FW 2024-25

AP/EN 3440 6.0A (Y)	Introduction to Contemporary Literature
Course Director:	Prof. Marcus Boon Office Atkinson 722 Ext. x 40675 e-mail: mboon@yorku.ca
Time:	ONLN
Delivery Format:	**ONLINE**
Description:	In this course, we will explore the relationship between contemporary literature and technology -- and the forms of life that have emerged around various new technologies since WW II. Specifically, in the first semester we will focus on computers, computation and the internet and their relationship to literature -- both the ways in which authors prior to the digital age, such as Orwell in *1984*, imagined what our worlds would be like -- and the forms that literature takes today on the actual internet, for example looking at fan fiction, Twitter and Instagram, crowdsourced fiction, blogs and more. In the second semester we will continue to explore these themes via a reading of Cixin Liu's recent novel *The Three Body Problem*, and the ideas of simulation and cosmopolitics, in other words, the idea that art and culture can only be understood in relation to the world view or cosmology that they emerge from. We will explore the ways in which contemporary literature offers models for "thinking otherwise" and imagining new models of reality and new forms of life. We'll read older works such as Philip K. Dick's *The Simulacrum*, as well as recent novels by Ling Ma, Kazuo Ishiguro and Tommy Orange. The core objective of the course is to get you to think critically and creatively about what literature is today, at a time when writing increasingly happens via the mediation of digital and other technologies. Conversely we will read literary works to think about the strange realities that we inhabit today -- especially in our current post-COVID condition. Class assignments will encourage creative as well as critical writing. This is an asynchronous class that will be hosted on Moodle (a.k.a. "eclass.yorku.ca"), and you can choose when you engage with course materials and content, week by week.
Category:	C
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	Weekly forum comments on a discussion topic related to the week's readings. 20% per semester =s 40% 1 x 2000 word research paper or creative writing assignment on an assigned topic. 15% per assignment =s 30% over the year End of semester exam. 15% per semester =s 30%.
Reading List:	Sophia al-Maria, *The Gaze of Sci-Fi Wahabi*

	Ted Chiang, "The Life Cycle of Software Objects" from *Exhalation*
	Byung Chul-Han, *Psychopolitics*
	Kazuo Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*
	Cixin Liu, *The Three Body Problem*
	Kevin Killian, *Selected Amazon Reviews*
	Ling Ma, *Severance*
	Patricia Lockwood, *No One is Talking about This*
	Jenny Odell, *How to do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*
	George Orwell, *1984*
	Tommy Orange, *There There*
Open To:	Yr 3, 4