

# WOMEN'S SPECULATIVE FICTION

## ENGL 3370/WOMS 3370

### SPRING 2018

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Miller

**Office:** 417 Carlisle Hall

**Office Hours:** Monday/Wednesday 1-2 and Tuesday/Thursday 11- 12

**Email:** [jennifermiller@uta.edu](mailto:jennifermiller@uta.edu)

**Faculty Profile:** <https://mentis.uta.edu/explore/profile/jennifer-miller>

**Time of Course:** Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:00 – 10:50

**Place of Course:** TH 202

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#### Course Description

This course asks the question: What do women imagine when they imagine other worlds?

We study multi-ethnic women's speculative literature across genres, including magical realism, horror, and science fiction to begin answering the question.

This course positions women as literary world-makers and works to identify the ways gender, sexuality, race, class, and ability, as well as historical and geographical location, influence the worlds women create.

Literary texts are paired with theory and criticism to facilitate critical analysis and engaged class discussion.

Students also explore various modes of writing about literature through participation in a class blog. They create original book reviews, fanfiction, and critical interpretations of assigned texts.

#### Course Objectives

- ❖ Identify and explain characteristics of speculative literary genres
- ❖ Develop strong close reading practices demonstrated by improved reading comprehension of literary and theoretical texts
- ❖ Apply theory to literary texts to produce original interpretations

- ❖ Evaluate literary texts and produce book reviews
- ❖ Create fanfiction that speculates character development

### Course Assignments

Students participate in the **class blog**:

<https://wordpress.com/view/womensspeculativefiction.wordpress.com>

Students are responsible for completing work in three writing genres (fanfiction, book review, and interpretive analysis) about three literary genres (science fiction, magical realism, and horror). Each writing assignment is 3-5 pages. We will discuss different writing genres throughout the semester.

**Students are encouraged to meet with me to discuss their projects.**

Each writing assignment is worth 30% of the final grade.

Due dates:

Science Fiction	Monday, March 5
Magical Realism	Monday, April 9
Horror	Monday, May 7

Additionally, **reading quizzes** will be administered throughout the semester. Reading quizzes are worth 10% of the final grade.

### Course Texts

Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl*

Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling*

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories*

Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale*

\*\*\* All other readings are available as a PDF on BB. I recommend printing it out, but I don't require it.

### Course Calendar

*I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as the semester progresses. Any modifications will be communicated in class and through Blackboard.*

### Part 1: Introduction to Course Content

**W 1/17**

Syllabus, Introductions

**F 1/19**

"Why Join Critical Conversations about Literature?" and "What is Literary Analysis?" by Wolfe and Wilder

**M 1/22**

"Writing About Literature: An Overview" by Barnet and Cain

## **Part 2: Science Fiction**

**W 1/24**

"Introduction: The Turn to Dystopia in Modern Literature" by Booker and "Introduction" to SF and the Human Imagination by Atwood

**F 1/26**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 1-7)

**M 1/29**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 8-17)

**W 1/31**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 18-24)

**F 2/2**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 24-29)

**M 2/5**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 30-39)

**W 2/7**

Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (chapters 40-46 and Historical Notes)

**F 2/9**

"Margaret Atwood on What *The Handmaid's Tale* Means in the Age of Trump" by Atwood and

"The Calculus of Love and Nightmare: *The Handmaid's Tale* and the Dystopian Tradition" by Feur

**M 2/12**

"Five Things That Fan Fiction Is, And One Thing It Isn't" by Coppa

**W 2/14**

"A Classic Read: *Woman on the Edge of Time*" review by Wilson and "Woman on the Edge of Time, 40 years on: "Hope is the engine for imagining utopia"" by Piercy

**F 2/16**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 1-5)

**M 2/19**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 6-8)

**W 2/21**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 9-10)

**F 2/23**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 11-13)

**M 2/26**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 14-16)

**W 2/28**

Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (chapters 17-20)

**F 3/2**

"Debating Feminist Futures" by Kafer

### **Part 3: Magical Realism**

**M 3/5**

"Delimiting the Terms" from Magic(al) Realism by Bowers

**W 3/7**

"A Cyborg Manifesto" by Haraway

**F 3/9**

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (pp. 1-58)

**M 3/12 (No Class)**

**W 3/14 (No Class)**

**F 3/16 (No Class)**

**M 3/19**

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (pp. 59-146)

**W 3/21**

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (pp. 147-209)

**F 3/23**

Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (pp. 211-269) and "Reproduction, Reincarnation, and Human Cloning: Literary and Racial Forms in Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl*" by Joo

**M 3/26**

Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (chapters 1-3)

**W 3/28**

Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (chapters 4-7)

**F 3/30**

Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (chapters 8-11)

**M 4/2**

Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (chapters 12-16)

**W 4/4**

Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (chapters 17-conclusion)

**F 4/6**

"The Pleas of the Desperate": Collective Agency versus Magical Realism in Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* by Caminero-Santangelo

#### **Part 4: Horror**

**M 4/9**

"Race as a Trope of the World" by Gates and "Toward a Politics of Empowerment" by Collins

**W 4/11**

"Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" by Rich, "Vampire Values: Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories*" by Bond, and Interview with Jewelle Gomez By Burch

**F 4/13**

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (Chapter 1)

**M 4/16**

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (Chapter 2)

**W 4/18**

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (Chapters 3-4)

**F 4/20**

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (Chapters 5-6)

**M 4/23**

Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories* (Chapters 7-8) and "More than Human: Black Feminisms of the Future in Jewelle Gomez's *The Gilda Stories*" by Morris

**W 4/25**

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (Chapters 1 -7)

**F 4/27**

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (Chapters 8-12)

**M 4/30**

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (Chapters 13 - 18)

**W 5/2**

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (Chapters 19 - 24)

**F 5/4**

Octavia Butler's *Fledgling* (Chapters 25 -29 and epilogue) and ""Every age has the vampire it needs": Octavia Butler's Vampiric Vision in *Fledgling*" by Brox

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### **Other University Policies**

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend

after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate based on disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after

graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located at the stairwell next to the elevators. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will decide to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>

**Emergency Phone Numbers: In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at 817-272-3003 (non-campus phone), 2-3003 (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number 817-272-3381.**