

LIT 4316: American Science Fiction

Spring 2026 – 3.0 Credits

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Kelly

Office: IST 2062

Office Hours: MWF 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

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Course Details

Credit Hours: 3.0

Course ID: LIT 4316

Section: 001

Modality: Face to Face

Class Meeting Times and Days: MWF 10:00 – 10:50 AM

Location: BARC 1123

LIT 4316

Course Title: American Science Fiction

Catalog Course Description

This course will explore American Science Fiction through a close examination of short stories, novels, and film. We will seek to understand common elements in American Science Fiction and consider how American Science fiction has evolved from Post-World War II writers who reimagined themselves and the world through science fiction.

- *Course Prerequisites:* ENC 1101 (or equivalent) and a 2000-level State Core writing-intensive humanities or social sciences course.
- *Communication/Computation Skills Requirement (6A-10.030):* This course meets communication/writing-intensive requirements (W).

Required Texts

- Butler, Octavia "Clay's Ark," Grand Central Publishing, 2000
ISBN: 978-1538751503
- Disch, Thomas "Camp Concentration," 1st Vintage Books ed
ISBN-13 978-0375705458
- El-Mohtar, Amal "This is How you Lose the Time War," HACHETTE INTL, 2019.
ISBN-13 978-1529405231
- Moon, Elizabeth "[The Speed of Dark](#)" [Ballantine Reader's Circle](#)
ISBN-13 978-0345447548
- One Selected film, TBA at this time
- Supplemental materials delivered via Canvas in .PDF format or by link to free e-book, authors are listed below

Course Objectives

To provide students with the following:

- An immersive study of science fiction in literature, film, and popular culture, including extended coverage of exemplary texts.
- An overview of various significant historical, social, political, economic, and psychological contexts that inform the development of science fiction.
- An overview of specific movements/periods in American Science Fiction and its subgenres
- A survey of major topics and movements in academic scholarship related to science fiction.

Course Learning Outcomes / Alignment with Program Outcomes

This course supports General Education competencies—arts and humanities and AHSS Certificate Outcomes. Program Learning Outcomes and General Education Competencies may be found in the Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.floridapoly.edu/Links to an external site.>).

Course Learning Outcome	ThinkWell/LearnWell Diagram	General Education Competency—Arts & Humanities	AHSS Certificate Outcomes
Demonstrate knowledge of science fiction in literature and film.	Applying	1, 2	1
Analyze assigned texts as sources of cultural, historical, theoretical, and creative expression	Analyzing:	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3
Locate, analyze and incorporate scholarly sources in composing responses to texts	Analyzing, Creating Evaluating	1, 2	2, 3, 4
Identify and elaborate on ways texts have affected and been affected by history, society, and culture.	Evaluating	3, 4	2, 3, 4

General Education Competency – Arts and Humanities

Through study and practice in the Arts and Humanities, students will learn how questions are posed and how insights and creative responses to them are formulated. Students will

1. Demonstrate critical thinking grounded in well-founded interpretive theory and methods and broad, cultural literacy.
2. Interpret and explain theories and methods behind forms of human expression.
3. Consider the multidirectional impacts between individuals, cultures, and the institutions and technologies they create.
4. Acquire competence in reflecting critically on the human condition.

AHSS Certificate Outcomes

This course supports the learning outcomes for the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Certificate. For more information, see the academic catalog. Students completing the AHSS Certificate program will demonstrate aptitude in the following areas:

1. Communication–Students completing the certificate program will demonstrate the ability to deliver highly polished verbal communication that is appropriate to audience and context.
2. Analysis and Interpretation–Students will demonstrate familiarity with a range of analytical frameworks associated with humanities and social science disciplines and apply them thoughtfully to social, historical, and other human phenomena.
3. Conceptual Translation–Students will demonstrate the ability to create connections between concepts in one area of human experience and adapt and apply them to another.
4. Epistemic Awareness–Students will recognize and describe different frameworks for constructing knowledge in the disciplines and the underlying assumptions, methods, and applications of that knowledge.
5. Reflective Learning and Responsibility–Students will demonstrate strategic and reflective learning through course content and develop a healthy critical analysis of one's own responses.

Course Policies

Attendance

Students in face-to-face courses are expected “to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as defined by the instructor” (University Policy, FPU-5.0010AP). Students who are experiencing an emergency situation that aligns with an academic exercise of consequence (e.g., a common exam) should work with CARE Services at care@floridapoly.edu.

Attendance is vital for success in this class. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting, and you will lose points for being absent and missing in-class activities. This is an active writing classroom. Each day is important; we write, share, discuss, and work together in small groups. Some days are workshops where we collaborate and work on our large projects. Missing class is the key to failure. You will succeed if you attend class, ask questions when confused, and do the work.

Participation

Students are expected to participate in the classroom experience. The use of earbuds/headphones during class is specifically not allowed and students who engage in this behavior may be asked to leave the class for the day (noting exceptions for authorized accommodations). In addition, students who routinely do not bring materials to class that are required for participation, will not be given credit for class attendance, and if this becomes a pattern of behavior, may be asked to leave the class for the day. Persistent problems with participation may result in a code of conduct referral.

Students may miss four (4) class meetings this semester without penalty. Unless I receive notification from CARE concerning a long-term illness or emergency, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Therefore, I recommend saving your days to be used when absolutely necessary. For each subsequent unexcused absence, the student’s final grade will drop one letter. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Technology Use

Since you will want to access both your discussion board posts and our online course readings during class, a laptop or tablet is highly encouraged at every class meeting. You can also check out a loaner laptop at the IT/library on the second floor of the IST building or the main floor of the ARC building.

It is also recommended that you have daily access to Canvas to check for announcements and any changes to the course. I use the announcement feature to alert the class to new information, class cancelations, and important reminders. It should be checked daily and viewed in “full site” mode. Checking Canvas through individual features (i.e. Calendar, To-Do List ,or Assignments) will mean that you miss vital information you need to complete this course, including the due dates for your discussion boards.

Late Work/Make-Up Work

Late work makes life hard for all of us, so I generally don’t accept it. With the exception of the discussion boards, which are made on a mutually-agreed upon schedule posted on Canvas and added to our weekly modules, assignments must be submitted on Canvas by the due date given to be graded and receive credit. You are responsible for keeping track of assignment due dates, which are posted in Canvas. If you know of an upcoming absence, complete and turn in your work early. I will not pursue you to track down late work, and I will not grade assignments emailed to me after the due date.

Grading Components/Major Assignments: Final grades will derive from the following categories which are comprised individual assignments as laid out in Canvas:

30%: Discussion Boards (Broken into two General Discussion Starters, one Impression of a Non-fiction readings, and one background post)

25%: Final Paper (Includes the Proposal and the Final Paper)

10%: Class Participation (Includes attendance and preparation)

10%: Document Review

5%: Quizzes

20% Midterm and Final Exams

Grading Scale

A = 93 and above	A- = 92.9-90	
B+ = 87-89.9	B = 83-86.9	B- = 80-82.9
C+ = 77-79.9	C = 73-76.9	C- = 70-72.9
D += 67-69.9	D = 60-66.9	F = 59.9 and Below

Assignment/Evaluation Methods:

Students will receive written feedback in Canvas on all graded assignments.

Students can request individualized feedback on major assignment drafts via email

or coming by office hours. Students will be provided with rubrics in Canvas demonstrating evaluative criteria.

University Policies

Reasonable Accommodations

The University is committed to ensuring equal access to all educational opportunities. The Office of Disability Services (ODS), facilitates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and documented eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to self-identify as a student with disabilities and register with ODS to request accommodations. If you have already registered with ODS, please ensure that you have requested an accommodation letter for this course through the ODS student portal, and communicate with your instructor about your approved accommodations as soon as possible. Arrangements for testing accommodations must be made in advance. Accommodations are not retroactive. If you are not registered with ODS but believe you have a temporary health condition or permanent disability requiring an accommodation, please contact ODS as soon as possible: DisabilityServices@floridapoly.edu; (863) 874-8770; www.floridapoly.edu/disability.

Accommodations for Religious Observances, Practices and Beliefs

The University will reasonably accommodate the religious observances, practices, and beliefs of individuals in regard to admissions, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. (See University Policy.)

Title IX

Florida Polytechnic University is committed to ensuring a safe, productive learning environment on our campus that prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking. Resources are available if you or someone you know needs assistance. Any faculty or staff member you speak to is required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator. Please know, however, that your information will be kept private to the greatest extent possible. You will not be required to share your experience. If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the Florida Polytechnic University Ombuds Office, BayCare's Student Assistance Program, 1-800-878-5470 and locally within the community at Peace River Center, 863-413-2707 (24-hour hotline) or 863-413-2708 to schedule an appointment. The Title IX Coordinator is available for any questions to discuss resources and options available.

Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity regulation include actions such as cheating, plagiarism, use of unauthorized resources (including but not limited to use of Artificial Intelligence tools), illegal use of intellectual property, and inappropriately aiding other students. Such actions undermine the central mission of the university and negatively impact the value of your Florida Poly degree. Suspected violations will be fully investigated, possibly resulting in sanctions up to and including expulsion from the university.

Recording Lectures

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance. Recordings may not be published or shared in any way, either intentionally or accidentally, without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements is a violation of state law (subject to civil penalty) and the student code of conduct (subject to disciplinary action). Recording class activities including, but not limited to, lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), and invited guest speakers is prohibited.

Academic Support Resources

- Library: Students can access the Florida Polytechnic University Library through the University website and Canvas, on and off campus. Students may direct questions to library@floridapoly.edu.
- Tutoring and Learning Center: The Tutoring and Learning Center (The TLC) provides tutoring to all Florida Poly students who may need additional academic support. The TLC is staffed by students who have excelled in the courses they tutor. They offer support by reviewing concepts and materials from class, clarifying points of confusion and providing assistance with learning strategies. While the focus of TLC is to provide support to students in freshman-level courses, upper-level courses are also tutored at the Center. The TLC is located in the IST Commons (second floor). ***For help in this course, the Writing Center is strongly recommended.***
- Knack Tutoring: Students looking for additional assistance outside of the classroom are advised to consider working with a peer tutor through Knack. Florida Polytechnic University has partnered with Knack to provide students with access to verified peer tutors who have previously aced this course. To view available tutors, visit floridapoly.joinknack.com and sign in with your student account.
- Academic Success Coaches: All students at Florida Poly are assigned an Academic Success Coach. Your Academic Success Coach can assist you with academic success strategies. Please visit the Student Success Center on the second floor of the IST building to meet with an Academic Success Coach.
- Writing Center: Located on the second floor of the IST (2059/2061), the Writing Center helps students to develop their writing and presentation skills. Consultations are available in person and virtually. For more detail, visit <https://floridapolytechnic.libguides.com/writingservices>

Civility and Collegiality

Faculty and students come to the university for the same reason, which is to participate in a highly professional educational environment. To that end, both students and faculty are expected to treat each other with mutual regard and civility. Communication, written, oral and behavioral, between faculty and students must remain respectful. Within and outside of the classroom, students must refrain from derogatory comments toward the faculty member and their fellow students, and faculty as well must refrain from derogatory comments toward their students. Faculty and students should address each other with respect, in accordance with the wishes of the faculty and the students: for example, no one should be addressed by their last name alone.

Faculty from the outset of a course can and should specify what constitutes activities and behavior that take away from, that diminish, the educational environment. An individual student's distracting behavior impedes the education of fellow students, which itself is a form of disrespect. Civility and collegiality also include respecting each other's time: for example, neither students nor faculty should arrive late to class (unless unforeseen, pressing circumstances prevail); faculty should be present at the posted office hours; and students and faculty should be punctual when meeting times are scheduled. In more general terms, collegiality means respecting the right of both faculty and students to participate fully and fairly in the educational enterprise.

Schedule (Topics, Readings, Assignments)

This schedule is subject to change. Refer to Canvas for readings access, extended assignment descriptions, and specific due dates. For University deadlines, consult to general Florida Poly academic calendar ([https://floridapoly.edu/academics/academic-calendar/Links to an external site.](https://floridapoly.edu/academics/academic-calendar/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site.)).

NOTE: *Students should read the assigned material before attending class on the day specified on our course modules. Quizzes and written submissions through Canvas are due on the due dates identified in Canvas, with the exception of discussion boards, which are due on the dates assigned to students on our Discussion Board Signup, which is available in Canvas course files. Discussion Boards include 3 types: Reflection (assigned to non-fiction readings), Discussion Starter (assigned to fictional readings) and Response (one for each).*

Week 1: Topic: Course Introductions and Expectations; Background on Science Fiction

Readings:

Non-Fiction: Course Syllabus, Darko Suvin “The State of the Art in Science Fiction”

Fiction: Isaac Asimov from *I, Robot* “Introduction,” “Robbie,” “Liar”

Work Due: Syllabus Quiz, Discussion Board Sign Up

Week 2: “Hard-Boiled” Sci Fi

Readings:

Fiction: Ray Bradbury *Illustrated Man* “Prologue” “The Exiles” “The Concrete Mixer”

“Zero Hour” “Epilogue

Non-Fiction: Smith “Introduction” *Rockets and Revolutions*

Work Due: Discussion Boards As Assigned; Discussion Boards Quiz

Week 3; “Hard-Boiled” Sci Fi

Readings:

Fiction: Robert Heinlein “From the Slopes of Vesuvius” “All You Zombies”

_____ Non-Fiction: Christopher Lockett “Domesticity as Redemption”

Work Due: Discussion Boards As Assigned

Week 4: Moving Towards Critique

Fiction: Cordwainer Smith “Think Blue, Count Two” “The Game of Rat and Dragon”

Non-Fiction: Rokne “Something of Freedom is Yet To Come”

Work Due: Discussion Boards As Assigned

Week 5: Science Fiction as Early Social Commentary

Readings:

Fiction: James Tiptree Jr's “The Man Who Walked Home,” “Her Smoke Rose up Forever;”
Samuel Delany “Aye, and Gomorrah...”

Non-Fiction: excerpts from Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned, Midterm Exam Prep Quiz

Week 6: Science Fiction as Early Social Commentary

Readings:

Fiction: Disch, Thomas “Camp Concentration” pt 1

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Discussion Boards As Assigned

Week 7: Science Fiction as Early Social Commentary

Readings:

Fiction: Thomas Disch *Camp Concentration* Part 2

Octavia Butler *Clay’s Ark* Part 1

Non-Fiction: Octavia Butler’s “The Monophobic Response”

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned

Week 8: Midterm Exam and Prep

Readings:

Fiction: Octavia Butler's *Clay's Ark*, Part 2

Work Due: Midterm Exam, Final Paper Proposal, Discussion Boards as Assigned

Week 9: Spring Break – Enjoy!

Week 10: Science Fiction in Our Era

Readings:

Fiction: Elizabeth Moon *The Speed of Dark*

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned

Week 11: Science Fiction in Our Era

Readings:

Fiction: Elizabeth Moon *The Speed of Dark* Part 2

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Final Paper Proposal, Discussion Boards as Assigned

Week 12: Science Fiction and Evolving Literary Forms

Readings:

Fiction: Amal El-Mohtar "This is How you Lose the Time War"

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned

Review of MLA Formatting

Week 13: Science Fiction and Evolving Literary Forms

Readings:

Fiction: Amal El-Mohtar "This is How you Lose the Time War"

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned

Week 14: Moving to the Big Screen

Readings:

Film Assignment: TBA

Non-Fiction: TBA

Work Due: Discussion Boards as Assigned, First Draft of Final Paper

Week 15: Preparing for Finals

Work Due: Peer Review of Final Paper and Final Exam Review

Week 16: Wrap Up

Work Due: Final Paper and Final Exam (schedule will be noted as it becomes available)