

ENGL 146: Contemporary Literature

Modern Dystopias

Instructor: Caroline Winter (she/her)

Instructor Email: winterc@uvic.ca

Course Details: ENGL 146, section A04, summer 2021 (33192)

Course site: On [Brightspace](#)

Office Hour: Wednesdays, 1–2pm (Pacific time) on [Zoom](#); book a meeting in my [online calendar](#)

Weekly discussion session: Wednesdays, 11–noon on [Zoom](#)

Teaching Assistant: Zoe McKenna (she/her)

TA Email: zoevmckenna@uvic.ca

TA Office Hour: Thursdays, 11–noon (Pacific time)

We acknowledge and respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

ABOUT THE COURSE

This is an introductory course in literary studies focusing on contemporary literature from the 20th and 21st centuries. It is also an introductory course in academic writing that satisfies the University of Victoria's [Academic Writing Requirement](#).

The theme for the course is Modern Dystopias. We'll read a selection of poems and novels that explore imagined post-apocalyptic worlds characterized by suffering and oppression. We'll also think about how these works speak to—and help us move forward from—the challenges we face in our own time.

Required Texts

Both of the novels (by Orwell and Dick) are available at the [UVic Bookstore](#). You can probably find copies at other local bookstores such as [Russell Books](#) or [Bolen Books](#). The two poems are available online, and I'll provide copies of a couple of critical readings throughout the term.

William Butler Yeats, "[The Second Coming](#)" (1920)

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949)

Any edition is fine. The edition at the UVic Bookstore is by Penguin UK (2008), ISBN: 9780141036144. Cost: new \$11.99

Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968)

Any edition is fine. The edition at the UVic Bookstore is by Penguin Random House (1996), ISBN: 9780345404473. Cost: new \$22, used \$16.50

Larissa Lai, "[Rachel](#)" (2010)

Recommended Text

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing 4th edition* (2018), ISBN: 9780393631678. Cost: new \$39.95, used \$29.95 at the UVic Bookstore. you can often find less expensive used copies at Subtext (in the SUB).

Required Tools and Equipment

Computer or Other Electronic Device

Because this class will be conducted online, you'll need an electronic device (a desktop computer, a laptop, or a tablet) and reliable access to the internet.

Laptops and other equipment can be [borrowed from the library](#). The library also has [study spaces available to book](#), including computer workstations, rooms for students taking online classes, and adaptive technology rooms with accessibility software.

If you are having trouble finding course texts or do not have access to a computer or reliable internet, please let me know—I'd be happy to help.

Brightspace

Brightspace is UVic's online learning and teaching platform, and the platform for our course. You can access it using your Netlink ID. For instructions for accessing and navigating Brightspace, see the Brightspace section of the Course Info module.

UVic has a number of [policies and expectations](#) in place related to learning in an online community:

- ["Online Student Conduct](#) for respectful and supportive learning environments
- [Academic Integrity](#) adhering to the ethical values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility
- [Copyright](#) for legal protection to original works of authorship
- [Non-academic Misconduct](#) which applies to students participating in university activity
- [Protection of Privacy, Security](#) and [Acceptable use of Electronic Information Resources"](#)

Hypothesis

In an in-person version of this course, most of our time in class would be spent reading and discussing the readings together. This term, as a substitute for in-class discussion, we're going to use an app called [Hypothesis](#).

Hypothesis is a tool for social annotation: it lets us add comments and questions to online versions of course readings that everyone in the course can see and respond to. One advantage of using this tool is that you can share your ideas and questions at any time—not only during class time. To use Hypothesis, you'll need to create an account and join the course's private group. For instructions and more information about this app, see the Hypothesis section of the Course Info module.

Zoom

[Zoom](#) is a cloud-based video conferencing app. We'll be using Zoom for weekly discussion sessions and for office hours. Your Zoom account is linked to your UVic Netlink ID. Please be sure to sign in to your Zoom account before joining all of our Zoom sessions—this will ensure you have access to all its features.

For instructions about activating your Zoom account and using the app, see the Zoom section of the Course Info module.

COURSE FORMAT

This class will be conducted online and delivered through [Brightspace](#). The course is organized into a series of modules, with two posted each week, on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Almost all course components will be asynchronous, meaning that they are not held live, and you can complete the work whenever you like. The only live components are the weekly discussion sessions.

Weekly Discussion Sessions

Each Wednesday, we'll have a synchronous (live) session on [Zoom](#). I won't be giving a lecture or sharing formal content; rather, these sessions are an opportunity for you to ask questions about the readings or assignments and share your ideas. We'll also take up activities and assignments during these sessions and hold group work sessions.

I will take attendance at these sessions, but you will not be penalized if you cannot attend, and I encourage you to join as many as you can—discussing the readings and assignments with me

and your classmates will help you get the most out of the course. I will record these sessions and post them to Brightspace for anyone who wasn't able to attend.

Two of these discussion sessions are particularly important to attend:

- The first discussion session on **Wednesday, May 12**: we'll discuss the syllabus, the readings, the assignments, and how to navigate the Brightspace site and submit work.
- The session on **Wednesday, June 9**: a librarian from UVic Libraries will give a tutorial about how to what's available at the library (did you know they have a PS4 you can borrow? And 3D printing?) and how to find finding research materials. You'll also be given an assignment to complete based on the session.

Office Hours

I'll hold a virtual office hour every **Wednesday from 1–2** (Pacific time). During this time, feel free to meet with me to discuss any questions or concerns you have about the readings, assignments, or other aspects of the course. Please book a meeting during this time using my [online calendar](#).

If you would like to talk but aren't able to meet on Wednesday afternoon, please let me know—I'd be happy to find another time that suits us both.

Our TA, Zoe, will hold a separate office hour each week, on **Thursday from 11–noon**.

For questions about the course, course content, and grading, it's best to contact me (Caroline). Zoe can help with questions about the assignments and improving your writing. You're welcome to ask either of us anything, though.

Important Dates

(Note: always refer to the official lists of [Academic Dates](#) and [Add/Drop Dates](#))

May 10: May–June courses begin

May 16: Drop date for 100% fee reduction and add deadline

May 24: Victoria Day – no class

May 27: Drop date for 50% fee reduction

May 31: Fee deadline for summer term

June 9: Last drop date, no fee reduction

June 25: May–June courses end

TBD: Summer exam period

ASSIGNMENTS & LEARNING OUTCOMES

The culminating assignment in this course is a research essay. The other assignments are designed to help you develop ideas for your essay over the course of the term. This course also has a final exam that will let you draw connections between the ideas and text we'll discuss over the entire term.

Assignments

Assignment (Weight)	Description	Due Date
Writing Diagnostic (0%) 250–300 words	An ungraded, informal writing assignment	Friday, May 14
Close Reading (10%) 500 words	An analysis of a passage from one of our readings	Wednesday, May 19
Midterm (20%) 500–750 words	A mid-term exam (at home, open book)	Friday, June 4
Library Research Assignment (10%) 500 words	A library research activity and a summary and analysis of a secondary source	Monday, June 14
Research Essay (25%) 1000–1250 words	An argumentative essay involving primary and secondary research	Wednesday, June 23
Final Exam (25%)	A final exam (at home, open book)	During the UVic exam period, TBD
Participation (10%)	A variety of activities assigned throughout the term	Each activity is due on the Sunday after it is assigned, at midnight

Participation

In each module, you'll be assigned one or two activities, such as annotating texts, writing a paragraph or two in response to a prompt, or thinking of research questions. Completing these assignments will give you the opportunity to practice writing and the other skills necessary to succeed in this course and will indicate that you're participating fully.

Each activity will be graded out of 5 points, for completion:

5 pts: completed fully and thoughtfully

3 pts: completed partially

1 pts: completed minimally

0 pts: not completed

All together, these activities will count toward the participation mark, which accounts for 10% of your final grade. Some activities require you to submit something (e.g., a written response), while others require you to annotate a text and then report that you've done so.

Learning Outcomes

These learning outcomes describe the knowledge and skills you should be able to demonstrate by the end of this course.

Literary Analysis Skills

- The ability to understand and engage in close reading practices
- the ability to identify and discuss the function of some of the more common literary devices; these might include metaphor, simile, imagery, symbols, allegory, rhyme scheme, alliteration, assonance, meter, enjambment, etc.
- the ability to identify different literary genres and to comment upon their key differences
- the ability to identify and communicate literary themes (and to recognize that literary works do not have *a* theme)
- the ability to identify and discuss differing modes of narration
- the ability to identify key ways literature addresses changes in human thought and experience—historical, cultural and/or social

Writing Skills

- The ability to identify and produce the key components of a university essay (introductions, conclusions and thesis statements; topic sentences and paragraphs; evidence and analysis)
- a greater self-consciousness regarding both what constitutes clear writing and how different forms of writing bring differing expectations re style and grammar
- the ability to produce an MLA-style Works Cited list and to use parenthetical references

Research Skills

- Familiarity with a range of academic research tools and resources
- the ability to gather information from primary and secondary sources;
- the ability to incorporate materials acquired through research into a document that accords with academic standards and conventions and makes clear and consistent use of a standard documentation style like (but not restricted to) MLA Style

COURSE POLICIES

Course Expectations

You can expect me (your instructor) to

- be prepared and well organized
- teach to the course goals
- give clear instructions and evaluation criteria for assignments
- advise and support you in your course work
- treat you with respect

- apply course regulations consistently and fairly
- be available during office hours and at other times as necessary
- return assignments in a timely manner

I expect you to

- participate in class by annotating readings, attending discussion sessions, and completing activities
- do the readings
- ask questions when necessary
- do your best on assignments and always strive to improve
- treat your classmates and me with respect
- check your email and the Brightspace site regularly and respond to messages from me as necessary
- complete your work with integrity and honesty

Attendance

The University Calendar states that students are expected [to attend all classes in which they are enrolled](#), starting in the first scheduled week of classes. In an online course like this one, attendance takes the form of participation in and engagement with the course.

You must express your intention to participate in this section of ENGL 146 by completing the Writing Diagnostic by **Friday, May 14**. **If you do not complete this learning activity by the stated deadline, you may be automatically de-registered from the course as a No-Show student.** This policy ensures that (a) all students receive appropriate guidance at the start of a course that will help them to meet course requirements and (b) waitlisted students have a chance to register in a course in lieu of any non-participating students.

For the remainder of the term, you must (**at a minimum**) maintain an active status (defined as participating in learning activities and completing assignments). Students who fail to meet this requirement may be barred from completing the final course assessment unless they have an academic concession, because according to the [UVic Calendar](#), students who neglect their academic work, including assignments, may be refused permission to write the final examination in a course.

Academic Integrity

The work you submit in any UVic course must be your own. Presenting the work of others as your own violates UVic's [Policy on Academic Integrity](#), whether it is used without attribution (plagiarism) or submitted by you but written by someone else (cheating).

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or if you are facing problems that make it challenging to complete your coursework, come talk to me. It is always better to hand in

an assignment late than to submit it on time and risk violating the academic integrity policy. The consequences for violating the policy can be quite serious.

UVic has prepared several resources to help you understand the university's policy, what constitutes plagiarism and cheating, and how to avoid them.

- The UVic Libraries page on [Plagiarism](#) explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it:
- The University of Victoria's [Policy on Academic Integrity](#), from the academic calendar, defines plagiarism and describes the university's procedures for dealing with allegations of plagiarism and the penalties.

Accessibility

I strive to make this course accessible to everyone. I will include closed captions in videos whenever possible and post my slides for your reference. I'm happy to provide accommodations as directed by the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) and to meet other accessibility needs. If you have any specific needs or suggestions for improving the accessibility of the class, please let me know.

Diversity and Inclusion

I am committed to making this course as inclusive as possible. I strive to create a learning environment that respects the diversity of perspectives and ways of knowing that students bring to the class and that honours your individual identities, but like many of us, I am still learning. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for making the class more inclusive, please let me know.

COURSE RESOURCES

COVID-19

Visit UVic's [COVID-19 Info for Students](#) page for up-to-date information about how the pandemic is affecting life and academics at UVic, as well as links to health, mental health, and financial support services.

Basic Needs and Crisis Situations

This is an especially challenging time for all of us, and I will do my best to support you and help you succeed in this course. If you're experiencing any kind of crisis—inadequate housing or food, a death in the family, a bad breakup, a childcare crisis, mental illness—please don't hesitate to seek help, either by talking to me and/or accessing the resources available on campus directly.

The Centre for Academic Communication (CAC)

The [CAC](#) provides free writing assistance for all UVic students, as well as workshops and tutorials related to academic communication. I may refer you to the CAC if I think you would benefit from these types of supports, and I encourage you to take advantage of these free resources!

UVic Libraries and Special Collections

The [UVic Libraries](#) are invaluable resources for all your courses, and they offers a wide variety of services for students, including research help.

The Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback about this course. Toward the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future.

When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can find the link on MyPage.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments must be submitted electronically through the Brightspace assignment portal.

All assignments are due at midnight (Pacific time) on the date indicated above unless you have arranged in advance for an extension. I recognize these are difficult and unpredictable times, so please don't hesitate to contact me if you need an extension or other support.

If you must miss a due date because of illness or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible, ideally before the due date. Late assignments will be accepted but will accrue a late penalty of 3% (3 points out of 100) for every day an assignment is overdue. The final day to hand in any assignment will be the date of the final exam (to be set by UVic).

Grading

Your work will be evaluated in terms of how well it meets the requirements of the assignment and your achievement of the learning objectives of the course. I will provide you with the evaluation criteria for each assignment, and I encourage you to ask me if you have any questions before the assignment is due. The following table shows how the letter grade or percentage score you receive on an assignment corresponds to the university's standard grading system. For more details, see [UVic's Undergraduate Grading Scale](#).

Undergraduate Grading Scale

Passing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage	Description
A+	9	90 – 100	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
A	8	85 – 89	
A-	7	80 – 84	
B+	6	77 – 79	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
B	5	73 – 76	
B-	4	70 – 72	
C+	3	65 – 69	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
C	2	60 – 64	
D	1	50 – 59	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
Failing Grades	Grade Point Value	Percentage	Description
F	0	0 – 49	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.
N	0	0 – 49	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

Grade Appeals

If you feel that an assignment has been graded incorrectly or unfairly, please contact me so we can review the assignment and the evaluation together. Be prepared to demonstrate that your work should receive the grade that you think it should, based on the grading criteria for that assignment.

If we cannot resolve the problem, you may apply for a formal [grade review](#).

If you have any questions about the information in this syllabus, please ask!