

## FW 2025-26

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| <b>AP/EN 3440 6.0A (Y)</b>     | Introduction to Contemporary Literature                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Course Director:</b>        | Prof. Marcus Boon<br>Office: Atkinson 722<br>Ext. x 40675<br>e-mail: mboon@yorku.ca<br>other information: www.marcusboon.com                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Time:</b>                   | Asynchronous Online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Delivery Format:</b>        | <b>ONLINE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Description:</b>            | <p>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 <i>1984</i>, 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, AI generated stories, TikTok poetry and the figures of the doppelganger (Naomi Klein), neoliberalism (Mark Fisher) and the attention economy (Jenny Odell).</p> <p>In the second semester we'll think about the way in which literature offers different models of the future, and escape from the impasses and impossibilities of the present, via figures of the alien, the robot and the apocalypse. We'll read older works such as Philip K. Dick's <i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> and Octavia Butler's <i>Parable of the Sower</i>, as well as recent novels by Ling Ma, Kazuo Ishiguro and Tommy Orange and Cixin Liu.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This is an asynchronous online class that will be hosted on eClass, and you can choose when you engage with course materials and content, week by week. There will be an in person exam at the end of each semester.</p> |
| <b>Category:</b>               | C                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Historical Requirement:</b> | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Requirements:</b>           | <p>Weekly forum comments on a discussion topic related to the week's readings. 20% per semester =s 40%</p> <p>Writing assignments. 15% per semester =s 30% over the year</p> <p>End of semester exam. 15% per semester =s 30%.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Reading List:</b>           | Selections from:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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|                 | <p>Sophia al-Maria, <i>The Gaze of Sci-Fi Wahabi</i></p> <p>Ted Chiang, "The Story of My Life"</p> <p>Philip K. Dick, <i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</i></p> <p>Sheila Heti, "According to Alice"</p> <p>Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>Klara and the Sun</i></p> <p>Cixin Liu, <i>The Three Body Problem</i></p> <p>Naomi Klein, <i>Doppelganger</i>.</p> <p>Ling Ma, <i>Severance</i></p> <p>Patricia Lockwood, <i>No One is Talking about This</i></p> <p>Sally Rooney, <i>Conversations with Friends</i></p> <p>Jenny Odell, <i>How to do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy</i></p> <p>George Orwell, <i>1984</i></p> <p>Tommy Orange, <i>There There</i></p> |
| <b>Open To:</b> | YR 3, 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |