

**English 1028G (001):
The Storyteller's Art II: The Rise of the Machines**

Department of English

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Course Description

Where do I end and my phone (or laptop/tablet) begin? From Frankenstein's Creature to the digital assistant of Spike Jonze's film *Her*, our technological prostheses have always been more than simply tools for carrying out the tasks that we have assigned them. They have been, too, the instruments by which we have sought to define what it means to be human in a world in which our microprocessed-driven devices seem to have acquired a mysterious agency, a *livelihood* of their own. This course will study novels, short stories, and a feature film that we sought to explore the social, political, and psychological dimensions of our increasingly intimate relationship with the technological realm. What fears and desires do these new life forms elicit in us? How do they compel us to think differently about what it means to work, think, love? And where, in the future, will we draw the line between what we want from them and what they might want from us?

The weekly course schedule consists of two hours of lecture and a third hour of tutorial discussion facilitated by a teaching assistant. In addition to providing opportunities for the discussion of reading and lecture materials, tutorials will also provide substantial instruction in effective essay writing and research methods.

Learning Outcomes

Successful students who complete the course will be able to:

- Identify and analyze basic elements of narrative literature, such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, diction, and tone.
- Write an essay about a work of narrative literature containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text;
- Research critical commentary on literary works;
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, especially those obtained through the Internet;
- Integrate outside research materials and references to the original text into an essay through use of quotations and paraphrases;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Document essays using MLA format.

Required Texts

(Available in the English section at the Campus Bookstore in the University Community Centre)

Asimov, Isaac. *I, Robot* (Macmillan)

Casson, Leslie E. *A Writer's Handbook* Fourth Ed. (Broadview)

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (Del Rey)

Gibson, William. *Neuromancer* (Ace)

Newitz, Annalee *Autonomous* (Tor)

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (Broadview)

Assignments and Grade Distributions

Four Quizzes: Best Three (3.33% each): 10%

Passage Analysis (1000 words): 15%

Essay (2500 words): 30%

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Final Exam: 35%

Quizzes

Four short quizzes will be conducted at the beginning of lectures on randomly selected dates. Each quiz will be made up of five questions testing your comprehension of the assigned texts and recent lecture materials. From these four quizzes, we will choose the best three (each worth 3.33%), to count toward your final grade, for a total of 10%.

Passage Analysis

researching, organizing, and writing an effective, university-level research essay, complete with secondary criticism and a list of works cited.

The Attendance and Participation grade will be divided between attendance (5%) and participation (5%). Participation means arriving for your tutorial on time, having read the assigned materials, and regularly volunteering informed, thoughtful, and helpful replies to questions and/or leading group discussions, as arranged by the Teaching Assistant.

In order for the tutorial groups to promote a free exchange of ideas and opinions, all students are expected to treat each other and their Teaching Assistants with dignity and respect. This means listening carefully to each others' contributions to the group discussion, and allowing each group member an opportunity to express his or her own point of view, with the objective of sharing and enriching our understanding of the literature we are studying.

Course Assignments

Essay and Passage Analysis assignments will be written according to standard essay style: doublespaced, 12 point font, and all margins set at 1 inch. A title page is not necessary, but the first page must include the title of the essay, your name, the course number, the professor's name, teaching assistant's name, and the date.

Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text, rhetorical persuasiveness, syntax, grammar, spelling, and technical bibliographic citation will all be factors in the grading of the essay.

All bibliographic notation will employ the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a works cited page. Please consult a standard style guide such as that found in Casson's *MLA Write Handbook*, or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (8th ed.), which is available in the reference shelves of the D.B. Weldon Library. A good online guide to the MLA method can be found [here](#)

Assignments will be submitted electronically through the owl site, and are due by 4:30 on the due date. Papers submitted late will be returned with a grade but no comments. Papers submitted late without prior permission will be deducted 2 per cent per day late, including weekends. Papers submitted after the assignment is returned will not normally be accepted.

Please keep at least one copy of each of your papers. Save each file on a usb key, external drive, drop box, or other form of back up media. Retain all returned, marked assignments until you

instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found [here](#)

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism (the unacknowledged use of another person's work) is one of the most serious academic offences, since it involves fraud and misrepresentation. In plagiarizing, one is in effect claiming another person's words or ideas or data as one's own work, and thus misrepresenting material subject to academic evaluation. It is necessary, therefore, that plagiarism carry

