

## NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY ENG 256 – LITERATURE OF SCIENCE FICTION (3 CR.)

### Course Description

Examines the literary and social aspects of science fiction, emphasizing development of ideas and techniques through the history of the genre. Involves critical reading and writing. Lecture 3 hours per week.

### General Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to survey the development of science fiction literature.

### Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

Prerequisites: ENG 112, or departmental approval.

### Course Objectives

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

**GOAL ONE:** Trace the literary history and evolution of science fiction literature Students will be able to:

- Recognize the connection between science fiction and other forms of literature Recognize the relationship of historical events, social evolution, and scientific facts that led to the development of science fiction literature.
- Recognize the role of science in science fiction literature.

**GOAL TWO:** Identify the unique literary characteristics and conventions of science fiction literature Students will be able to:

- Distinguish science fiction from other “mainstream” literature, as well as other fantastic literatures.
- Recognize the use of speculation, extrapolation, and cognitive estrangement in selected works.
- Identify the scientific premise of selected works.
- Identify the definitive features of important subgenres of science fiction such as dystopia, post-apocalypse, cyberpunk, and Afrofuturism, etc.

**GOAL THREE:** Recognize and interpret important themes in science fiction literature. Students will be able to:

- Examine and analyze the use of important science fiction themes in selected works.
- Critique the role of science in selected works.

- Articulate how a science-fictional text reflects its author's contemporary concerns, as evinced by its theme and implicit argument.

**GOAL FOUR:** Continue the development of critical reading and writing skills Students will be able to:

- Effectively employ organizational strategies to open and close their texts and to move the reader between and within main ideas, paragraphs, and sentences.
- Use textual evidence to support critical analysis of selected works of science fiction.
- Appropriately employ grammatical and mechanical conventions in the preparation of readable texts.
- Employ an appropriate style of documentation for all research writing.

**Major Topics to be Included**

- Definitions of science fiction
- Early science fiction, including the scientific romance Magazine science fiction
- The “Ages” of science fiction, including The Pulp, Golden Age, New Wave, Cyberpunk  
Hard and soft science fiction
- Science fiction subgenres
- Science fiction story or presentation