

FYE 1000-28

First Year Experience: Science Fiction

Fall 2025

Seminar: Monday & Wednesday 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM, Chapman 233

Writing Workshop: Tues 11:20 AM - 12:35 PM, Fri 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM, Chapman 233

Common Learning Experience: Thursday 11:20AM - 12:35PM, Ruth Taylor Recital Hall

Instructors for FYE 1600-26

Seminar

Dr. Lauren Turek

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Office Hours: Th 9am-11am and by appt.

Writing Workshop

Dr. Duane Colharp

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(210)-999- 8231

Office: Dicke Hall 318

Office hours: MTWR 1pm-2pm and by appt.

Peer Tutor: Millie Dinger

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Peer Tutor: John Bieberich

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Course Description

Science fiction is often thought of as a literature of the imagination, or a literature of the future or of other worlds. In this First-Year Experience, however, students will find that science fiction critiques and comments on the world we live in today as much as it speculates about the future. Students will read several classic novels, short stories, and films that confront such timeless themes as politics and religion, humanity and technology, gender, and environmentalism. The approach will be eclectic, borrowing methods and perspectives from the natural and social sciences as well as the humanities. The combination of reading, writing, and discussion offers students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the liberal arts experience as they journey “where no one has gone before.”

The FYE meets five days a week. On Thursdays, all sections will meet together in the Ruth Taylor Recital Hall for a common learning experience (CLE), where an invited lecturer will speak on the reading assigned for that week, or a topic associated with that reading. On MW/TF, students will meet with their sections, alternating between writing and seminar instructors.

Texts:

1. Orson Scott Card. *Ender's Game*. New York: Tor Books, 1985.
2. Christopher Priest. *Inverted World*. New York: New York Review Books, 1974.
3. Ursula K. LeGuin. *The Lathe of Heaven*. New York: Scribner, 1971.
4. Martha Wells. *All Systems Red* and *Artificial Condition*, from *The Murderbot Diaries*. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2017 and 2018.

Required short stories are available on your course section's Canvas site.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the First Year Experience (FYE), students will have demonstrated the ability to analyze and interpret sophisticated texts and ideas through:

1. analytical and argumentative writing
2. reasoned discussion of substantive issues
3. oral presentations
4. locating and evaluating diverse information sources to enhance their understanding of course materials

Assignments:

Common Learning Experiences (CLEs)

Students will be responsible for asking questions of the guest lecturers immediately following each Thursday lecture.

Writing Workshop Sub-Section

The Writing Workshop component of the course will focus on critical reading, writing, and thinking skills, emphasizing writing as a persuasive analytical activity. We will concentrate on close reading, carefully developed argument, critical analysis, and editing techniques in an attempt to foster the kinds of writing that you will be asked to do throughout your academic career.

Requirements: **6 assignments**. All assignments, readings, and papers are due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates and must be completed in order to pass the course.

All essays should be between four to six pages in length, written in an appropriate twelve-point font, double-spaced, and stapled. Please do not use a title page; you may print your papers double-sided. Late work will be penalized with a lowered grade for each day late. Essays over four days late will not be accepted. All cell phones should be put away during class. Texting and emailing during class are strictly forbidden.

Contact the instructor if you are struggling to complete and/or submit the assignments.

Seminar Sub-Section

Students will hand in **10 assignments** throughout the term. The topics of these brief assignments will deal with the reading assignments and the lecture content. **No late reading responses will be accepted.** Since the ideas for the assignments will grow out of class discussion and lectures, attendance and active, intelligent class participation are mandatory and will be considered in the final course grade.

Oral participation is an integral part of the course and gives the students an opportunity to try out ideas for the paper assignments. Students should also arrive at the seminars armed with questions about the texts under discussion.

There will be one midterm examination during the course of the semester and a cumulative final exam, all involving short essays and identifications.

General Expectations for Seminars and Writing Workshops:

Readings: Instructors expect students to have read assignments carefully by the assigned dates and to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. Please bring the readings to all classes and lectures so that we may refer to them.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Excessive absences and repeated lateness will result in a lowered course grade. Attendance will be taken at all common experience lectures and both class sub-sections by your peer tutor. Be sure to check in with the peer tutor either before or after the common experience lectures.

Laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices: Please do not use electronic devices during CLE lectures and do not use cell phones in class unless instructed to do so.

Laptops are permissible if they are used only for notetaking. If you are doing non-FYE work on your laptop during class, you will not be allowed to use it.

Academic Integrity: All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work” and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated “pledged” with a signature.**

We expect students to abide by the Academic Honor Code to which they pledged upon enrollment. Instructors expect all students to be thoroughly familiar with the Honor Code (available at: [Academic Honor Code](#)).

With increasing use of Internet sources and "cut and paste" technology, it is all too easy to plagiarize the work of others. This can happen especially when you are rushed, tired, and generally stressed. Whether intentional, or due simply to forgetting to include proper citations, or especially to failing to exercise due caution in using your own wording when paraphrasing another's words, or neglecting to indicate by quotation marks the actual words of another author, it is still plagiarism!

Needless to say, there are other forms of academic dishonesty than plagiarizing from the Internet. Please be aware of other behaviors such as unauthorized collaboration that constitute violations of academic integrity in its various forms.

The instructors have a basic faith in the integrity of students and their desire to live in a world where fairness and trust are dominant features of the way we conduct our lives in community with others. Understanding and observing academic integrity are part of building that world of fairness and trust, right here at Trinity. However, should we become aware of violations of academic integrity, we will file the necessary charges with the Academic Honor Council.

If you have any questions or doubts relating to academic integrity regarding any assignments for this class, including what help you may or may not receive on any given assignment, PLEASE ASK THE INSTRUCTOR!

Use of generative AI:

Academic integrity and the pursuit of excellence are two of the central values that all Trinity University students and community members pledge to uphold. The First Year Experience is intended to foster your academic excellence by helping you develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, and written and oral expression. One of the best ways for you to nurture those skills is through writing, which is why this course places a strong emphasis on developing your writing and critical thinking abilities.

We recognize though that emergent generative AI tools, such as but not limited to ChatGPT, can provide writing assistance to their users. In generating text, these AI tools are not performing thought or analysis, and they cannot replace human creativity, the individual voice of a writer, or the original thought that emerges through the process of writing. Your instructors may choose to permit, to limit, or to prohibit the use of generative AI for specific assignments. If you do use AI for any written assignments, **you must fully cite the AI tool**. This means that *any* text written by AI must be quoted and you must include the name of the tool in parentheses (ChatGPT). Even if you do not use AI-generated text in your paper, if you used generative AI *at any point in the process of working on the paper*, you must indicate how you did so by writing the following statement at the end of your paper: “This paper used AI for the following components of the writing process: brainstorming, editing, sentence generation [choose any or all of these as appropriate].” Failure to disclose your use of AI will be considered a violation of academic integrity and the Trinity Honor Code.

Peer Tutors:

Typically, each section of the FYE has a peer tutor for the writing workshop and a peer tutor for the seminar. They attend their respective classes as well as the weekly common learning experiences. They are involved in class discussions and are available to talk with you outside of class. This semester, we just have one peer tutor, who will attend classes on Mondays and Wednesdays. You can visit the peer tutor for assistance for both the writing workshop and seminar sections however, and the peer tutor will be helpful to you as you develop your ideas for your papers or as you prepare to lead class discussion. They read and comment on, but do not grade, student work. The professors alone make the final decision concerning all grades.

Grading:

Writing Workshop Sub-Section:

Six essays: 90%

Student participation: 10%

Seminar Sub-Section:

Midterm: 10%

Final: 20%

Ten Small assignments: 50%

Class participation (comprised, at least in part, of oral assignments): 20%

Students will receive one grade for the course. This six-credit grade is determined jointly by the writing workshop instructor and the first-year seminar instructor at the end of the semester. Student improvement in each sub-section will be taken into account in determining the final grade.

Lecturers for Common Learning Experiences: (in order of appearance)

Dennis Ugolini (Department of Physics and Astronomy)

James Ivy (Department of Religion)

Lauren Turek (Department of History)

Orson Scott Card (Hugo and Nebula award-winning science fiction author!)

Todd Barnett (Department of History)

Brian Miceli (Department of Mathematics)

Katherine Troyer (Collaborative)

Courtney Salinas (FYE)

Kimberlyn Montford (Department of Music)

Heather Sullivan (Department of Modern Languages and Literatures)

Althea Delwiche (Department of Communication)

Jim Shinkle (Department of Biology)

Kenneth Loiselle (Department of History)

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Reporting:

As faculty members, we are designated as Responsible Employees. As such, we are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator when: 1) we witness or receive information in the course and scope of our employment, 2) this information is about the occurrence of an incident that we reasonably believe is Sexual Harassment or Sexual Misconduct, and 3) the incident is committed by or against someone who was a Trinity university student, employee, or contractor at the time of the incident. This

reporting responsibility applies regardless of where the incident occurred (on- or off-campus) and regardless of whether the individual(s) are still affiliated with Trinity.

If you share information with either of us about any incidents that implicate the [Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#), we are required to report this to the Title IX Coordinator to make sure you have information about support resources and complaint resolution options. Our report does not initiate the complaint process, and you are in control over how you choose to engage with our Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, we encourage you to share this information directly with the Title IX Coordinator or one of the individuals who has been designated as a confidential resource on campus. [The reporting form is available here](#) and information about supportive resources is available [here](#).

Academic Support:

Trinity faculty hold students to the highest academic standards and also know that the very best students seek out help when necessary. The following resources are in place to support your academic success:

- [Office of Academic Advising](#): Your academic advisor is available to help you explore academic opportunities, identify goals, plan your degree program, assist with registration, and navigate your academic experience.
- [Academic Support](#): time management, study skills, test anxiety, note taking, supplemental 1:1 tutoring
- [Office of the Dean of Students](#): provides comprehensive student support, development, and engagement opportunities through Trinity's Student Care Referral and connection with case manager/life coach; student conduct; and leadership development through engagement in campus activities and student organizations
- [Center for Experiential Learning & Career Success](#): major exploration, career guidance
- [Counseling Services](#): mental health concerns, interpersonal relationship challenges, identity development
- [Health Services](#): physical health concerns and care
- [Quantitative Reasoning and Skills Center](#): tutoring for quantitatively demanding coursework
- [Student Accessibility Services](#): accommodations for a diagnosed disability
- [Wellness Programs](#): nutrition, sleep, stress management
- [Writing Center](#): starting a paper, finding a thesis, drafting, and editing

All campus resources for students can be found in the [TigerHub](#).

Course Calendar and Requirements

Date	Readings/Screenings	Assignments for Dr. Coltharp	Assignments for Dr. Turek
Aug 25	Introductions		
Aug 26	Asimov, “Reason”; Godwin, “Cold Equations”; Bradbury, “There Will Come Soft Rains”		
Aug 27	Asimov, Godwin, & Bradbury		
Aug 28	CLE: Science in Science Fiction (Dennis Ugolini)		
Aug 29	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 31-131, chapters 1-7		
Week 2			
Sep 1	Labor Day (No Class)		
Sep 2	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 31-131, chapters 1-7		
Sep 3	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 31-131, chapters 1-7		Seminar Response Paper #1 Due
Sep 4	CLE: Ideology and the Golden Age of Science Fiction (James Ivy)		
Sep 5	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 132-266, chapters, 8-12		
Week 3			
Sep 8	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 132-266, chapters, 8-12		
Sep 9	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 267-368, chapters 13-15	In-class microessay (<i>Ender's Game</i>)	
Sep 10	<i>Ender's Game</i> , 267-368, chapters 13-15		
Sep 11	CLE: <i>Ender's Game</i> and the Long Twilight Struggle (Lauren Turek)		
Sep 12	TV episode: <i>Star Trek</i> , “The Devil in the Dark”; <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i> , “Darmok”		
Week 4			
Sep 15	TV episode: <i>Star Trek</i> , “The Devil in the Dark”; <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i> , “Darmok”		Seminar Response Paper #2 Due
Sep 16	Overflow		

Sep 17	Overflow		SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS 1
Sep 18	CLE: Q&A with Orson Scott Card		
Sep 19	Hao Jingfang, "Folding Beijing"	WW Paper #1 (<i>Ender's Game</i>)	
Week 5			
Sep 22	Hao Jingfang, "Folding Beijing"		Seminar Response Paper #3 Due
Sep 23	<i>Inverted World</i> , 1-109, Prologue & Part One	In-class microessay (poetry)	
Sep 24	<i>Inverted World</i> , 1-109, Prologue & Part One		
Sep 25	CLE: The Impact of Comic Books on Science Fiction (Todd Barnett)		
Sep 26	<i>Inverted World</i> , 111-159, Part Two		
Week 6			
Sep 29	<i>Inverted World</i> , 111-183, Part Two		
Sep 30	<i>Inverted World</i> , 185-242, Part Three		
Oct 1	<i>Inverted World</i> , 185-242, Part Three		Seminar Response Paper #4 Due
Oct 2	CLE: Math in SF, or How We Live by Our Assumptions (Brian Miceli)		
Oct 3	<i>Inverted World</i> , 243-313, Parts Four & Five	WW Paper #2 (poetry portfolio)	
Week 7			
Oct 6	<i>Inverted World</i> , 243-313, Parts Four & Five		
Oct 7	overflow	In-class microessay (<i>Inverted World</i>)	
Oct 8	overflow		Midterm Review and Prep
Oct 9	CLE: Midterm Exam (in the classroom)		
Oct 10	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 1-50, chapters 1-4		
Week 8			
Oct 13	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 1-50, chapters 1-4		
Oct 14	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 51-111, chapters 5-7		

Oct 15	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 51-111, chapters 5-7		Seminar Response Paper #5 Due
Oct 16	CLE: Light(year)s, Camera, Action: Film and Sci-Fi (Katherine Troyer)		
Oct 17	October Break (No class)		
Week 9			
Oct 20	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 112-184, chapters 8-11		
Oct 21	<i>Lathe of Heaven</i> 112-184, chapters 8-11	WW Paper #3 (<i>Inverted World</i>)	
Oct 22	Movie: <i>Don't Look Up</i> (2021)		Seminar Response Paper #6 (Movie Review) Due
Oct 23	CLE: Dreamer, Prophet, Madman: The Unreliable Narrator and LeGuin's <i>Lathe of Heaven</i> (Courtney Salinas)		
Oct 24	Movie: <i>Don't Look Up</i> (2021)		
Week 10			
Oct 27	<i>The Murderbot Diaries: All Systems Red</i>		
Oct 28	<i>The Murderbot Diaries: All Systems Red</i>	In-class microessay (<i>Lathe of Heaven</i>)	
Oct 29	<i>The Murderbot Diaries: All Systems Red/Artificial Condition</i>		Seminar Response Paper #7 Due
Oct 30	CLE: The Sound of Science...Fiction (Kimberlyn Montford)		
Oct 31	<i>The Murderbot Diaries: Artificial Condition</i>		
Week 11			
Nov 3	<i>The Murderbot Diaries: Artificial Condition</i>		
Nov 4	Movie: <i>Blade Runner</i> (1982)	In-class microessay (<i>Murderbot Diaries</i>)	
Nov 5	Movie: <i>Blade Runner</i> (1982)		Seminar Response Paper #8 (Movie Review) Due
Nov 6	CLE: The Posthuman (Heather Sullivan)		
Nov 7	Movie: <i>Ex Machina</i> (2015)		
Week 12			
Nov 10	Movie: <i>Ex Machina</i> (2015)		
Nov 11	Game: <i>Detroit: Become Human</i>		

Nov 12	Game: <i>Detroit: Become Human</i>		Seminar Response Paper #9 Due			
Nov 13	CLE: Gaming the Future (Althea Delwiche)					
Nov 14	overflow	WW Paper #4 (<i>LH</i> or <i>Murderbot</i>)				
Week 13						
Nov 17	overflow		SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS 2			
Nov 18	Tiptree, "Love is the Plan, the Plan is Death"; Le Guin, "Coming of Age in Karhide"; Butler, "Bloodchild"					
Nov 19	Tiptree, Le Guin, & Butler		Seminar Response Paper #10 Due			
Nov 20	CLE: The Evolution of Sex (Jim Shinkle)					
Nov 21	Movie: <i>Alien</i> (1979)					
Week 14						
Nov 24-28 Thanksgiving break (No Class)						
Week 15						
Dec 1	Movie: <i>Alien</i> (1979)					
Dec 2	overflow					
Dec 3	overflow		SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS 3			
Dec 4	CLE: Science Fiction and the Enlightenment (Kenneth Loiselle)					
Dec 5	Evals, wrap-up					
Week 16						
Dec. 8	Evals, wrap-up					
Dec. 9	Celebration					
WW Paper #5						
Friday, December 12, 7:00-10:00 p.m (in our classroom)						
Final Examination						
Tuesday, December 16, 8:30-11:30am (in our classroom)						