



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

Ciencia ficción, ecología y feminismo /
Science fiction, ecology and feminism

**Grado en *Estudios Ingleses* /
Grado en *Lenguas Modernas y
Traducción***

Universidad de Alcalá

Curso Académico 2022/23

3º y 4º – 1º Cuatrimestre

GUÍA DOCENTE

Nombre de la asignatura:	Ciencia ficción, ecología y feminismo / Science fiction, ecology and feminism
Código:	251065
Titulación en la que se imparte:	Estudios Ingleses / Lenguas Modernas y Traducción
Departamento y Área de Conocimiento:	Filología Moderna Filología Inglesa
Carácter:	Optativa
Créditos ECTS:	8
Curso y cuatrimestre:	3º / 4º, primer cuatrimestre
Profesorado:	Irene Sanz Alonso
Horario de Tutoría:	Por determinar
Idioma en el que se imparte:	English

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Science fiction is one of the most popular genres even if for some time it seemed to be neglected by literary critics. Its lack of boundaries in relation to time and space makes it ideal to critically observe our reality from an outsider's perspective. For this reason, this course aims at exploring the evolution of the genre from its beginnings until its most recent representations both in literature and cinema, focusing mainly on those works which offer a significant portrayal of conflicts related to gender and the environment. Drawing upon ecofeminist theories, we will analyze how science fiction works criticize unhealthy patterns in terms of gender equality and sustainability, and we will explore written and audiovisual texts which offer alternative solutions to the environmental problems we face nowadays.

Prerequisites:

Following the guidelines issued by the Department of Modern Philology, students are expected to have acquired a level C1 in all four skills at the end of their 4th year. Since the course will be taught in English, students who enroll in this course are expected to have minimum a B2 in all four skills.

2. COMPETENCES

Generic competences:

1. To develop critical thinking.
2. To develop student's autonomous learning.
3. To analyze literary and audiovisual products focusing on their multiple interpretations.
4. To present findings in a coherent and logical way.
5. To produce well-structured essays, using reference material in an appropriate way.

Specific competences:

1. To become familiar with the main strategies and figures of science fiction.
2. To understand the concept of extrapolation and its importance in science fiction.
3. To be able to identify unhealthy attitudes and patterns in literary and audiovisual products following the main theories of ecofeminism.
4. To understand the evolution of science fiction in relation to the portrayal of gender issues.
5. To be able to discuss different types of texts, acknowledging their specific characteristics and offering a supported opinion.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

Units	Hours
1. Science fiction: definition and historical overview	9
2. Science fiction strategies, tropes and characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robots • Aliens 	9
3. Feminist science fiction	10
4. Science fiction and the environment	8
5. Ecofeminism and science fiction	8

Throughout the course we will study different authors representative of feminist and ecofeminist science fiction, exploring their life and works.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Student workload: 200 hours

Class-contact hours: 48	Lectures, oral presentations, debates and analysis of literary and audiovisual works.
Independent learning: 152	Students are encouraged to prepare the readings before the sessions so that they can actively participate. Preparation of oral presentations. Writing journal entries.

Materials and resources

A wide array of theoretical texts, literary texts and audiovisual products in English will be offered throughout the course. The theoretical materials will be provided by the professor and will be available on the university online platform (Blackboard). The platform will be an essential tool in terms of communication between professor and students, and they are expected to upload there their written assignments. Some of the materials include:

- Episodes from TV series: *Black Mirror*, *Love, Death & Robots*
- Films: *Blade Runner*, *Nausicaä*, *Mad Max: Fury Road*
- Fragments and short stories from different authors: Philip K. Dick, Margaret Atwood, Octavia Butler, Ursula K. LeGuin, Douglas Adams, Rosa Montero.

5. ASSESSMENT

Students following the continuous assessment option will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Active participation in class: students are expected to attend classes regularly (80%) and actively participate in the critical analysis of the works discussed in class taking into account the theoretical contents presented and their own personal views.
- Oral presentations: students will prepare brief presentations on science fiction authors, their works and relevance for the genre.
- Written assignments:
 - Students will write a personal journal with their impressions on the different theories and works discussed in class.
 - Students will prepare a final essay analyzing the work of their choice from a list of options.

Final exam

Students granted the final assessment option by the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, will be assessed in a final exam in which they will perform a literary commentary following the contents of the course. They will also be expected to submit a paper on one of the options offered by the instructor. This paper will be submitted the day of the exam, so students need to get in contact to the instructor at least two weeks before the date of the exam.

Students are warned that plagiarism will not be tolerated, therefore, all references should be appropriately acknowledged following the MLA citation system. If a student presents a plagiarised work, they will be automatically penalised and will be asked to take the exam in June, just as those who fail the continuous assessment option.

Grading descriptors

- **Outstanding (MH):** Students have performed outstandingly in all the assessment criteria. They have developed a deep knowledge on the contents of the course and put them into practice in the seminars and the oral and written projects. They have actively participated in the discussions in the seminars showing they hold a supported and critical perspective.
- **Excellent (Sobresaliente):** Students have performed excellently in all the assessment criteria. They have developed a deep knowledge on the contents of the course and put them into practice in the seminars and the oral and written projects. They have actively participated in the discussions in the seminars showing they hold a supported and critical perspective.
- **Very Good (Notable):** Students have performed well in all or some of the assessment criteria. They have developed an adequate knowledge on the contents of the course and put them into practice in the seminars and the oral and written projects. They have sometimes participated in the discussions in the seminars showing their personal perspective.
- **Satisfactory (Aprobado):** Students have performed satisfactorily in some of the assessment criteria. Their oral and written projects show a correct understanding of the contents of the course, but with some problems. Students have rarely participated in the discussions in class.
- **Fail (Suspenso):** Students have not appropriately fulfilled the grading criteria of the course. The assignments and class discussions have not been adequately prepared and are not well-supported. They have not participated actively in the sessions.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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D' Ammassa, Don. *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. Facts on File, 2005.

Donawerth, Jane. *Frankenstein's Daughters*. Syracuse University Press, 1997

Gaard, Greta, editor. *Ecofeminism. Women, Animals, Nature*, edited by Greta Gaard, Temple University Press, 1993.

- Haraway, Donna. *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. Routledge, 1991.
- James, Edward and Farah Mendlesohn, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
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- Murphy, Patrick D. *Literature, Nature, and Other. Ecofeminist Critiques*. State University of New York Press, 1995.
- Otto, Eric C. *Green Speculations. Science Fiction and Transformative Environmentalism*. The Ohio State University, 2012.
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- Roberts, Adam. *Science Fiction*. Routledge, 2006.
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- Vint, Sherryl. *Bodies of Tomorrow: Technology, Subjectivity, Science Fiction*. University of Toronto Press, 2007.
- Warren, Karen J. *Ecofeminist Philosophy*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2000.
- Wenz, Peter S. *Environmental Ethics Today*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Wolmark, Jenny. *Aliens and Others*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993.

7. ADDITIONAL PROVISION

The University of Alcalá guarantees that if, due to health requirements, the public authorities prevent teaching activity from taking place on the University's premises, the teaching plans' objectives will be met through an online teaching and evaluation methodology. The UAH commits to return to face-to-face teaching as soon as said impediments cease.