title: IDH3931 section 3418, Honors Science Fiction

B.) Credit Hours: 3

C.)

Prerequisites: none

D.) Current Classification

1. General Education Code:  B  C  D  H  M  N  P  S  x None
2. Gordon Rule (Writing):  E2  E4  E6  x None
3. Gordon Rule (Math):  M  x None

### Requests:

I. General Education

A.) Requested Classification:  B  C  D  x H  M  N  P  S

B.) Effective Date:  Fall  x Spring   
Summer 2011 (year)

Or

1-time Approval \_\_\_\_\_ (year)

C.) General Education purpose and learning outcomes for the course? [Detailed attached response requested.] See attached syllabus.

II. Gordon Rule

A.) Requested Classification for course  E2  E4  x E6

B.) Writing Requirements:

- 1.) Number of papers, essays, etc. with word count specified.  
10 short responses, 300 words each= 3000 words.  
One five-page paper = 1250 words  
One seven-page research paper = 1750 words

2.) Due Dates? Returned with feedback dates? See attached syllabus.

3.) What type of feedback will be provided the student (in reference to writing skill)?

\_\_\_\_\_x\_\_\_ Grade      \_\_\_x\_\_\_ Corrections      \_\_\_x\_\_\_ Drafts  
\_\_\_\_\_x\_\_\_ Other (office hours, conferences)

4.) Assessment

- a.) Will the written work be evaluated for grammar, punctuation and proper usage of standard written English? Yes
- b.) Will written work be evaluated for an effectiveness, organization, clarity and coherence of writing? Yes
- c.) Will a published rubric be used? Yes

### III. Syllabus

Courses that offer students General Education and/or Gordon Rule credit must provide clear and explicit information for the students about the classification and requirements.

A.) For courses with a General Education classification, the syllabus should include:

- Statement of the General Education Purpose of the Course with attention to the General Education Classification requested
- List of assigned General Education Student Learning Outcomes
- List of any other relevant Student Learning Outcomes
- List of required and optional texts
- Weekly course schedule with sufficient detail (e.g. topics, assigned readings, other assignments, due dates)

B.) For courses with Gordon Rule (writing) classification, the syllabus should include:

- A description/list of Gordon Rule expectations for students (word count, page lengths and deadlines for assignments).
- A statement to the effect that students written assignments will be evaluated with respect to grammar, punctuation, and usage of standard written English, as well as clarity, coherence, and organization. Reference rubric.
- A statement indicating that students will receive feedback on written assignments prior to the last class meeting.
- Assessment note to include basis for grading (rubric) and a statement identifying the two components of the grading, letter grade for course and approved completion of the writing portion of the course.

#### IV. Submission and Approvals

A.) Submitted by (Signature of Instructor): Andrew Gordon

Date Aug 19, 2010

B.) Department Approval: R. Lawson, Director Honors Program

C.) College Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

D.) Committee Action:  Approved  Denied  Tabled Date \_\_\_\_\_

### General Education and Gordon Rule Descriptions and Assessments

#### I. General Education

##### A. Description of Areas

###### Composition (C)

Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e., grammar, punctuation, usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive, require multiple drafts submitted to the instructor for feedback prior to final submission, and fulfill 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement.

###### Diversity (D)

Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. These courses encourage you to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups and impact U. S. society. These courses guide you to analyze and to evaluate your own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups.

###### Humanities (H)

Humanities courses provide instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of a humanities discipline. The courses focus on the history, theory and methodologies used within that discipline, enabling you to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

###### International (N)

International courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that constitute the culture of countries outside the United States. These courses lead you to understand how geographic location and socioeconomic factors affect these cultures. Through analysis and evaluation of your own cultural norms and values in relation to those held by the citizens of other countries, you will develop a cross-cultural understanding of the rest of the world.

###### Mathematical (M)

Courses in mathematics provide instruction in computational strategies in at least one of the following: solving equations and inequalities, logic, statistics, algebra, trigonometry, inductive and deductive reasoning, and applying these concepts to solving problems. These courses include reasoning in abstract mathematical systems, formulating mathematical models and arguments, using mathematical models to solve problems and applying mathematical concepts effectively to real-world situations.

###### Physical (P) and Biological Sciences (B)

The physical and biological sciences provide instruction in the basic concepts, theories and terms of the scientific method. Courses focus on major scientific developments and their impacts on society and the environment. You will formulate empirically-testable hypotheses derived from the study of physical process and living things and you will apply logical reasoning skills through scientific criticism and argument.

###### Social & Behavioral Sciences (S)

The social and behavioral sciences provide instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of a social and behavioral science discipline of your choice. These courses focus on the history, underlying theory and/or

**IDH3931 Undergraduate Honors:  
American Science-Fiction Literature and Film**

**Professor Andrew Gordon    Spring 2011  
Section 3418    W 4-7 period    Little 0119**

**Office Hours: T 3-5 pm or by appointment  
E-mail: [agordon@ufl.edu](mailto:agordon@ufl.edu)  
Homepage: <http://web.clas.ufl.edu/users/agordon>**

**Objectives:**

1. To survey the history of twentieth and twenty-first century American science-fiction (SF) literature and film.
2. To develop critical skills in thinking about the role of SF within contemporary American culture. We will consider SF as the literature of science, technology, and change, and as perhaps the most characteristic American literature since 1945, a genre affecting all areas of our popular culture. By the end of the course, you should understand the theory and methodologies which have been applied to the study of science fiction and be able to apply them yourself.
3. To develop analytical skills through writing about science-fiction stories and films. To communicate knowledge and, ideas about these texts and films clearly and effectively.

This course meets **General Education** requirements in **Humanities** and is a **Gordon Rule writing course requiring 6000 written words**.

The Writing Requirement (Gordon Rule) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive writing credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

I am an English professor and will pay close attention to your writing. You will be writing almost every week, and I will return papers by the next class, with comments on grammar, punctuation, spelling, organization, and content. The short response papers will give you a good idea of how I read and what I expect in your writing. If you want to improve your writing, I am always happy to work with you outside of class. You can see me during office hours, make an appointment, submit rough drafts in class, or e-mail me questions. I guarantee that by the end of this course you will be a better writer.

**Texts** (at Orange and Blue Textbooks, 309 NW 13 St., 375-2707)

Science Fiction: The SFRA Anthology ed. Warrick, Waugh, and Greenberg

Starship Troopers by Robert A. Heinlein (Ace)

Dune by Frank Herbert (Berkley)

The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula Le Guin (Ace)

The Forever War by Joe Haldeman (Avon)

Neuromancer by William Gibson (Ace)

Snowcrash by Neal Stephenson (Bantam Spectra)

Kindred by Octavia Butler (Beacon)

Screening Space by Vivian Sobchack (Rutgers)

Science Fiction After 1900 by Brooks Landon (Twayne)

The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction eds. Edward James, Farah Mendlesohn (Cambridge )

A packet of stories and articles: "Twilight" by Campbell, "Heat Death" by Pamela Zoline, "The Thing in All Its Guises," "Alien and the Monstrous Feminine," "Back to the Future," and sample reaction papers.

### **About the Instructor**

Andrew M. Gordon is Professor Emeritus of English. He is author of Empire of Dreams: The Science Fiction and Fantasy Films of Steven Spielberg; An American Dreamer: A Psychoanalytic Study of the Fiction of Norman Mailer; co-editor with Peter Rudnytsky of the anthology Psychoanalyses/Feminisms; and co-author with Hernan Vera of Screen

Saviors: Hollywood Fictions of Whiteness. He has published many articles and reviews on contemporary American science fiction and film, including the SF of Samuel Delany, Robert Silverberg, and Ursula Le Guin, and the SF films of George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Robert Zemeckis, and the Wachowski brothers. He served as an editorial consultant on SF film for the journal Science-Fiction Studies.

## Requirements:

1. **Ten one-page (300 words typewritten) responses** on the stories, novels, critical articles, or films. Due dates are listed on the schedule. These should concern one work from the previous week or one work assigned for that week. They must be handed in at the class meeting (each response is worth 2%, so unexcused late responses lose .4% per school day and will not be accepted more than five school days late). Keep the responses tightly focused on one aspect of the work, such as characterization, style, or a central idea; don't give plot summaries. You can also analyze your emotional response to a work and why the work may have elicited such a response in you. Alternately, these responses can expand on topics raised in the class the week before or can argue for or against ideas from the critical works we will be reading. The responses are intended to keep you reading and thinking about the works and coming to class. They may also develop ideas you can expand in the longer papers. These short responses will be returned the next class with comments.

*Short responses= 20% total.*

2. **Two papers. Paper 1**, due in class **February 9** should be about five typed pages (1250 words) and concern a novel, story, or film covered in Weeks I-V. Keep it tightly focused on one topic. Graded papers will be returned a week after they are submitted, with comments on grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization, and content.

You may revise Paper 1 if your grade is less than a B (79 or below). It may not be revised if it was a late paper. The revision and the original graded paper are due a week after the paper is returned.

**Paper 2**, due by **4 pm Friday, April 15**, should be seven typed pages (1750 words) and compare any two works (novels, stories, or films) from the course, except the one you wrote on in Paper 1. It should show

evidence of research from at least four critics (this may include the crucial readings for the course). Use MLA format. You may also write about works not on our reading list, but clear this with me in advance.

In both papers, I encourage you to apply not only what you have learned in this class but also what you have learned in other courses, whether history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, political science, economics, biology, physics, or chemistry. Science fiction is the meeting ground of the humanities, social sciences, and hard sciences, and any or all of these approaches may be valid for particular works.

Alternately, with my prior permission, Paper 2 may be a science-fiction story of at least seven pages. But in this case, you must submit a first draft in class March 23; I will make suggestions for revisions but reserve the right at that point to ask you to do the paper instead of the story. The grade is based on the final draft of the story submitted April 15.

Contact me before the due date if you need extra time. Unexcused late papers lose two points per school day. The final papers and stories will be returned in class April 20 with detailed comments. We will discuss some of your papers in this final class.

*Paper 1= 25%. Paper 2= 35%.*

**3. One oral report to the class.** You may report on an assigned author, novel, or film, or on another author or work of science-fiction literature or film. (These reports may also help you prepare for your papers.) Alternately, you may discuss such topics as the Star Trek or Star Wars phenomenon, an SF (science fiction) TV series, SF music, SF comics or magazines, SF in ads; SF computer games or role-playing games; science fiction saturates our popular culture. You can use, if you wish, CD, DVD or power point. Two students may collaborate on a project. Limit yourself to approximately five minutes per person.

Be creative and have fun with your reports: for example, you can have a debate, do a skit, or conduct a mock-interview with an author.

*Oral report= 10%*

**4. Class attendance and participation.** Missing one class means missing an entire week's work. Everyone is allowed one unexcused absence; after that, contact me with a valid explanation. Each subsequent unexcused absence means three points off your final grade. Each

unexcused late entrance into class or early departure counts as half an absence.

Attendance alone is not enough; everyone is encouraged to participate.

Classroom etiquette: please, no reading of newspapers, sleeping, or chatting in class. Cell phones off. Laptops are allowed for taking notes only—no web browsing or e-mailing in class.

*Attendance and participation= 10% .*

**5. No quizzes, exams, or final exam.**

**Grading Policy:** A= 92-100; A- = 88-91; B+= 85-87; B= 80-84; C+= 75-79; C= 70-74; D+= 65-69; D= 60-64

## Outline:

- I     **Jan 5**       **Introduction.** Film: The Day the Earth Stood Still.
  
- II     **Jan 12**       **Precursors of SF:** stories by Hawthorne, Wells ("Star"), Forster (in SFRA Anthology). **"Golden Age" SF:** Weinbaum, Campbell, "Who Goes There?" (SFRA Anthology), "Twilight," and "Heat Death" (in packet). Landon, Preface, Chapter 1-2 (to p. 58). Cambridge Companion Introduction. **R (Response Paper) 1 due.**
  
- III    **Jan 19**       **SF of 1940s and 50s:** Asimov, Moore, Sturgeon, Bradbury. Sobchack, Chapter 1. Cambridge Companion: Icons of SF. Film: The Thing. **R2.**
  
- IV    **Jan 26**       **SF of 1950s:** Blish, Smith, Bester. "The Thing in All Its Guises" (packet). Sobchack, Chapter 2. **R3.**
  
- V     **Feb 2**        **SF of 1950s: Starship Troopers.** Landon 58-71.



Cambridge Companion: Hard SF, Marxist Theory and SF, Politics and SF. Clips from film Starship Troopers.

- VI Feb 9 SF of 60s: Dune (to p 240). Sobchack, Chapter 3. Film: 2001. R4. PAPER 1.
- VII Feb 16 SF of 60s: Conclude Dune. Zelazny. Conclude film 2001. R5.
- VIII Feb 23 60s "New Wave": Delany, Dick, Ellison. Landon 107-22, 145-58. Clips from film Dune. R6.
- IX Mar 2 The New Women: Le Guin, "Nine Lives" and Left Hand of Darkness. Landon 123-44. Cambridge Companion: Feminism and SF, Gender and SF. R7.
- X Mar 9 SPRING BREAK
- XI Mar 16 The New Women: Russ, McIntyre, Tiptree, Butler. Sobchack, Chapter 4. Film: Alien. R8.
- XII Mar 23 The New Women: Kindred by Octavia Butler. Cambridge Companion: Race and Ethnicity and SF. Conclude Alien. FIRST DRAFT OF SHORT STORY.
- XIII Mar 30 SF of 70s: Vietnam in Space: Forever War. "Alien and the Monstrous Feminine" (packet). Film: Blade Runner. R9.
- XIV Apr 6 80s Cyberpunk: Neuromancer. Landon 159-66. Cambridge Companion: Postmodernism and SF. Conclude Blade Runner. R 10. AFTER CLASS PIZZA PARTY, LEONARDO'S (Univ. and 13th).
- XV Apr 13 1990s and Beyond 2011: Snowcrash (to p. 258). "Back to the Future" (packet). Landon, 167-79. PAPER 2 OR FINAL DRAFT OF SHORT STORY DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 15 BY 4 PM.

XVI Apr 20

Finish Snowcrash. Cambridge Companion: SF 1980 to Present. Papers and stories returned.

## GORDON'S GUIDELINES

**Rules for Writing** (these are jokes; each memorably illustrates the rule by breaking it):

1. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid cliches like the plague.
6. Also always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.
8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
10. No sentence fragments.
11. Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.
12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. One should never generalize.
15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
16. Don't use no double negatives.
17. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
18. One-word sentences? Eliminate.

19. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
20. The passive voice is to be ignored.
21. Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
22. Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.
23. Kill all exclamation points!!!
24. Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
25. Understatement is always the absolute best way to put forth earth shaking ideas.
26. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
27. If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times: Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it well.
28. Puns are for conversation and children, not groan readers.
  
29. Go all around Robin Hood's barn to avoid colloquialisms.
30. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
31. Who needs rhetorical questions?
32. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
33. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.

### **My Rules (joking aside):**

#### **1. Grading Criteria:**

- A (92 and above)= distinguished work, well written, free from all serious defects, shows originality and insight.
- B (80)= good work, above average performance, no serious weaknesses in form or content.
- C (70)= acceptable work, unobjectionable. A C paper usually has more writing errors than the A or B paper and does not show as much depth, originality, or insight.
- D (60)= below average work: serious or many defects in form and/or content.
- E (55 or under)= unacceptable.

0= failure to turn in an assignment may result in failure in the course.

A grade such as A-/B+ means that your paper was on the borderline between the two grades.

2. Pick a **carefully focused topic** you can handle in a few pages: not "The Character of Holden Caulfield in Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye" but "Holden and Phoebe" or "Holden and the Movies."
3. **State your thesis** (an argument or point worth proving) at the end of the first or second paragraph. For example: "The automobiles and the way they are driven in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby reflect the character of the people who own or drive them."
4. Be sure your **argument is original and worthwhile**. Don't waste your time and mine restating the obvious, reciting critical commonplaces, or retelling the plot.
5. Your **title** should reflect your specific topic: not The Great Gatsby but "Cars in Gatsby."
6. **Do not underline or put in quotation marks your own title.**
7. **Support your argument** with references to characters, incidents, and relevant quotations.
8. **Recount narrative action in present tense**: "At Myrtle's party, everyone gets drunk and Tom breaks Myrtle's nose." Exception: action which is antecedent to the "present tense" of the narrative: "Gatsby had always been given to grandiose dreams, dreams which seem realized when he met Daisy in 1917."
9. Use " " even when quoting only a few words from the text.
10. **Avoid long quotations**, especially in short papers. If a quotation is longer than 50 words, set it off by indenting and single-spacing it. You don't need to use " " then since it is already set off from your text.

11. When you are quoting two **lines of poetry** as if they were prose, put them in " " and use a slash / to indicate line endings. When you are quoting three or more lines of poetry, indent, single-space and write them out exactly as they appear on the page in the original text. You don't need to put them in " " then.
12. **Dialogue** is already in " " in a story, so **quote dialogue using double quotation marks: "" "" (13).**
13. Follow **American punctuation: commas and periods go inside the quotation marks**, unless a parentheses follows. Thus:

But " " or " ." (13), or " " (13).

14. **Novel but "Short Story."** In other words, underline (or italicize) the titles of long works but use " " around the titles of short works. The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald but "The Swimmer" by John Cheever.
15. **Number all pages** (except cover page and page one).
16. **Keep a copy** of the paper for your protection.
17. Never end a line with a hyphen.
18. Avoid **paragraphs** that are too short (one or two sentences) or too long (one page).
19. A **hyphen** is indicated by a -. A **dash** is indicated by a --. Don't confuse the two.
20. A **three-dot ellipsis (. . .)** indicates that something has been omitted from the middle of quoted matter. You don't need the ellipsis at the beginning of a quotation (it is obvious that something has been omitted if your quotation does not begin with a capital letter). A **four-dot ellipsis (. . . .)** indicates that the end of a sentence or a sentence or more has been omitted (the fourth dot is the period ending the sentence).

21. Use **brackets** [ ] not parentheses to indicate your own insertions within quoted matter: "His [Jim's] notion was wrong." Parentheses within quoted matter are taken as the original author's.
22. **I don't expect perfection** in papers because I don't find it in my own work. Everyone can use a good editor. Writing errors are evidence that you are doing your own work and honestly trying. Use your mistakes: learn from them and learn to **be your own editor**.
23. I value papers that do some original thinking and **teach me something new** about a novel or story. When you're writing, remember: **you're the teacher**.
24. Some **abbreviations** I use in correcting or commenting on papers:

AWK= awkward

BA= *Not only x but also y*. Keep these parallel: x must be grammatically equivalent to y:

People have *not only* an enormous capacity to err *but also* an enormous desire to learn from their mistakes.

CHOP= choppy writing. Too many short sentences in a row; this usually goes along with W, O-U, and R.

CL= cliché

D= diction (word choice: check dictionary or thesaurus)

FS= fragment sentence. For example: He wanted to run. Although he could barely walk.

The second sentence is FS (a subordinate clause belonging to the first sentence).

H= *On the one hand. . . . On the other hand. . . .* Don't use one without the other. Think of a pair of handcuffs.

O-U= omit unneeded words

PSV= avoid passive tense (not "the ball is hit by me" but "I hit the ball").  
Emphasize the person doing the action.

R= needless repetition. (Note: a lot of what I do in reading papers is simply crossing things out: unnecessary or repetitious words, phrases, sentences, or occasionally entire paragraphs.)

RO= run-on sentence

RO/CS= run-on sentence, comma splice (using a comma where a period, semicolon, or comma plus coordinating conjunction is called for). For example: He wanted to go, however, he couldn't. That's RO/CS. Correct to:

He wanted to go. However, he couldn't.  
He wanted to go; however, he couldn't.  
He wanted to go but he couldn't.

SP= spelling

T= wrong tense

U= unclear

V= vague

W= wordy

¶ = paragraph

Check mark = good point