

*Department of English*  
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**ENGE2380 TWENTIETH-CENTURY FICTION  
(The Book in Twentieth-Century Dystopian Fiction)**

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**Course Description**

This course examines some of the key works of dystopian fiction written in the twentieth-century. It does so by thinking about the ways in which the book – that common symbol of culture and civilization – is treated in these works. The course begins by contextualizing the dystopian novel in the literary landscape of the twentieth-century and thinking through the notion of dystopia and its cognates. After revealing a strong link between the dystopian image and the emasculation of culture, we move on to consider the particular visions of society presented by Ray Bradbury, George Orwell, and Anthony Burgess. As we shall see, they are visions of society that insist that we not only question our idea of “culture” but also how culture itself intervenes in the inevitable tension between state and individual.

**Learning Outcome**

By the end of the course, you should be able both to recognize the genre of dystopian fiction and articulate many of the features of dystopian fiction. In addition, you should be able to understand some of the different ways in which critics and commentators have read the idea of “culture.” In doing so, this will allow you to then to offer insightful comment on the value of literature to contemporary society. Finally, by the end of this course you should be able to produce a well-reasoned essay

**Reading List**

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*

Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*

**Assessment**

Seminar Preparation/Participation	10%
Seminar Presentation	15%
In-Class Essay	20%
Formal Essay	55%

## Department of English

### **Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes.**

Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study. The 'A' grade should be reserved for truly excellent work that exceeds the level expected for the majority of students and are expected to be achieved only by a small minority

### **Grade A- / Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on ALMOST ALL learning outcomes.**

Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

### **Grade B+ / Good (Plus): HIGH performance on all learning outcomes, OR HIGH performance on some learning outcomes which compensates WELL for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.**

Demonstrates the ability to apply WELL the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level WELL.

### **Grade B / Good: SUBSTANTIAL performance on all learning outcomes, OR SUBSTANTIAL performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.**

Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a MORE COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

### **Grade B- / Good (Minus): GOOD performance on all learning outcomes, OR GOOD performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.**

Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a COMPREHENSIVE manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.

### **Grade C+ / Fair (Plus): VERY SATISFACTORY performance on the majority of learning outcomes.**

Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a SOMEWHAT SUSTAINED manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

### **Grade C / Fair: SATISFACTORY performance on the majority of learning outcomes.**

Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.

**Grade C- / Fair (Minus): SOMEWHAT SATISFACTORY performance on A NUMBER OF learning outcomes.**

Demonstrates the ability to SOMEWHAT apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the BARE basic requirement at this level.

**Grade D+ / Pass (Plus): BARELY SATISFACTORY performance on A FEW learning outcomes.**

Addresses the course inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

**Grade D / Pass: ALMOST BARELY satisfactory performance on VERY FEW learning outcomes.**

Addresses the course inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in very few areas while responding very minimally with possibly tangential content in others.

**Grade F / Failure: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.**

Fails to address the course and likely does not understand what the course requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.