

## Course|Gen\_Ed|New-Close-Modify for request 10377

### Info

**Request:** ENL2930, "Special Topics - Climate Fiction"

**Submitter:** Harpold, Terry Alan tharpold@ufl.edu

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**Form version:** 1

### Responses

**Course Prefix and Number :** ENL2930

**Course Title:** Special Topics ("Climate Fiction")

**Request Type:** Change GE/WR designation (selecting this option will open additional form fields below)

**Effective Term:** Spring

**Effective Year:** 2016

**Credit Hours :** 3

**Prerequisites:** None

**Current GE Classification(s):** None

**Current Writing Requirement Classification :** None

**One-semester Approval?:** Yes

**Requested GE Classification:** H

**Requested Writing Requirement Classification:** None

**Type of writing skill feedback provided :** *No response*

**Description of other writing skills feedback:** *No response*

## **ENL 2930: Special Topics – “Climate Fiction”**

**Professor Terry Harpold**

**Spring 2016, Section 17A7**

**Time: Tuesday, per. 7 (1:55–2:45 PM); Thursday, periods 7–8 (1:55–3:50 PM)**

**Location: TBA**

office hours (Harpold): Th, 4–6 PM & by appt. (TUR 4105)

office hours (ENL 2930 TA): TBA

email (Harpold): tharpold@ufl.edu

email (ENL 2930 TA): TBA

home page for Terry Harpold: <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/tharpold/>

e-Learning (Canvas) site for ENL 2930 (*registered students only*): <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>

### **Course Description**

*“Modern science fiction is the only form of literature that consistently considers the nature of the changes that face us, the possible consequences, and the possible solutions.” – Isaac Asimov*

As we move into an era of increased global climate instability, scientific analysis of climate and climate change is becoming central to our understanding of the physical systems of our planet and to the impact of these systems on human life. Science fiction (sf), the distinctive literary form of our time, bridges elite and popular cultures and broadly engages enthusiasts and scholars alike in the work of imagining our possible futures. These areas of scientific, intellectual and artistic inquiry – climate studies and sf – are converging in the new field of “climate fiction”: print and graphic fiction and film grounded in scientific realities of environmental change, and projecting the consequent transformations of our societies, politics, and cultures. In this course we will read major works in this emerging literary genre from the late 19th through the early 21st centuries.

This course coincides with an international colloquium to be held at UF, on “Imagining Climate Change: Science and Fiction in Dialogue” (February 17–18, 2016). The instructor (Harpold) is one of the organizers of the colloquium, which is co-sponsored by The Center for African Studies, The Center for the Humanities in the Public Sphere, the Department of English, the Florida Climate Institute at the University of Florida, the France-Florida Research Institute, the Science Fiction Working Group, the UF Smathers Libraries, and the UF Water Institute. Colloquium events are supported by a generous grant from the Embassy of France. Several of the authors whose work we will read are participants in the

colloquium, and students in the course will be required to attend their public lectures. See <http://imagining-climate.clas.ufl.edu> for a complete schedule of the colloquium.

## **General Education Requirements & Learning Outcomes**

### **This course is a humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education**

**Program.** Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn 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.

Our emphasis will be on the intersections and feedbacks between the sciences of climate change and the emerging fictional imaginary of climate change: how fiction authors have applied our understanding of climate in the late Anthropocene (the geologic era dominated by humans) to predict human society, politics, and culture in the near- and long-term future.

Science fiction, as Isaac Asimov's observation (above) suggests, is an important venue for identifying challenges that face us in a more unstable world, and for imagining solutions that preserve biodiversity, human dignity, and ethical agency. Though "climate fiction" is a new label, science fiction shaped by a consideration of climate change is at least a century old. Our approach will be rigorously historical, addressing very old and recent fiction as we look for continuities and discontinuities that indicate how imaginative responses to climate have changed and continue to change. A key outcome of this course will be the connections that we make between methods of humanistic inquiry and effects of physical phenomena that are widely – and mistakenly – assumed to be measurable only by laboratory and field sciences.

At the end of this course, you will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes, as defined by UF's General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

**Content.** *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the subject area.* You will acquire a knowledge of modern science fiction (in print and graphic narrative) and of key concepts and methods of the academic discipline of science fiction studies. Through cross-comparisons of historical and transnational examples of climate fiction, you will become familiar with a range of authors and subgenres reflecting the varied approaches of this sf genre. Your competence in these content areas will be assessed by regular quizzes on the assigned readings and by comprehensive short essay midterm and final exams.

**Critical thinking.** Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the subject area. Our discussions of climate fiction will draw heavily on established climate science – and the most assured predictions of the future that this science enables – and the historical and critical vocabulary of science fiction studies. You will learn to identify and analyze points of contact and departure between the physical sciences and imaginative literature, and how these fields operate in complex feedback with one another in contemporary scientific and popular discussions of climate change.

**Communication.** Students clearly and effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning in written or oral forms appropriate to the subject area. The comprehensive midterm and final exams will assess your command of the nonfiction and fiction we have read together, and your ability to apply appropriate terminology and critical methods to print narratives, graphic narratives, and film. This is a reading-intensive course. The purpose of the reading quizzes is to help you keep to an appropriate reading schedule. The purpose of the exams is to give you opportunity to reflect on and to discuss with insight the broad and specific traits of a significant corpus of an innovative and increasingly influential literary genre.

## Required Texts

These texts are available at the UF Bookstore and from the usual online vendors. Used and electronic editions are permissible, so long as the version of the text you read is unabridged. I encourage you whenever possible to buy from independent booksellers. If you choose to buy your texts online, I recommend sources such as Abebooks.com and Alibris.com that serve independent booksellers.

Bacigalupi, Paolo. *The Water Knife: A Novel*. New York: Knopf, 2015. ISBN 9780385352871. Print.

Ballard, J.G. *The Drowned World*. New York: Liveright, 2013. Orig. pub. 1962. ISBN 9780871403629. Print.

Buckell, Tobias S. *Arctic Rising*. New York: Tor Books, 2012. ISBN 9780765358738. Print.

Itäranta, Emmi. *Memory of Water. A Novel*. New York: Harper Voyager, 2014. ISBN 9780062326157. Print.

Lob, Jacques and Jean-Marc Rochette. *Snowpiercer, Vol. 1: The Escape*. Titan Comics, 2014. Orig. pub. 1982. ISBN 9781782761334. Print (graphic novel).

Legrand, Benjamin and Jean-Marc Rochette. *Snowpiercer, Vol. 2: The Explorers*. Titan Comics, 2014. Orig. pub. 1999 & 2000. ISBN 9781782761365. Print (graphic novel).

Rich, Nathaniel. *Odds Against Tomorrow: A Novel*. New York: Picador, 2014. ISBN 9781250043641. Print.

Smith, Stephanie A. *Other Nature*. New York: Tor Books, 1995. ISBN 9780312856380. Print. *Note: this book is out of print. Inexpensive, new copies may be purchased directly from the author, a UF faculty member. I will announce how this may be done early in the semester.*

Squarzoni, Philippe. *Climate Changed: A Personal Journey through the Science*. Trans. Ivanka Hahnenberger. New York: Abrams, 2014. Orig. pub. 2012. ISBN 9781419712555. Print (graphic nonfiction text).

Other required and recommended readings for the course will be made available in electronic formats via the WWW or via the course's electronic reserves (Ares, <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/>)

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## Course Calendar

*Note: Readings marked "Ares" will be made available via UF Libraries' electronic reserve.*

### ***Climate Changed***

Tu, Jan 5	<i>Course introduction</i>
Th, Jan 7	Csicsery-Ronay, <i>The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction</i> (excerpt, 2009, Ares) <i>Recommended reading: The Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet XI, lines 1–203 (Ares)</i>
Tu, Jan 12	Squarzoni, <i>Climate Changed</i> (2012)
Th, Jan 14	Squarzoni, <i>Climate Changed</i> (2012)
Tu, Jan 19	Squarzoni, <i>Climate Changed</i> (2012)

### ***The Drowned World***

Th, Jan 21	Ballard, <i>The Drowned World</i> (1962)
Tu, Jan 26	Ballard, <i>The Drowned World</i> (1962)
Th, Jan 28	Ballard, <i>The Drowned World</i> (1962)
Tu, Feb 2	Buckell, <i>Arctic Rising</i> (2012)
Th, Feb 4	Buckell, <i>Arctic Rising</i> (2012)
Tu, Feb 9	Rich, <i>Odds Against Tomorrow</i> (2013)
Th, Feb 11	Rich, <i>Odds Against Tomorrow</i> (2013)
Tu, Feb 16	Rich, <i>Odds Against Tomorrow</i> (2013) <b><i>Midterm exam posted at end of class meeting</i></b>
Th, Feb 18	<i>“Imagining Climate Change: Science and Fiction in Dialogue”</i> – Students will attend UF colloquium
Tu, Feb 23	Debriefing of “Imagining Climate Change” <b><i>Completed midterm exam due by 1:55 PM</i></b>

### ***The Big Freeze***

Th, Feb 25	Wells, <i>The Time Machine</i> (ch. 11, 1895, Ares) Campbell, “Night” (1935, Ares) Clarke, “The Forgotten Enemy” (1949, Ares) Leiber, Fritz. “A Pail of Air” (1951, Ares)
Tu & Th, Mar 1 & 4	<b><i>Spring Break (no class meeting)</i></b>
Tu, Mar 8	Lob, Rochette, and Legrand, <i>Snowpiercer</i> , vols. 1 & 2 (1982, 1999, 2000)
Th, Mar 10	Lob, Rochette, and Legrand, <i>Snowpiercer</i> , vols. 1 & 2 (1982, 1999, 2000)

### ***The Burning World***

Tu, Mar 15	Itäranta, <i>Memory of Water</i> (2014)
Th, Mar 17	<b>No class meeting (Harpold is at a conference)</b>
Tu, Mar 22	Itäranta, <i>Memory of Water</i> (2014)
Th, Mar 24	Bacigalupi, Paolo. <i>The Water Knife</i> (2015)
Tu, Mar 29	Bacigalupi, Paolo. <i>The Water Knife</i> (2015)
Th, Mar 31	Bacigalupi, Paolo. <i>The Water Knife</i> (2015)

### ***After the Anthropocene***

Tu, Apr 5	Smith, <i>Other Nature</i> (1995)
Th, Apr 7	Smith, <i>Other Nature</i> (1995) – <i>In-class discussion with the author</i>
Tu, Apr 12	VanderMeer, <i>Annihilation</i> (2014)
Th, Apr 14	VanderMeer, <i>Annihilation</i> (2014)
Tu, Apr 19	Rosny, <i>aîné</i> , "The Death of the Earth" ( <i>Ares</i> , 1910) <b>Final exam posted at end of class meeting</b>
Th, Apr 21	<b>Reading days (no class meeting)</b>
Tu, Apr 26	<b>Final exam due by 1:55 PM</b>

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### **Evaluation of Grades, Attendance Requirements & Other Course Policies**

Your final grade in this course will be determined by the average of three kinds of assignments:

Regular reading quizzes (best 8 of 10): 50% of final grade

Midterm exam: 20% of final grade

Final exam: 30% of final grade

**The reading quizzes.** Ten unscheduled reading quizzes will be given in the closing minutes of Thursday sessions of the course. (N.B.: There will be no quiz given during the first week of classes.) Each of these quizzes is worth 10 points, and will consist of 4 multiple choice or true/false questions, each worth 2 points. You will be given 2 points for signing your name; this will be a measure of your attendance. The quizzes will not be especially challenging. If you read the assigned texts and attend class, you should be able to earn a near-perfect score on all of them.

Keep in mind that the quizzes, if they occur before we have completed our discussions of a text, will cover material I can reasonably expect you to know if you are keeping to a reading schedule. For example, if a quiz occurs at the end of the third of four class periods devoted to a book, I will expect you to have read 3/4 of the book. If you miss a quiz you will receive a grade of "0" for that quiz and will be marked absent for that class meeting. At the end of the semester, I will discard your two lowest quiz scores and your overall quiz average will be based on the average of the remaining eight quizzes. However, class absences recorded via "0" quiz grades will be counted toward your overall course attendance record.

**The midterm & final exams.** These exams will be open-book and cumulative to the dates on which they are given. Each will consist of short essay responses to detailed prompts that require you to reflect on texts we have read and to apply historical and critical methods of the course to them. Each exam will consist of four prompts, from which you must respond to two.

The midterm and final exams are take-home exams. In each case, the exam prompts will be posted on the course e-Learning (Canvas) site at the end of a class meeting and your completed exam must be uploaded to the site no later than the beginning of the class meeting one week later.

*There are no other graded assignments in this course. There are no extra-credit assignments.*

**Grading scheme and graded assignments.** The evaluation method in this course is consistent with UF's policies on grading (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>).

Grades are calculated on a numeric scale, as below:

A	90–100	A–	87–89		
B+	84–86	B	80–83	B–	77–79
C+	74–76	C	70–73	C–	67–69



D+ 64–66      D 60–63      D– 57–59

A grade of 56 or below is a failing grade (E). A minimum final grade of C is required for General Education Credit.

If you do not complete an assignment, you will receive a grade of 0. If you feel that you've been unfairly graded on an assignment, you may make a case in writing for a better grade. I will consider no grade changes without this written rationale.

You may make up a missed exam only if you have a written medical excuse from a doctor, a signed letter from a judge or law enforcement officer (if you are called for jury duty or to testify in court, for example), or if a death or serious illness or injury occurs in your family. You should contact me as soon as possible when you anticipate a delay in submission of graded work. Missed quizzes can only be made up only in extraordinary circumstances and will require special permission from the instructor.

**Attendance & lateness.** The texts and concepts we will review are complex and challenging. You cannot reasonably expect to master them if you do not keep up with required reading assignments and come to class prepared and on time. Moreover, course lectures will often include discussion of materials not among the assigned readings. For these reasons, your presence in class is essential and is required. After **four missed class periods**, I reserve the right to lower your final course grade by five points for each additional class period that you miss.<sup>1</sup> I treat excused and unexcused absences alike in this regard. It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences and to make sure that you complete all required work. If you must miss class, make sure that you turn in any assignments due for that day, and that you are ready if another assignment is due on the day you return to class. In the event of a prolonged illness or other emergency you should notify me as soon as possible so that we may make provisions to insure that you do not fall behind.

Lateness is disruptive to others in the classroom, and is strongly discouraged. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, this will be considered an absence.

If you have special classroom access, seating, or other needs because of disability, do not hesitate to bring those to my attention so that I may make appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the UF Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) by providing appropriate documentation.

If you are unable to attend any part of a class meeting or work on a course assignment because these coincide with the timing of religious observances, you must notify me of

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<sup>1</sup> Our course meets on a Tu/Th schedule: one class period on Tu, two class periods on Th. If you miss a Thursday meeting it counts as much as two missed Tuesday meetings.

this conflict well in advance, so that we may make appropriate adjustments to relevant assignment deadlines.

***Use of computers and other electronic devices in class.*** You may use personal computers and other electronic devices in class for purposes related to class discussion and collaboration. Casual WWW browsing, emailing, chatting, texting, etc., unrelated to classroom activities will not be tolerated. In the event of a violation of this policy, I reserve the right to prohibit your individual use of all electronic devices in class. Apart from those times when I have approved their use in advance, cell phones, pagers, and similar communication devices may not be used during class meetings, and must be set to silent ring at the start of class.

***Course evaluation.*** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be notified of specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

***Policy on academic honesty.*** The University community's policies and methods regarding academic honesty, your obligations to me and mine to you with regard to academic honesty, are clearly spelled out in the UF Student Honor Code, which is available online at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this course. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or oral information in the preparation of graded assignments submitted for this course.
- Substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual or individuals.
- False claims of performance or work submitted by a student for requirements of this course.

I am obliged to act on any suspected act of academic misconduct. This may include a reduced or failing grade for the course as a whole or other disciplinary proceedings, as per the recommendation of the Dean of Students. If you have any concern that you may not have made appropriate use of the work of others in your research or writing for this course, please confer with me before you submit the assignment. You should retain all graded materials that you receive from me until you receive your final course grade.