English 426.090: Dystopian Novels

Dr. Michael Given  
F 181-TR 11:00-12:15  
468-2231 (givenmw1@sfasu.edu)  
LA 228-Office Hours TBA

Description:

In this class we will read and discuss several of the most influential and interesting novels in the genre known as “Dystopian Literature.” Each of the texts that we will study has varying elements of stylistic and thematic significance, and all will be considered as artifacts of their particular historical era. We will begin with a fundamental review of dystopian characteristics and then consider such questions as. . . From what particular cultural milieu did these novels develop? How did they emerge? What were the central characteristics of those times, those authors, those works, and what were their most important legacies?

Program Learning Outcomes:

Students will
- closely and accurately read complex texts
- comprehend and apply critical theories with relevant interpretation to texts
- demonstrate knowledge of British literary history
- effectively conduct literary research
- write clear, grammatically correct prose

Texts:

Huxley, Brave New World, ISBN 9780060929879
Orwell, 1984, ISBN 9780451524934
Golding, Lord of the Flies, ISBN 9780399537424
Burgess, A Clockwork Orange ISBN 9780393312836
Moore & Lloyd, V for Vendetta, ISBN 9780930289522
Hall, Daughters of the North, ISBN 9780061430367

Course Requirements:

There will be one major semester project (15-20 pages), and you have three options:

1-Critical literary analysis of one or more of the novels on our list
2-Historical analysis (decade report)
3-Chapter of your own dystopian novel (based on our readings, historical & current events)
Come to me as soon as possible to discuss what you want to write about—as soon as I accept your project, you should begin your research and writing.

There will be frequent quizzes over the readings. They will be short answers, designed to stimulate discussion of the assigned passages for that day and will count 10 points each. These reading quizzes cannot be made up unless you have written documentation of a severe illness or some other serious and unavoidable distress. I will drop the two lowest quiz grades and all other quiz grades will be averaged and counted toward your final grade.

There will also be a final exam.

**Grades:**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Project</td>
<td>50%</td>
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**Participation—Attendance**

Mere attendance is not participation. I will take attendance each day, but there is no attendance grade. Participation involves careful pre-class preparation and willingness to engage the ideas that you have developed with your professor and classmates. The best possible format for such a class is one that mixes lectures and class discussion. In order for this format to be successful we must all read each assignment, take active notes about the various readings and our responses to them, and be willing to both assert our opinions and conscientiously listen to the opinions of others. Do not be afraid to ask questions and to offer opinions about the reading assignments. I encourage you to attend regularly, be on time, and respond thoughtfully.

Participation grades will be lowered by many absences, by late arrival to class, by sleeping in class, by phones or other electronics going off in class, by net surfing, text messaging or any other disruption or discourtesy to the class.

**WH Grades**

Only assigned if course work cannot be completed due to unavoidable circumstances that must be documented for and approved by Dr. Given (with possible review and advice from the Department Chair).
Disabilities:
To obtain related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Definition of academic dishonesty:
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism include (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of another into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Presenting someone else’s work as your own is a serious offense and will not be tolerated in the academic community of which you are a member. By this time in your academic career, you should be well acquainted with what constitutes plagiarism. If not, you should review the university policy on plagiarism at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

I reserve the right to fail any student who plagiarizes.

If you have ANY doubts about whether the idea that you are considering or the language that you are using is “yours” or someone else’s, SEE ME before you turn in your work and we will discuss how best to present it. Unfortunately, there have been several incidents at all undergraduate and graduate levels in which students thought that they could take shortcuts in their work without being caught and/or penalized. They were wrong. Remember—any of the Internet shortcuts available to students are also available to my colleagues and me. Our entire department is very serious about this issue and plagiarism in my class will result in a failing grade.

I HAVE READ AND DISCUSSED THE ABOVE GUIDELINES. I UNDERSTAND AND WILL WORK WITHIN THESE GUIDELINES AS LONG AS I AM ENROLLED IN THIS SECTION OF ENGLISH 426.

(Sign and Print your name here)
ENGL (426) 4326 "Advanced Study of Topics/Themes" (3 credits) typically meets twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination or seminar presentation. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments of primary, secondary, and tertiary materials. Comprehension of the readings is assessed regularly through in-class activities, as well as through end-of-unit or midterm exams. Students are required to conduct a significant literary research project, and to produce formal written essays and other writings totaling 25-30 pages over the course of the semester. These activities average at a minimum 9 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.