

CLAS CCX: ☀ SCIENCE FICTION & CLASSICAL LITERATURE ♀

Spring 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Nick Dobson

TIME: T/TH 11-12:15

OFFICE: WH 2, x2103



CONTACT: ndobson@monm.edu

PLACE: WH 114

OFFICE HRS: MWF 10-11, T/TH 1-2,
& by appointment (or serendipity)

People have been interested in the human and the superhuman for millennia, endlessly exploring our limitations and imagining ways to go beyond them. In this class we'll read various Greek and Roman fantastical texts and compare them to more modern works of imagination, both in print and on the screen. We'll consider ideas of literary genre with these broad themes as our guides: I) The origins of Life, the Universe, and all that; B) Bizarre Journeys; Γ) the Human(oid) soul; and IV) Social Conflicts.

Required Texts (as listed on the MC Bookstore website)

Frankenstein

Author: Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft/ Hunter, Paul J. (EDT)

Edition: Reissue, © 1996

ISBN: 978-0-393-96458-5

A Canticle for Leibowitz

Author: Miller, Walter M., Jr./ Russell, Mary Doria (INT)

Edition: Reprint, © 2006

ISBN: 978-0-06-089299-9

Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?

Author: Dick, P. K.

Edition: © 2008

ISBN: 978-0-19-479222-6

Hunted

Author: Gardner, James Alan

Edition: © 2000

ISBN: 978-0-380-80209-8

The Journey Of Niels Klim To The World Underground

Author: Holberg, Ludvig/ Fitting, Peter (INT)/ McNelis, Ja

Edition: © 2005

ISBN: 978-0-8032-7348-1

Class Format

Classes will generally meet 2 days a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 until 12:15 A.M. Attendance is recorded, & class participation counts towards your final grade. Each student is permitted 3 unexcused absences during the semester. A student with **more than THREE** unexcused absences will drop one grade point on the final semester grade for each unexcused absence over three.

Course materials will be available in electronic form on the Monmouth College Moodle webpage (<http://lms.monm.edu/moodle>).

Do not hesitate to ask questions in class. If you don't understand something, there are inevitably others in the class who do not understand either. You will do the entire class a favor by asking for explanations.

Although there is no final exam in this course, please note that class **WILL MEET** during the period scheduled for a final exam (**Sat., May 12, 6PM**). This meeting will be used for various activities, including ORAL REPORTS, a course summary, and student evaluation. Attendance at this session is mandatory.

Goals and Requirements—Your final grade will be determined in the following way:

Short Papers 15%

Print Resource: Summary and Review 10%

Electronic Resource: Summary and Review 10%

Individualized Project 20%

Class Presentation 10%

Quizzes 35%

I. Short Papers

Approximately once a week each student will submit a statement on a class discussion, reading, film, etc. These statements, at least 600 words (2 pages) in length are informal, short, non-research essays on discussion topics. They are not just summaries of activities. They should go beyond mere recording of events to include personal analysis and commentary. Emphasis will be on (1) integration of the student's own ideas and thoughts with the subject matter of the course and on (2) coherent and logical expression of these ideas. In these statements you will briefly summarize the main points, offer your own opinion and thoughts about the topics raised, and support your statement with specific data. These statements will be graded according to the following criteria.

Rubric for Short Essays

A content, writing style and personal analysis all excellent

B content, writing style and personal analysis, at least two adequate

C content, writing style and personal analysis, at least one adequate

D assignment submitted on time

F assignment not submitted on time or lacking academic merit

II. Print Resource: Summary and Review

Each student will prepare a review (1000 word minimum) on a print resource (book or journal article) dealing with some aspect of science fiction in ancient Greece or Rome. There will be books on reserve for this course. Available journal resources include the *American Journal of Archaeology*, *American Journal of Philology*, *Archaeology*, *Classical Journal*, *Classical Outlook*, *Classical Philology*, *Classical World*, *Helios*, *Phoenix*, and *Transactions of the American Philological Association*. I encourage you to use interlibrary loan or 1 of the online subscription databases available through the library (such as JSTOR). Since individual articles cannot be reviewed by more than one student, you should confirm your choice with me as soon as possible. Each review must include in its top matter standard bibliographic information (including Hewes Library call number, where appropriate). Below this bibliographic information summarize the source in two or three sentences.

A photocopy of journal articles MUST also be submitted to the instructor along with the review. Within the body of the review the following questions must be addressed: 1.) What are the main points of this resource? 2.) How does the author illustrate these points? What ancient sources and evidence are used to illustrate these points? 3.) How is the subject of this article related to the course topic (science fiction in the ancient world) and, specifically, to topics and evidence discussed in class? 4.) What are the author's qualifications for dealing with this material? and 5.) What is your own evaluation of the author's work?

III. Electronic Resource: Summary and Review

Each student will prepare a review (1000 word minimum) on webpage dealing with some aspect of science fiction in ancient Greece or Rome. Since the same material cannot be reviewed by more than one student, you should confirm your choice with me as soon as possible. Each review must include in its top matter standard bibliographic information (including web address and date accessed). A print copy of the first page (or table of contents) of this website also be submitted to the instructor along with the review. Within the body of the review you must address the following questions: 1.) What are the main features of this resource? 2.) What is the author(s)' point of view or main purpose? 3.) How does the author illustrate and develop this point of view or purpose? What ancient sources and evidence are used to illustrate these points? 4.) How is the material related to the course topic (science fiction in the ancient world) and, specifically to topics and evidence discussed in class? 5.) What are the author's qualifications for dealing with this material? and 6.) What is your own evaluation of the author's work? All reports are to be submitted electronically to all members of the course via the college computer network. The grade for this project will be 10% of the final grade and will be based upon at least the following criteria: the quality (and length) of the material chosen; its appropriateness for the assignment; writing style; and completion of assignment instructions.

IV. Individualized Project

Ideally, this project will lead naturally from the print and electronic resources reviewed in II and III. Each student will pursue a semester-long project which focuses on some special aspect of science fiction in the ancient world. The central product of this project can take the form of a research paper, creative writing, artwork, website or any other work which deals with material covered in course readings or discussions.

Preparation for this project must include library research, analysis of historical evidence, and original work. The project must also demonstrate significant use of ancient primary sources as well as secondary, scholarly material. A prospectus for this project is due around mid-semester. See Individualized Project Guidelines for additional suggestions about choosing a topic and completing this assignment.

The central product of this project can take the form of a research paper, creative writing, artwork, website or any other work which deals with material covered in course readings or discussions. While length will vary according to the medium used, the central product should clearly reflect semester-long work and research. This project cannot be completed successfully in one or two days at the end of the semester.

All central products must be accompanied by:

- 1.) a project overview and self-evaluation (c.750 words) which contains the following information:
 - a.) a summary of the project;
 - b.) a description of its preparation;
 - c.) an explanation of how you used and analyzed sources (originality);and
- d.) your evaluation of the ways your project meet the project goals (self-assessment);

2.) an annotated bibliography of a works consulted. A good starting point for this bibliography is the list of print and electronic resources evaluated by the class. (Annotations summarize the resources and

explain how they were used in the project. A typical annotation will be at least thirty words, not including bibliographic information);

NOTE: A minimum of 10 sources are required for a B-range grade; more are encouraged for a project worthy of an A-range grade. Course books and website evaluated by the class can be cited in the bibliography but only as complements to at least 10 additional works. The quality of the material consulted will significantly affect the grade. It is highly recommended that a variety of resources be consulted, including books, journals, and websites. Heavy reliance on a single kind of resource is not advised.k

Here is the form which will be used to evaluate your individualized project.

V. Class Presentation

During the final exam period students will present to the class five-minute oral summaries of their individual projects. The grade for this presentation will be based upon 1.) the appropriateness of the presentation to the topic; 2.) the presenter's ability to explain the project orally to this audience; 3.) the quality and appropriateness of the visual features accompanying the presentation (e.g., posters or skits; no use of on-line resources permitted.)

This poster presentation will be 10% of the final score.

VI. Quizzes

There will be one (1) map (geography) quiz and at least (2) unit quizzes. Both unit quizzes will consist of single essay questions which offer students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of class lectures and text readings, to draw general conclusions about the material, to evaluate their own attitudes towards science fiction in the ancient world. Click here to read these quiz questions. In answering this essay questions you should be prepared to make reference to a variety of material, including class lectures, slides, text readings and films. The map (geography) quiz must be passed in order to pass the course. Other quizzes, both announced and unannounced, may be given at the discretion of the instructor. No make-ups for quizzes (except for the map quiz) will be given.

Grading scale:

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following pattern:

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

Honesty and Plagiarism:

Don't cheat! Passing off someone else's work as yours is plagiarism. **Any student submitting plagiarized work will receive a 0 for that assignment.**

Caveat: This syllabus is subject to revision by the instructor, provided that written or verbal notice is given in class.