

Freshman Writing Seminar: A Century of Science Fiction

(INTD 105 - 11)

Fall 2006

What am I doing here? This is a course in persuasive writing (*not* a course in science fiction or creative writing). Whether you seek a career in education, philosophy, math, or science, the quality of your writing will be one of the most significant factors affecting your success. The first year writing seminar is required of all students entering SUNY Geneseo. There are several goals for this course:

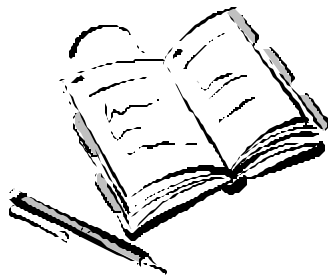


- 1) The ability to read significant texts carefully and critically, recognizing and responding to argumentative positions.
- 2) The ability to write sustained, coherent and persuasive arguments on significant issues that arise from the content at hand.
- 3) The ability to write clearly, following the conventions of Standard English.

Good writing is one of the most difficult and time consuming tasks that you will ever attempt. In my opinion, it is harder than math or science. The quality of your writing should continually improve throughout your life, with improvements obviously continuing even past the end of this course. As this semester progresses (and your skills hopefully improve), you will be held to higher and higher standards for your assignments.

We will be using a variety of science fiction stories as the basis for our discussions, loosely investigating this theme:

Technological developments in the nineteenth century impacted society at many levels. Writers such as Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, their daily lives noticeably transformed by the inventions of the era, extrapolated ways in which technology might further affect society, for good or bad. To this day, the genre remains focused on the impact of technology (and extrapolated technology) on the human condition. The impact includes ecological, political, ethical, and social issues.



What will we be reading? The textbook for this class is *Pocket Keys for Writers*, by Ann Raimés. In addition, you are required to obtain two short novels (*The Time Machine*, by H.G. Wells, and *Starship Troopers*, by R. Heinlein), and a collection of short stories (available from Sundance books).

Where can I get help? In addition to Dr. Pogo's home page for the course (listed above), there is a writing seminar home page at <http://www.geneseo.edu/~intd105>. Also, Geneseo has an excellent online writing guide available at <http://writingguide.geneseo.edu>. Finally, there is an on-campus Writing Learning Center in Welles Hall, room 217.

What will I be writing? The college requires that you write six essays totaling more than 5000 words for this course. The *average* length of these major papers will be about three pages. You will be required to resubmit each major paper in multiple drafts. In addition, we will have several smaller (one page) assignments throughout the semester. All submissions must be typed (double spaced) using a 10-point Times-Roman font.

How will I be evaluated? Your writing assignments will be graded using the standard SUNY Geneseo rubric (see Geneseo's Intd105 webpage). Be assured that although too-short essays will adversely affect your grade, essays that are expanded with trite or irrelevant text will be *severely* penalized. Late assignments will also be severely penalized. In addition, there will be a short quiz on the reading assignment *every time class meets*. A numerical grade will be computed using the following weights:

Daily quizzes*:	15%
Classroom Participation:	15%
Short Assignments:	30%
Major Papers:	40%

*your lowest quiz score will not be counted

Tentative Course Reading Schedule:

Date	SF Reading Due
Wednesday, August 30	<i>The Feeling of Power</i>
Friday, September 1	<i>Collateral Damage</i>
Wednesday, September 6	<i>Profession</i>
Friday, September 8	
Monday, September 11	<i>Cautionary Tales</i>
Wednesday, September 13	<i>The Gentle Vultures</i>
Friday, September 15	<i>Long Shot</i>
Monday, September 18	<i>The Last Question</i>
Wednesday, September 20	<i>The Giving Plague</i>
Friday, September 22	
Monday, September 25	<i>Good Taste</i>
Wednesday, September 27	
Friday, September 29	
Monday, October 2	<i>Cruel and Unusual</i>
Wednesday, October 4	<i>The Jigsaw Man</i>
Friday, October 6	<i>The Winnowing</i>
Wednesday, October 11	<i>Kin</i>
Friday, October 13	
Monday, October 16	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 1, 2, 3)
Wednesday, October 18	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 4, 5, 6)
Friday, October 20	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 7, 8, 9)
Monday, October 23	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 10, 11)
Wednesday, October 25	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 12)
Friday, October 27	<i>Starship Troopers</i> (ch. 13, 14)
Monday, October 30	
Wednesday, November 1	<i>Cloak of Anarchy</i>
Friday, November 3	<i>A Thousand Deaths</i>
Monday, November 6	<i>But We Try Not to Act Like It</i>
Wednesday, November 8	
Friday, November 10	<i>Crunchers, Inc.</i>
Monday, November 13	<i>The Last McDougal's</i>
Wednesday, November 15	
Friday, November 17	<i>Nano Comes to Clifford Falls</i>
Monday, November 20	<i>Are You There</i>
Wednesday, November 22	
Monday, November 27	<i>The Time Machine</i> (ch. i - iv)
Wednesday, November 29	<i>The Time Machine</i> (ch. v - vii)
Friday, December 1	<i>The Time Machine</i> (ch. viii – xii, epilogue)
Monday, December 4	
Wednesday, December 6	<i>The Warm Space</i>
Friday, December 8	<i>Datacide</i>
Monday, December 11	

In addition, there will be various reading assignment from the *Pocket Keys* textbook.