

This is the syllabus from last Spring. Expect some small changes.

HONOR 2211

3:40 – 5:00 pm, Tuesday/Thursday

Prof. Christopher Mead

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Office Hours: 10:30-11:30 am, Tuesday/Thursday – MHC 1203

Writing in Honors

In his celebrated essay “The Death of the Author,” Roland Barthes suggests that writing is “where all identity is lost, beginning with the very body that writes.” In this reading- and writing-intensive seminar, we will test this claim that the beginning of writing marks the end of embodiment by reading a wide range of materials that explore and define the relationship between texts and bodies. First, we will read across genres to see what conclusions can be reached about the relationship between the author’s body and literary form. Second, we will read across history to examine the possibility that relationships between bodies, texts, and technology are cultural and fluid, rather than essential and static. Finally—and most crucially—we will consider, stretch, and strengthen our own writing bodies: our constant goal throughout the semester will be to hone and augment our skills as critical thinkers who are able to express arguments in clear, sophisticated, and vibrant ways.

This course fulfills the following: Writing Requirement 2

Course Objectives:

- To improve your abilities as readers, discussants, researchers, and writers.
- To begin to prepare you for the type of work that will be required in upper-level writing courses and, especially, in writing the Honors thesis.

Required Texts:

H.G. Wells – *The Time Machine* (Norton – 0393927946)

Bram Stoker – *Dracula* (Norton – 9780393970128)

Margaret Atwood – *The Handmaid’s Tale* (Anchor – 038549081X)

A course reader available on Canvas

You must buy these specific editions, all of which should be available at the Campus Store. Needless to say, these texts can also be purchased online; if you search by ISBN, you can rest assured that you are buying the correct edition.

You must also print the course reader, which is available on our Canvas site under “Files.” The wise among you will complete this task cheaply and easily at Staples, Costco, or some other print center. The less wise will print individual readings on a personal printer, incurring much greater labor, expense, and stress.

Course requirements:

Diligent attendance and thoughtful participation – 10%

(Please come see me if you have difficulties speaking in class—I can help)

Reading quizzes – 10%

Over the course of the semester, there will be a series of short unscheduled (i.e., “pop”) quizzes based on the day’s assigned reading. Each quiz will be given at the beginning of class and cannot be made up if you are absent or late.

Exploratory Writing Exercises – 15%

These short writing exercises will be assigned on a rolling basis and will help you reflect on the assigned reading and prepare for upcoming assignments.

Major Assignments

(We will discuss these assignments in greater depth closer to their respective due dates)

Assignment 1: Problem Statement Assignment – 15%

Assignment 2: First Essay – 15%

Assignment 3: Annotated Bibliography & Final Essay – 35%

In order to pass this course, you must receive a passing grade on all of the above components.

Schedule:

Date	Reading or viewing due	Major Assignment (due at the beginning of class)
	Unless otherwise noted, read the entire text prior to the first class in which it makes an appearance.	Exploratory Writing Exercises are not listed and will be assigned on a rolling basis.

August 21	Introduction	
August 23	Linda Pastan – “Answering Machine”	
August 28	Emily Dickinson – “There is no frigate like a book” Michael Donaghy – “Machines”	
August 30	Anne Bradstreet – “The Author to her Book”	
September 4	William Shakespeare – Sonnet 11	

September 6	Langdon Winner – “Do Artifacts Have Politics?”	
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September 11	Herman Melville - "Bartleby, the Scrivener"	
September 13	"Bartleby, the Scrivener"	
September 18	Laura Mulvey – "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"	Problem Statement
September 20	H.G. Wells – <i>The Time Machine</i>	
September 25	<i>The Time Machine</i>	
September 27	Hubert Dreyfus – "Anonymity versus Commitment: The Dangers of Education on the Internet"	
October 2	Werner Herzog – <i>The Cave of Forgotten Dreams</i> (viewing)	
October 4	<i>The Cave of Forgotten Dreams</i> (discussion)	
October 9	Fall Break	
October 11	Fall Break	
October 16	Plato – selections from the <i>Phaedrus</i>	
October 18	Michel Foucault – "What is an Author?"	
October 23	TBA	First Essay
October 25	Edgar Allan Poe – "The Purloined Letter"	
October 30	Introduction to the Library/Research (meet in Marriott Library - Room TBA)	
November 1	Bram Stoker – <i>Dracula</i> (p. 1-154)	
November 6	<i>Dracula</i> (p. 154-285)	
November 8	<i>Dracula</i> (p. 285-end) Movie and Pizza night – 5:30-9 pm	
November 13	Hélène Cixous – "The Laugh of the Medusa"	
November 15	Margaret Atwood – <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> (p. 1-99)	
November 20	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> (p. 100-195)	

November 22	Thanksgiving	
November 27	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> (p. 195-end)	
November 29	Christian Bök – selections from <i>The Xenotext</i>	
December 4	Writing Lab	
December 6	Last day of classes	Annotated Bibliography and Final Essay

Changes to syllabus:

While I will make every effort to keep to this syllabus in all respects, I reserve the right to make changes to the course schedule, assignments, and due dates. You will be notified promptly of any changes.

Participation and attendance:

I expect students to come to class prepared to participate actively in that day's discussion and activities. There will be many ways for you to participate in class over the course of the semester, including speaking up during discussion, doing group work inside and outside of class, posting comments to the discussion board on the course website, attending office hours, and emailing me with thoughtful questions and comments. We'll discuss all of these methods more thoroughly over the semester, and I may assign some of them specifically. For now, remember that the best way to prepare to participate is to come to class having completed the assigned reading and writing assignments.

Class attendance is mandatory, and I will take roll each class. You are permitted two absences for any reason; each additional absence will reduce your final participation score by a full letter grade. **A large number of unexcused absences will cause you to fail the course.** If you arrive to class late or leave class early, your attendance and participation score for that class will be reduced by half. The same reduction will apply if you show up to class without bringing a hard copy of the assigned reading.

As a member of this class, you have the responsibility to engage respectfully with your peers and help create a collegial atmosphere in which we engage thoughtfully and rigorously with one another's ideas.

Extensions and late assignments:

For conflicts between this schedule and extracurricular university activities such as varsity athletics, notify me in writing by the second week of the semester. To request an extension, you should have a truly substantive reason for doing so (i.e., a serious illness or a family emergency). Assignments handed in late will have their grades reduced by half a letter grade per day. Exploratory Writing Exercises must be submitted on time in order to receive credit.

Technology in the classroom:

To avoid distraction and disruption, no electronics are permitted in the classroom, except for the accommodation of disability. Please do not bring your laptop to class, and make sure your phone is turned off and put away before class begins. If I have to ask you to put your phone or computer away, you will receive a zero for that day's attendance/participation grade.

Canvas:

I have created a Canvas page where you will be able to access copies of materials from class, resources that will be of use to you when writing your papers, the course reader, and this syllabus.

Contacting me:

If possible, bring questions to my office hours or catch me after class. Otherwise, the best way to reach me is by email. Do not assume that I can read and respond to your message immediately; allow a reasonable amount of time (24 hours) before you need an answer. That said, I will always do my best to respond to you promptly. Two days before a major assignment is due, I will stop answering emailed questions.

For a number of reasons, I do not give substantive feedback on written work via email. If you would like to discuss a draft of a paper, a possible thesis, or other written work, I am always happy to meet with you in person, either in office hours or by appointment.

I will regularly contact the class by email or the Canvas messaging system. You are responsible for checking your UMail regularly and for making sure that you receive Canvas alerts in a timely fashion.

I will not respond to emails asking questions whose answers are contained in this syllabus.

Honors grading rubric:

- A Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course material and evinces exceptional levels of originality and sophistication that far surpass course expectations.
- A- Excellent achievement. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course material and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner.
- B+ Very good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course material and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus.
- B Student performance meets designated course expectations and demonstrates understanding of the course materials at an acceptable level.
- B- Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials.

- C Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials.
- D Unacceptable work. Coursework performed at this level will not count toward the honors bachelor's degree. For the course to count toward the degree, the student must repeat the course with a passing grade.
- F Failing

Important University of Utah policies that apply to this course:

Academic misconduct:

It is both my hope and my expectation that your experience as a student at the University of Utah will be fueled by your passion for learning. I also appreciate that being a student can be stressful. There may be times when you feel tempted to engage in some kind of cheating in order to improve your grade or advance your career. This behavior could be as blatant as having someone else sit for you in an exam, or submitting a written assignment that has been copied from another source. It could also be as subtle as glancing at another student's quiz when you are unsure about an answer. It is possible that one might do any of these things and not get caught. However, if you cheat, no matter how much you may have otherwise learned in this class, you have failed to learn what is perhaps the most important lesson of all.

In accordance with University of Utah policy, any instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in failure of the course, along with other possible sanctions. For more information and a number of important definitions, including that of plagiarism, see the [University of Utah's Student Code of Conduct](#).

To help promote academic integrity, your written work in this course may be checked for originality using [Turnitin](#), a web appliance that compares submitted assignments to a database of books, journal articles, websites, and other student papers.

Disability accommodations:

“The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the [Center for Disability Services](#), 162 Union Building, 801-581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.”

If you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me as soon as possible by seeing me after class or making an appointment to visit during office hours.

Addressing sexual misconduct:

“Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected

categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#), 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the [Center for Student Wellness](#), 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the [Department of Public Safety](#), 801-585-2677."

Content accommodation policy:

"Students are expected to take courses that will challenge them intellectually and personally. Students must understand and be able to articulate the ideas and theories that are important to the discourse within and among academic disciplines. Personal disagreement with these ideas and theories or their implications is not sufficient grounds for requesting an accommodation. Accommodations requested on such grounds will not be granted. The University recognizes that students' sincerely-held core beliefs may make it difficult for students to fulfill some requirements of some courses or majors. The University assumes no obligation to ensure that all students are able to complete any major." No content accommodations will be made for this course.