University of Washington in Tacoma   
School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences (IAS)  
Winter Quarter 2017

The research shows that the best predictor of success in college is effort.  Not IQ, not the college you attend, not your SAT scores, age sex or race.

--M. Garrett Bauman, “Ideas and Details”

Course Syllabus

Title: TCORE 114: AFROFUTURISM

Time: TTH - 3:05 – 5:10PM (SLN#: 20672, SECTION E)

Location: ADMC GWP 101

Canvas: <https://canvas.highline.edu/> --- Login using Highline network/email user name and password.

Instructor:  Stephanie Owings

* Visit me during my office hours: TUESDAYS and THRUSDAY after class from 5:30-6:30PM. If this time does not work for you, make an appointment with me.
* You can also contact me through email: Use the ANVAS email system or my email address [owings@uw.edu.](mailto:owings@uw.edu.) I answer Canvas emails first. I will respond to emails within one day. (I don't always check my email over the weekend.)
* Visit the CANVAS website for course materials.

Course Description (What can I expect?)

Welcome!  In this introduction to humanities course introduces students to university level scholarship. The work we will be doing incorporates a core curriculum theme that we will explore from multiple and interdisciplinary perspectives, including literature, philosophy, film, theatre, music, and art. In so doing, we will practice reading, writing, and research as a process engaging texts on multiple levels for understanding.

Since reading is the first step to good writing, we will discuss what it means to be a critical reader.  Reading critically is more than simply summarizing or paraphrasing a text, although those are important reading and writing skills.  A critical reader asks questions and challenges the writer’s ideas and assumptions.  Much of the class work will revolve around the reading and it is essential that you come to class having carefully read the material.

It is through the writing process that we discover and share ideas.  Writer, Edward Albee said: “I write to find out what I am thinking about.”  A careful, honest, and sincere approach to your own work enables us to develop our ability to write complex and organized essays.  For instance, we will explore how to write collaboratively by discussing the readings in groups and as a class. Then read and respond to one another’s work.

Research is not only the basis for solid writing, but also the entrance into an ongoing conversation that allows us to expand our knowledge about a topic and collaborate with other scholars. It is also a process that includes the reinterpretation, and through analysis, perhaps a different perspective that may bring about new knowledge. In the humanities, our research is not necessarily the discovery of new artifacts, but results in contributions that inform other disciplines, individuals and social change.

I look forward to learning with you.  Good Luck and remember:  breathe!

Required Course Materials

1. Afrofuturism Course Packet ($38.21)
   1. ***Astrofuturism: Science, Race,, and Visions of Utopia in Space,* “Introduction: The Wonderful Dream” by De Witt Douglas Kilgore**
   2. ***The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction* Edited by Bould, Butler, Roberts and Vint,“Critical Race Theory” by Isiah Lavender III**
   3. ***Learning From Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition, and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia* Edited by Patrick Parrinder, Science Fiction and Utopia: A Historico-Philosophical Overview by Carl Freedman**
   4. ***Social Text: Afrofuturism,* “Introduction: Future Texts” by Alondra Nelson AND *Kindred* by Octavia Butler**
   5. **“Race, Sex, and Nerds: From Black Geeks to Asian American Hipsters” by Ron Eglash**
   6. ***The Souls of Cyberfolk: Posthumanism as Vernacular Theory* by Thomas Foster, “Replaying the L.A. Riots: Cyborg Narratives and National Traumas” by Thomas Foster**
2. ***NOVELS***
   1. ***Black No More* by George Schuyler**
   2. ***Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* By Phillip K. Dick**
   3. ***Kindred* by Octavia Butler**
   4. ***The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz**
3. RECOMMENDED MATERIALS - PEARSON WRITER (SOFTWARE in the bookstore)  
   ISBN: 9781269385466  
   Author: PEARSON



Sign up for the Pearson Writer for college level research and writing ONLINE.  
<http://www.pearsonhighered.com/writer/>

* $15.99 for 4 mos.
* $21.99 for 12 mos.  
  + USB flash drive or some way to save in-class work
  + Your computer will also require [ADOBE ACROBAT READER](http://get.adobe.com/reader/) to access some handouts and reading assignments.  Click on the link to download this free software

Course Structure

Time Commitment

This course will take somewhere between 20-30 hours to complete. While it is self-paced, you will find you have the most success by dedicating a regular time to working on the course, for at least one-two hours per sitting. Some tricks you can try:

* How much time study time will this course require? This course will require at least ONE hour each day or five hours a week. May be more depending on the assignment.
* Hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door.
* Hide: take a laptop to the library or other low-interruption spot.

Technical Requirements and Skills

A [general set of technical requirements for online and hybrid courses](http://distanceed.highline.edu/tech.requirements.php) at Highline is available on the Distance Learning web site, and applies to this course.

Additional items particular to this course are:

* Not all activities can be completed from Canvas Mobile, or from browsers on tablets or phones (e.g. iPad, Galaxy). Some will require a desktop computer.
* Canvas does not work well with Internet Explorer. Chrome, Firefox and Safari all seem to work fine.

Think Aloud/ Class Discussions and Participation

Sometimes people reach different conclusions about meaning after reading the same text. That does not mean that one is correct and one is wrong. First, to better understand the text you will need to BREAK IT DOWN. Second, talk in small groups. Third, take notes about what you have read and be ready to discuss it as a class.

Reading and writing is a symbiotic relationship which requires an understanding of how they work together. All the strategies listed below are used by proficient readers as ways of consolidating and refining their reading comprehension when you may not understand the material.

I will be using (demonstrating) all of these strategies as we read and talk about the meaning, as well as, how to apply the text to your writing. However, early in the quarter I will shift this responsibility to you. I will not cover all of the readings during class; and therefore, *you are responsible for reading and understanding* all of the assigned material.

* Look at the headings of the text we are reading. For example, the title and subheadings. What information do they give you?
* **“Chunk”** the text into smaller, manageable pieces. For example, one sentence, one paragraph, one page or chapter at a time.
* Create an **“outline”** starting with the first chunk then adding the next. For example, what is the topic and what examples support this topic.
* **“Question”** the reading, the authors, and yourself. Write these questions down and discuss them your small group and the class discussion.
* “Talk to the text” by making notes in the margins, underlining, and/or highlighting what you think is important and what you don’t understand.
* Visualize what is described in the text.
* Connect the text to your own experiences, other texts, or knowledge that you have.
* Reread sections of the text to clear up confusions.
* Summarize, retell, or paraphrase the text or parts of the text.
* Represent concepts and content o texts in graphic form. (Draw a picture)
* Represent concepts and content of texts through metaphors and analogies.
* Organize and keep track of ideas in a text through graphic organizers, outlines, response logs, and or notes.
* We will add to this list during the quarter….as we share and learn other strategies that you have for understanding.

Class Participation, Short Writings, and In-class assignments (30% of final grade):

You need to be ready to actively participate. Class discussion plays a large role in developing your understanding of class readings. You are expected to complete assigned readings before coming to class (Online discussion rooms are considered an extension of our classroom).  Your participation then includes being prepared to raise questions about the readings.

In order to receive all 300 points

* You need to be able to summarize or question the major points of each reading.  You need to be able to come up with your own questions and informed responses to the readings; and constructively participate in the discussion. Complete all discussion class Learning Activities - these activities cannot be made up later.
* 20 minute Class Presentation (Topic to be discussed as a class)
  + Sci-Fi Topic Analysis

OR

* + Course Reading Analysis

Essays (70% of final grade)

Each essay has a series of assignments due in order to receive the full amount of points.  These assignments are a part of the writing process that will help you develop your essay as a whole and make your writing more fluent.  For example, in class discussion, a summary and response assignment, Canvas discussion room and a short quiz will be preparation for writing the first essay.  A peer review draft is due before the final draft of the *Analysis Essay* that your classmates will read and review.  The final copy of your essay I will grade. I will not read rough drafts; however, if you have specific concerns about an essay, please let me know. I am glad to give feedback, if you have a specific question, visit me during my office hours.

Because student input is an essential part of the writing process, I will deduct points for each day the peer review draft is late from for the discussion board.  You cannot make up peer reviews or any discussion board assignments.

In order to receive all 700 points:

* Reflection Essays
* Summary and Response Essays, 2 to 3 pages (100 points each)
* Short Analysis Essay 5 to 6 pages (200 points)
* Analysis Essay 8 to 10 pages (200 points)
* Cite class readings within your writing and in a source list at the end
* Use MLA (Modern Language Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) style formatting for integrating quotations into your writing and documenting the sources you use.  Read the example paragraph below:

In Dan Ariely's book, *Predictably Irrational*, he shows us how to beat procrastination by using a quote by David Thoreau. "'Simplify! Simplify!'" and, indeed, simplification is one mark of real genius" (Ariely 121). If a procrastinator simplifies the work ahead of them, the job appears easier and less tedious, and thus may become easier to complete. This brief quotation by Thoreau is a good philosophy for life and a perfect example of what he is attempting to convey. What could be simpler than coming right out and saying what you need to do? For instance, to make a long writing assignment simpler a student could break it down in to smaller parts, like brainstorming, research, and writing the first draft. This quote is significant because it makes a specific point (simplify) about a specific topic (procrastination). Simplifying your choices can help you focus, changing a jumble of tasks into one focused goal.

WORKS CITED

Areily, Dan.  *Predictably Irrational.*New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008

Course Policies

I want to help you become a more conscious, comfortable, and confident writer. In order to accomplish this, there need to be certain guidelines that we all follow.

Policy #1: Late Papers  
  
Generally, I do not accept late papers, quizzes, peer response forms, or essays. Every assignment has a specific due date (including the latest possible hour it can be posted to me) which is indicated on each individual assignment.

Your responsibility is to know what is due, when it’s due, and to make sure you hand in your assignments/ response forms in a timely fashion so that your peers can do their work. However, if you have some extenuating circumstance that prevents you from turning in your work, CONTACT ME, so we can come to an agreement when you will be turning in your assignment.  If I still have not received your work after the agreed due date, you will automatically get a 0.0 for the assignment.

With that being said, my official policy on late papers is "better late than never."  Sometimes life is unexpected and if you need to turn in an assignment after the due date, please do so.  I will take off points for late work, approximately 1-5 points for each day the assignment is late depending on the assignment.  Seven (7) days after the due date the assignment will be considered incomplete and receive a zero.

Policy #2: [Plagiarism and Academic Honesty](http://flightline.highline.edu/reference/ILModules/plagiarism/definition.htm) (click on this link for more information)  
  
Copying or "borrowing" someone else’s work either off the Web or from somewhere else is more than a violation of College policy, it is intellectual dishonesty. Any paper that is suspected of being plagiarized will be given an automatic 0.0.

See the College Catalog and the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Plagiarism includes: failing to cite significant sources in a research paper or presentation; submitting verbatim or in a closely paraphrased form material from a printed or electronic source, a website for example; submitting material produced by another student, or for another class. In a case of suspected plagiarism I will consult privately with the student.

A. If we resolve that plagiarism has not occurred I will offer my sincerest apologies to the student.

B. If we resolve that plagiarism has occurred: 1) The student will receive no credit for the assignment, 2) I will report the incident to the office of Vice-President for Students; 3) The office of VP for Students may place the student on academic probation, or suspend the student from the college.

C. If the issue cannot be resolved between the student and myself, I will submit a report to the office of Vice President for students and they may conduct a hearing in order to resolve the issue.

Policy #3: Learning Community   
  
As members of this class we are all part of each other’s learning community, which means we need to be respectful and open to differences of opinion, experience, and perspective. This does not mean that we cannot challenge each other, but it does mean that we need to consider how our words and actions affect everyone around us. By remaining as open and respectful as possible to each other, together we can create a safe environment in which we can all learn from each other. Uncertainty, confusion, ambiguity are all natural parts of the learning process. Expect to be troubled or angered or stumped by some of the material we discuss but don’t stop with that feeling; allow your discomfort to guide you into a deeper understanding of the material and your response to it.

Consider this class a ‘Safe Zone’ for you to be yourself. This means respecting yourself and respecting others.

Netiquette and Privacy

Words can mean many things and what we intend to say is not always what others hear. This is especially true of "online communication" during which other students do not have the opportunity to see your "body language" and therefore have a greater possibility of misunderstanding what you truly mean.

Please, follow these guidelines in all your online responses  
and discussion groups.

* RESPECT. I suggest respectful exchanges as a basic ground rule. Address people by their names, even in emails. We feel that informational errors should be pointed out- respectfully (even if stated strongly...). Disagreements that honor the viewpoints of the various contributors are productive and can lead to new learning and understanding.
* PRIVACY. Keep in mind not only your own privacy rights but others as well. Do not reveal any information that you deem private.
* BE CONSIDERATE of grammatical/spelling errors. (Correct grammar and spelling errors for clarity and easier reading.)
* REMEMBER that humor and satire are often misinterpreted online. Communication is more than words. So, be prepared for some misunderstanding and requests for clarification.
* BE SUPPORTIVE. We are all still learning. Our job is not to judge or condemn or even praise, although genuine encouragement is a necessary ingredient. We are here to provide information, to address topics in a discussion forum, and to provide assistance in helping each participant use her/his own unique learning style. Reflection generally precedes growth. So reflect upon what is said, provide sincere comments, and hopefully, we will all grow.

*One good way to avoid problems is to reread your postings before sending them. Something written in haste may be misread.*

Percent to Grade Point Average (GPA) Chart

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[Grading Policy](https://flightline.highline.edu/sowings/Writing091/HandoutsResources/Rubrics/GradingPolicy.htm)

Do not expect a 4.0 for merely completing the work.  Grading criteria will be distributed with each assignment, and those criteria will be evaluated on the 4.0 scale, with the following benchmarks:

Please note that you must complete all the assignments in order to earn a 2.0 grade or better.  Assignments will be graded on a 4.0 scale.  The conversion scale for percent to G.P.A. (4 point scale) can be found here.  This conversion may be slightly different than those used in your other courses, so please examine it carefully.

0.0: No credit  
The assignment was not turned in, or you did not contribute to a group project.

1.0: Failure  
The score reflects non-compliance with the instructions given for the assignment.  The minimum requirements were not met.  You turned in something that doesn’t complete the assignment.

2.0: Remediation needed  
The minimum requirements for the assignment have been met, but barely.  The assignment may contain mechanical errors, faulty logic, or rough language.

3.0: Competent  
The assignment is meeting the minimum requirements and exhibits some of the qualities of effective, professional writing.  All ideas are explained and supported well.  A mechanical error or two may have slipped through your proofreading efforts.

4.0:  Approaches upper-level college work  
To earn a 4.0, an assignment must go above and beyond the requirements.  4.0 assignments exhibit mature, thoughtful response to readings, fully-developed ideas, exquisite language use, and flawless mechanics.

 What is an educated person?

* Admit to not knowing
* Be curious and ask why, as well as why not and how else
* Be conscious of other’s viewpoints and seek them out
* Learn about the past and how the past has shaped the present
* Be courageous enough to change an opinion in the light of new information
* Seek out a variety of experiences
* Suspend judgment in the face of uncertainty or fear
* Ask for help
* Look at the present and hypothesize a future based on the possible consequences of current choices and actions
* Assess what is written, aired, and professed critically
* Self-assess
* Communicate honestly, clearly and effectively ---with yourself and others
* Take risks and look at failures as opportunities to learn---not beat yourself up
* Be open to epiphanies

“Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” -Margaret Mead

# "Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person." ~Mother Teresa Winter Quarter Reading Schedule

DIRECTIONS – Read the listed next in preparation for each scheduled class time.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Week 1 - 01/ 03 | Read - *Astrofuturism: Science, Race, and Visions of Utopia in Space,* “Introduction: The Wonderful Dream” by De Witt Douglas Kilgore (Course Packet)  Write – Pre Self Reflective Essay Due  Canvas Discussion Due |
| Week 2 – 01/ 10 | **Read *- The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction* Edited by Bould, Butler, Roberts and Vint,“Critical Race Theory” by Isiah Lavender III (Course Packet)**  **Write – Summary and Response Essay 1 Due  Canvas Discussion Due** |
| Week 3 – 01/ 17 | **Read - *Black No More* by George Schuyler**  **Canvas Discussion Due** |
| Week 4 – 01/ 24 | **Read – *Learning From Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition, and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia* Edited by Patrick Parrinder, Science Fiction and Utopia: A Historico-Philosophical Overview by Carl Freedman (Course Packet)**  **Write – Summary and Response Essay 2 Due**  **Canvas Discussion Due** |
| Week 5 – 01/31 | **Read – *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* By Phillip K. Dick**  **Canvas Discussion Due** |
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| Week 6 – 02/ 07 | **Read – *Social Text: Afrofuturism,* “Introduction: Future Texts” by Alondra Nelson AND *Kindred* by Octavia Butler**  **Write – Short Analysis Essay Due**   * **Search a variety of sources** |
| Week 7 – 02/ 14 | **Read - “Race, Sex, and Nerds: From Black Geeks to Asian American Hipsters” by Ron Eglash**   * **Research** * **Analyzing sources**   **PRESENTATIONS** |
| Week 8 – 02/ 21 | **Read – *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz**  **Write – Summary and Response Essay 3 Due**   * **Research** * **Audience and Purpose** * **A variety of perspectives**   **PRESENTATIONS** |
|  |  |
| Week 9 – 02/ 28 | **Read – *The Souls of Cyberfolk: Posthumanism as Vernacular Theory* by Thomas Foster, “Replaying the L.A. Riots: Cyborg Narratives and National Traumas” by Thomas Foster**   * **Research**   **PRESENTATIONS** |
| Week 10 – 03/ 07 | **Write - Analysis Essay Due** |
| Week 11 – 03/ 14 | **Write - Post Self Reflective Essay Due**  **Finals Week** |