

ENGL 101.05 BOT OR NOT: TECHNOLOGY, IDENTITY, AUTONOMY

OVERVIEW:

- As society becomes more technologically advanced, questions of what counts as human abound. While the course will engage with texts that focus on artificial intelligence and genetic engineering, we will also consider broader questions of how the digital intersects with and impacts other markers of identity. We will critique the historical and cultural development of digital communities. Of particular concern is the digital divide: how society counts (or discounts) groups that lack sufficient access to technology or those who opt out of the widespread integration of the digital in our daily lives.
- This course will be writing-intensive with a focus on form, revision, and writing for multiple audiences. The majority of class time will be spent in discussion of our texts and working on the writing process.
- Learning Objectives: Drawing on the English Department learning objectives, this course aims to develop students' critical thinking skills so that they may:
 - Analyze a variety of texts and respond to their aesthetic and cultural value
 - Consider question from many different points of views
 - Respond to a wide range of texts and understand their historical and cultural contexts
 - Articulate ideas effectively in discussion and in oral presentations
 - Develop strategies to manage your own writing process
 - Receive and respond to feedback on your writing; provide useful feedback to your peers
 - Write gracefully, coherently, imaginatively, and persuasively, with proper attention to effective organization, form, content, and audience

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Bucknell Bookstore):

- Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* ISBN: 9780345404473
- Margaret Atwood, *Year of the Flood* ISBN: 9780307455475
- [Video available via Moodle](#): *Ex Machina* (2015), *Dollhouse* (2009), *Orphan Black* (2013)
- Various other readings will be provided

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance

- As per our agreement, I will accept any absence as excused, but you must email me prior to the start of class and be honest about why you are missing class. It is important to realize that though your absence will be excused, you will not be able to make up any work missed during that class. If you miss a class without informing me prior, your absence will be unexcused.

Participation

- **Active participation is required.** Come to class prepared and ready to participate. If you are unprepared or do not have the necessary materials (your text, drafts, reviews, etc.), you may be asked to leave. You will be respectful of your fellow classmates. Disruptive behavior—rudeness, talking while others are speaking, or texting during class—may result in me asking you to leave.
- There will be various forms of participation in this class. I recognize that some of you may prefer in-class discussion, while others prefer written discourse. You will be expected to do some of both.

Over the semester, you will develop facility in formulating your ideas in both out loud and in writing. To that end:

- You are required to provide a topic for discussion on a rotating basis throughout the semester. A topic may include a passage that you found interesting or confusing. Similarly, you might want to discuss a particular character or an action that occurs in the text. You may also raise broader issues/questions from the text, or topics that engage with the world more broadly.
- You are required to contribute to class notes on a rotating basis throughout the semester. This is not to discourage you from taking your own notes or from contributing to class notes when it isn't your day, but rather to allow all of us to contribute to the collective experience and provide a space for questions and comments that we can readily address throughout the semester.

Readings and Film Screenings

- You will notice that the reading for this course is heavy. Please familiarize yourself with the syllabus and the readings and budget your time accordingly.
- Beyond reading for this course, you will be required to watch a film and several television episodes over the course of the semester. I expect that you will use a critical eye when viewing the films just as you would when reading a text. Again, make sure to budget your time accordingly.

In-Class Writing

- Once a week you will spend the first ten minutes of class writing. You will not be allowed to use your books or secondary reading during the ten minutes. Your write-ups should be approximately one page long. Each response will be graded. If you miss the first ten minutes of class you may not make up the writing for that day. Likewise, if you are absent you may not make up the writing for that day (another reason why it is important to attend class and arrive on time).

Course Site Contributions

- You will have several assignments posted throughout the semester to our course site. They will include more formal revision and expansion of in-class writing assignments, annotated bibliography entries, a hash-tag review, and two reflective posts.

Peer Review/Drafting

- During the semester, you will be expected to produce and workshop drafts of your major essays and your digital essay. During this process, you will be asked to read and respond carefully to the writing of your peers. Sometimes this will be an in-class workshop, other times you will be asked to comment on work or posts on the class site.

Two Essays

- You will write two essays over the course of the semester. One will be a formal essay written outside of class, the other will be an in-class essay written during the final exam period. Both will be explained fully and developed over several weeks.

Digital Essays

- One of your written responses will be developed into a digital essay. Through the process you will learn how to compose for screen and the importance of visual and audio components in communicating your argument.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**Plagiarism**

- ***Plagiarism is a serious offence.*** Plagiarism includes any representation of another's ideas or work as your own, including the ideas of another student, articles, books, or information from the internet. I take instances of plagiarism seriously. **If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail the assignment and be reported.**
 - If you find yourself stuck during the writing process, come and see me. If you have any questions about how to properly cite sources, I'm more than happy to help.
 - If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please see [Bucknell's page on avoiding plagiarism](#), ask me, or make an appointment with the [Writing Center](#).

Academic Accommodation

- From Teaching and Learning Center's page on [Additional Student Support](#): "Bucknell is committed to ensuring 'reasonable accommodations' to all students who are diagnosed with disabilities. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves to the appropriate Associate Dean, to provide the appropriate documentation, including assessment of their needs, and to discuss the types of accommodations that may be needed." For further information, please contact the [Office of Accessibility Resources \(OAR\)](#).

Extra Credit

- Generally speaking, I do not believe in extra credit. Please do not ask if you can make up absences or missed work. That being said, there are two events this fall that I will allow you to attend in order to make up *Class Participation points*. These are optional events and you will be expected to Tweet them and/or write a post to the blog after the event. Mark your calendars.
 - R. Luke DuBois: Artist Talk, Wed, 10/7, 7pm Center Room, ELC, 2nd Floor
 - Bucknell Digital Scholarship Conference, Sat 11/7 and Sun 11/8, ELC, 2nd Floor

Please note that the syllabus is subject to change.

GRADES:

- Class Participation: 5%
- In-Class Writing: 10%
- Peer Review/Drafting: 10%
- Course Site Contributions: 20%
- Essay One: 20%
- Digital Essay: 20%
- In-Class Final Essay: 15%

Date	Readings / Class Topics	Due
8/24 M	Syllabus, Introductions, and class site	
8/26 W	WIRED/NYTimes article	Annotated Bibliography #1
8/28 F	“Super-toys Last All Summer Long”	G1 topics / G3 notes
8/31 M	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> (chapters 1–4)	G2 topics / G4 notes
9/2 W	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> (chapters 5–7)	G3 topics / G5 notes
9/4 F	Turing Test (chat with A.L.I.C.E.) Workshop: Essay One Topics	
9/7 M	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> (chapters 8–10)	G4 topics / G1 notes
9/9 W	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> (chapters 11–16)	G5 topics / G2 notes
9/11 F	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep</i> (chapters 16–22)	G1 topics / G3 notes
9/14 M	Library Instruction (meet in Bertrand 025)	Reading Response
9/16 W	<i>Ex Machina</i>	G2 topics / G4 notes
9/18 F	Workshop: Thesis Statements and Outlines	Annotated Bibliography #2
9/21 M	“ Cyborg Manifesto ” (p149–160)	G3 topics / G5 notes
9/23 W	“ Cyborg Manifesto ” (p161–169)	G4 topics / G1 notes
9/25 F	“ Cyborg Manifesto ” (p170–181)	G5 topics / G2 notes
9/28 M	<i>Dollhouse</i> (episodes 1 & 2)	G1 topics / G3 notes
9/30 W	<i>Dollhouse</i> (episode 10) TBD reading on the Uncanny Valley	G2 topics / G4 notes
10/2 F	Workshop: Peer Review	Draft of Essay One
10/5 M	<i>Orphan Black</i> (episodes 1 & 2)	G3 topics / G5 notes
10/7 W	In-class: <i>Orphan Black</i> (episode 10)	
10/9 F	Workshop: Bots	Final Essay One
10/12 M	No Class: Fall Recess	
10/14 W	Introduction to Digital Essay	Reflective Post
10/16 F	Workshop: Text to Script & Images	

Date	Readings / Class Topics	Due
10/19 M	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 1–12)	G4 topics / G1 notes
10/21 W	Workshop: Audio (meet in DSC, Bert 123)	Digital Essay Script
10/23 F	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 13–23)	G5 topics / G2 notes
10/26 M	No Class: work on Digital Essay Narration	
10/28 W	Workshop: Peer Review	Edited Narration Draft
10/30 F	Workshop: Storyboards	
11/2 M	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 24–35)	G1 topics / G3 notes
11/4 W	Workshop: Final Cut (meet in Video Lab, Bert 018)	Narration, Images, Storyboard
11/6 F	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 36–42)	G2 topics / G4 notes
11/9 M	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 43–51)	G3 topics / G5 notes
11/11 W	Workshop: Peer Review	Digital Essay Draft
11/13 F	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 52–61)	G4 topics / G1 notes
11/16 M	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 62–70)	G5 topics / G2 notes
11/18 W	<i>The Year of the Flood</i> (chapters 71–End)	
11/20 F	Review Final Essay Topics	Final Digital Essay
11/23 – 11/27	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	
11/30 M	“22XX: One-Shot” from <i>Octavia’s Brood</i>	Reading Response
12/2 W	Workshop: Preparing for Final In-Class Essay	Annotated Bibliography #3
12/4 F	“Runway Blackout” from <i>Octavia’s Brood</i>	
12/7 M	Last Day of Class	Reflective Post
TBD	Final Exam: In-Class Essay	