

WRTG 3018: WRITING ABOUT POPULAR CULTURE

BLACK MIRROR, Policies, SPR '25

INSTRUCTOR:	Nona Brown
EMAIL:	Canvas messages
HOURS:	T 2:00-3:00, Zoom conference or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Often described as a modern day Twilight Zone, the BBC television program *Black Mirror* considers the increasing footprint of new technologies on our social, cultural, digital, and material lives. WRTG 3018 provides an introduction to the critical analysis of popular culture by utilizing the series as primary text and point of reference.

Specifically, WRTG 3018 aims to

- Decode the visual, semiotic, and cinematographic elements that convey meaning in the series
- Survey the paradigms of mass culture and cultural theory
- Read *Black Mirror* from different theoretical perspectives
- Develop meaningful claims and support those claims with authoritative research, logical reasoning, and thoughtful analysis
- Engage the series critically and creatively, acquiring strategies to become a more active critic and contributor to pop culture discourse

To accomplish course objectives, students will complete a series of written, multimodal, and presentation assignments.

COURSE TEXT/S

Cultural Theory and Popular Culture, 5th Edition, by John Storey (online)
Additional readings available on Canvas

COURSE PROJECTS

Visual Analysis Script -&- YouTube Video (25%)
Theoretical Analysis / Researched Argument (25%) / Process Work (5%)
Episode Pitch (10%)
Activities, quizzes, & participation (30%)

COURSE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

WRTG 3018 is a participation-intensive course. Regular in-person and online attendance, including meaningful participation and substantive engagement with myself and your peers, is necessary to pass the class. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class period. To receive full credit, plan to miss class no more than 3 times during the semester.

In order to promote a classroom climate that is conducive to collective success and individual excellence, meaningful participation is required from each member of the class. With that, and attitude of mutual respect, cooperation, and collegiality is expected.

STANDARD for ASSIGNMENTS

All major assignments must be submitted before the submission deadline. To prevent problems involving corrupt or lost files, electronic copies of each assignment for this class should be saved in at least two places. Late assignments will be downgraded one-half of a letter grade per each day that they are late. If you are having a problem with an assignment, please be sure to let me know before it is due.

Grading Scale (1000 points available)

930-1000 A	870-899 B+	770-799 C+	670-699 D+	00-590 E
900-929 A-	830-869 B	730-769 C	630-669 D	
800-829 B-	700-729 C-	600-629 D		

ETHICS & PLAGIARISM

You must do your own original work in Writing 3018. Plagiarism is against university standards: it will result in failure of the course and further disciplinary action. (See sections II and V of the Student Code for details.) Use of an AI Generator such as ChatGPT, Bard, iA Writer, Grammarly, DALL-E, etc. is explicitly prohibited unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The information from these tools is generated from previous queries and sources, including published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. It is imperative that all work submitted should be your own.

AMERICANS with DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) STATEMENT

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 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

CONTENT ACCOMMODATION

I will not grant content accommodation for this course. Please review the syllabus and readings to determine whether the content of the course or any of the readings conflicts with any of your core beliefs. If you do see such a conflict, you may want to drop the class, with no penalty, before the last day to drop courses. You are welcome to come and discuss any such conflict with me, as well. For more information on the content accommodation policy, please visit the Accommodations Policy section of the administration policy and procedures at <http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/index.html>.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The University Writing Center is a free service available for all students of the University of Utah. It provides one-on-one assistance for all stages of the writing process, from generating ideas for topics, to improving analysis and clarity, to polishing finished drafts. The Center's staff is trained to work with student writers from first semester freshmen through graduate school, and writers of all levels of ability are welcome. To schedule an appointment, call 587-9122 or stop by the Marriott Library to schedule an appointment.

RESEARCH LIBRARIANS

The library is filled with resources. One of the most important is the group of research librarians, who are available to help you with many things, from finding sources, creating the works cited, citing sources correctly, to downloading software such as the free version of Office Suite that you get as a student. If you have a question, you can simply walk up to the Knowledge Commons on Level 2 of the Marriott Library. Or if you prefer, visit their website to find information about online consultations, email addresses, etc.: <http://www.lib.utah.edu/services/knowledge-commons>.

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](tel:801-581-8365), or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, [801-581-7066](tel:801-581-7066). For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, [801-581-7776](tel:801-581-7776). To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

WELLNESS STATEMENT

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness: www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

VETERANS CENTER

If you are a student veteran, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class.

CENTER for COMMUNITY & CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

The Center for Community & Cultural Engagement provides support resources for university students: <https://culture.utah.edu/support/index.php> Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (<http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/>); the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss.