



## Science Fiction, Science Fact

Writing 101-48  
Keohane Quad 4D  
WF 4:40-5:55pm  
Office Hours by appointment

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In 1976 astrophysicists Carl Sagan and Edwin Salpeter, then both at Cornell University's Center for Radiophysics and Space Research, published an article theorizing life on Jupiter. While they extrapolated from known fact their article is ultimately based on a fictional premise, not unlike Sagan's science fiction novel *Contact*.

Although not a typical example of a scientific article, Sagan and Salpeter's work poses questions about the exchanges between fact and fiction. What differentiates a hypothesis and a premise of science

fiction? What are their respective uses? Do their uses and audiences overlap? Reading works of science fiction, science studies, and popular science writing we will explore how seemingly fixed or obvious differences between fact and fiction can change depending on the context.

### Goals for Writing 101

Writing 101 will help you develop the skills necessary for academic writing. Through practice researching, workshopping, revising, and editing your writing we will engage with the work of our peers and other scholars, articulate a position, situate our writing for specific audiences, and transfer our writing knowledge to other situations.

A full explanation of the Thompson Writing Program goals and practices that we will pursue over the course of the semester can be found at <http://twp.duke.edu/students/writing-101/course-goals-and-practices>.

### Goals for this Course

In addition (and related to) to the goals of writing 101, this course has 3 specific goals that will both introduce you to interdisciplinary English studies and serve as a platform for other types of academic writing. By the end of this course you will be able to:

#### 1) Read and evaluate text in detail in multiple genres

Texts, in many forms, are the subject of studies in English, thus we will work on *close reading* as a tool for developing the necessary attention and insight to discuss texts in detail and engage with them critically. As we will see throughout the semester, detailed and critical reading is used in one form or another in almost every field whether it is applied to a spreadsheet of data or a triple decker novel. As a writer, these skills will help

you identify and understand different writing contexts when you encounter them in the future and thus respond to them effectively.

- 2) Develop your ideas through research and participation in a scholarly community  
You are now part of a community of scholars at many different levels (congratulations!) Participation in this community requires many skills that we will practice throughout the semester including developing ideas through discussion, making and supporting claims, and eliciting and incorporating peer feedback (among many others). Practicing these skills will prepare you for more productive engagement at Duke and, ideally, beyond.
- 3) Communicate your research and expertise to others  
Communication of your work is part of participation in a community of scholars but we will also discuss how information is circulated outside of a particular field via analysis of popular media and our own writing and class discussion. The nature of interdisciplinary work demands that we learn to communicate with others who do not share our knowledge and expertise and who may not always understand its purpose. While you may not be an expert in a field (yet!) you have and will continue to develop knowledge the class may not share. You will practice communicating these ideas to those of us unfamiliar with your work and ideas. Being able to exchange ideas with those outside of your expertise will ultimately offer you a richer and more diverse understanding of your own ideas.

It's also just more fun.

### **Texts:**

You will need to purchase the following texts available on Amazon or Powell's Books:

MacLean, Katherine. *The Diploids and Other Flights of Fancy*.

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

Other readings and links to video clips will be available on Sakai. You are responsible for bringing weekly readings to class in whatever form you choose. Electronic copies are acceptable so long as the use of computers/readers/tablets are not abused in the classroom. Television episodes will be placed on hold for viewing at Lily Library.

### **Attendance**

Our class will rely heavily on group work and effective class discussions of course material. As such, your attendance and participation in class is important not only for your own performance but the success of the class as a whole.

You will be allowed *2 absences during the semester*. After you have missed two classes each additional unexcused absence will decrease your final grade in the class by half a letter grade.

In accordance with Duke University's policies, if you experience an incapacitating illness or health problem you should file a STINF. This is part of the formal notification process between students, instructors, and relevant deans in the case of illness. More information can be found at <http://trinity.duke.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/illness>, including University procedures for personal emergencies or other issues you may (but hopefully won't) encounter.

If you miss class *please contact me at the earliest opportunity* so that we can work something out as far as assignments and missed work (this also applies if you file a STINF). If you do not contact me within 48 hours of your absence I may be less able to accommodate you.

Missing a scheduled conference also counts as an absence *unless* you have contacted me ahead of time and rescheduled or your absence is due to an emergency.

### **Participation**

Sharing your thoughts and writing with others can be difficult and stressful (it is for me too!), however it is a necessary part of participating in a scholarly community. Participation is not limited to speaking in front of the entire class (though that is a good goal); participation is also demonstrated by active listening, bringing your writing to group workshops, providing constructive feedback to peers, engaging with small group assignments, and turning in ungraded assignments.

### **Technology in the Classroom**

I understand that many of you (myself included) prefer to take notes or carry your readings on a laptop or tablet. I trust that you will use these resources responsibly. *If I observe that use of laptops and tablets is interfering with participation they will be barred from the classroom.*

Ebooks editions are acceptable for course texts you must purchase.

Keep your phones on silent and put away during class.

### **Office Hours**

I do not hold weekly scheduled office hours but this does not mean I don't want to see you! In order to accommodate your busy schedules and mine please schedule individual appointments. If you have any questions, concerns, or just want to discuss the course you are more than welcome to meet with me at any point during the semester.

Scheduling by email is preferred. When you email please list at least two different times you are available in case I have a conflict with your first choice.

### **Email**

I will be communicating with you through your Duke email periodically during the semester. Please check it! You may also communicate questions or concerns to me via email, although understand that the assistance I can provide through email alone can be limited.

When writing emails to me (or other faculty and professionals) keep in mind that you are still communicating with your instructor and I expect an appropriate level of professionalism. If you are unsure about how to draft a professional email I encourage you to consult this handout on academic emails ([http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media\\_items/academic-email-tips.original.pdf](http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/academic-email-tips.original.pdf)) and if you still have questions please ask me!

### **Other Resources**

#### **Sakai**

Our Sakai site will have copies of this syllabus and our readings, including links to information available online. There is also an email tool for contacting me and/or your

classmates and a forum available for discussion if you choose to use this with your classmates.

### **TWP Writing Studio**

You can take your writing to the Writing Studio at any stage in the process for assistance from a writing consultant. I highly encourage that you take advantage of the Studio as having an additional eyes on your work is always valuable, even when you are just brainstorming.

*Note that if you go to the Studio you have the option of drafting a note to me with the consultant about your work there. Please do so.* This will alert me to your concerns with your writing and what you have been working on so I can provide more effective feedback on your work. There are also many handouts on different aspects of writing and other information that may be of use to you.

A consultant from the Writing Center will visit us in the first few week and explain their services in more detail.

### **Course Librarian**

We are lucky enough to have a librarian working directly with our course. Melanie Sturgeon will be hosting a class visit to the library in February and providing other assistance with library use and research throughout the semester. She can be reached at [melanie.sturgeon@duke.edu](mailto:melanie.sturgeon@duke.edu).

### **Assignments**

General information:

-Assignments will be handed in on Sakai on the Assignment folder before class on the due date unless otherwise stated.

-Assignment file names MUST include your last name and the assignment type. For example: GoreckiCloseReading.docx

-All citations of outside material must be in MLA format. Guidelines available at: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>

-Assignments should be in double spaced, 12 point font and 1 inch margins. *Make sure your name is on both the document itself and the file name!*

More specific information will be provided during the semester but this is what to expect in the coming weeks:

#### **Short response papers (1 page)**

These are short one page assignments space throughout the semester to keep you in the habit of writing as well as provide a way for you to flesh out some of your ideas about weekly readings in preparation for discussion. I will provide some feedback on these and their completion will be considered as part of your overall participation grade.

### **Close reading paper (3-4 pages)**

This short paper will make an argument about a course text based on close reading and textual analysis. There will be no outside research required.

### **Analytical paper (5-6 pages)**

This paper will be very similar to the close reading paper but you will be incorporating 1-2 outside sources to support or complicate your claim.

### **Annotated Bibliography (5-6 sources)**

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations collected during research. Each source is then *briefly* summarized and evaluated for its quality and relevance to the writer's project. This will be the basis for your research paper.

### **Research Paper (6-8 pages)**

Your research paper will develop a topic of your own choosing based on your independent research to make and support a claim. The exact nature of your research paper will change based upon your topic which we will discuss during individual conferences.

### **Late Assignments**

Major assignments (close reading paper, analytical paper, annotated bibliography, and research paper) will decrease by half a letter grade for each day that your work is late (an A will become an A- and so forth). I will still read and give feedback on weekly informal assignments if they are turned in late, however they will not count toward your grade. If there are extenuating circumstances that impact your ability to turn in assignments on time please contact me at the earliest opportunity.

### **Grading and Evaluation**

Your final grade will be calculated by

Participation: 150 points

Drafts and Workshops: 200 points

Close Reading Paper: 150 points

Argumentative Paper: 200 points

Bibliography: 50 points

Research Paper: 250

Final grade percentages break down as follows:

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 and below
A 94-96	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-66	
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63	

If you are concerned about your performance in the course at any time feel free to meet with me!

### **Drafts and Grading:**

Drafts are an important place to air your ideas and work on building new skills on the way to producing a polished final piece. As such, individual drafts will *not* be assigned a final letter grade. However, the completion of drafts and participation in the review process benefits both you and your classmates and as such will count for a portion of your overall grade.

### Plagiarism and the Duke Community Standard

I will hold you to the Duke Community Standard (<http://www.integrity.duke.edu/new.html>). This extends to plagiarizing the work of others. We will cover when and how to cite sources in class and techniques for keeping track of ideas and source material during the research process. If you have any questions please ask me or consult: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism>.

*Know that as an instructor I am required to report suspicions of plagiarism to the Duke University Undergraduate Judicial Board. Being found guilty of plagiarism can result in failure of the assignment, this course, and/or suspension from the University*

### Students with Disabilities

If you believe you require accommodations please contact me privately to discuss your needs. If you have not already, you will also want to contact the Student Disabilities Access Office for documentation and approval of necessary accommodations. More information is available at: <http://access.duke.edu/students/requesting/index.php>

**A final note:** I reserve the right to change this syllabus and the course schedule throughout the semester. Changes will be discussed and announced in class before implementation and updated copies of the syllabus will be uploaded to Sakai for your use.

	READING DUE	WRITING DUE
<b>Week 1: Jan. 13</b>	No class	No class
<b>Week 1: Jan. 15</b>	X	X
<b>Week 2: Jan. 20</b>	Gernsback "Imagination and Reality" & "Fiction Verses Fact", Poe	<b>1 page close reading response due</b>
<b>Week 2: Jan. 22</b>	<i>The Diploids</i>	
<b>Week 3: Jan. 27</b>	<i>The Diploids</i>	<b>1 page close reading response due</b>
<b>Week 3: Jan. 29</b>	X	<b>Introduction for close reading paper due</b> , submit to Sakai and bring a printed copy
<b>Week 4: Feb. 3</b>	<i>Optional: Sagan and Salpeter</i>	<b>Close reading paper draft due</b>
<b>Week 4: Feb. 5</b>	<i>Androids (through chapter 3)</i>	

	READING DUE	WRITING DUE
Week 5: Feb.10	<i>Androids chapter 7</i>	<b>Library visit</b> , come with potential topics for the analytical paper
Week 5: Feb. 12	<i>Androids chapter 12</i>	<b>1 page close reading response due</b>
Week 6: Feb. 17		<b>Close reading paper due</b>
Week 6: Feb. 19	Andriods through chapter 15	X
Week 7: Feb. 24	<b>Conferences- no class</b>	<b>Conferences- no class</b>
Week 7: Feb. 26	Finish Andriods	<b>Summary of source due</b>
Week 8: Mar. 2	Kuzawa and Sweet, Hoffman	X
Week 8:Mar. 4	Print your draft (so far) to workshop in class	X
		<b>Analytical paper DRAFT due SUNDAY at MIDNIGHT to Sakai</b>
Week 9: Mar. 9	<b>Conferences, no class</b>	
Week 9: Mar. 11	<b>Conferences, no class</b>	
Week 10: Mar. 16	SPRING BREAK	
Week 10: Mar. 18	SPRING BREAK	
Week 11: Mar. 23	Cosmos (Sagan) episode	<b>Analytical FINAL paper due</b>
Week 11: Mar. 25	Independent research	<b>Research paper proposal due</b>
Week 12: Mar. 30	Library research day	
Week 12: April 1		
Week 13: April 6	Independent research	<b>Bibliography due</b>
Week 13: April 8	X	

	READING DUE	WRITING DUE
<b>Week 14: April 13</b>	No Class	<b>Draft of research paper due by midnight on Sakai</b>
<b>Week 14: April 15</b>	X	Exchange research paper drafts
<b>Week 15: April 20</b>	Partner papers	Marked up group drafts
<b>Week 15: April 22</b>	X	Revision plan, bring selection of paper to work on in class
<b>Week 16: April 27</b>	X	<b>Research paper due</b>