

## ENG 2012 RVC 1198, Approaches to Literature The Posthuman: Animal, Vegetable, Mineral



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**Please reach out to me!**

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### Welcome to ENL 2012, Approaches to Lit!

This course provides a starting point for working with theoretical texts, being aware of conversations in literary criticism, and participating in scholarly conversations about the texts you read. In this course, you will learn strategies and skills for critical and original thinking about a variety of texts, communicating through writing and speaking, and assessing the value of diverse critical approaches to literature and other texts. As you develop these abilities, they will serve you throughout college and your lifetime.

### Course Resources



Name &  
email address here



Blackboard  
[ecampus.fiu.edu](http://ecampus.fiu.edu)



Bookstore  
Graham Center



Office hours:  
& by appt. / Location

## Course Description

English 2012 is an introduction to literary analysis that begins to prepare you for the demands of critically writing about and reading literature in the university but also helps you to think about writing beyond the classroom and in a variety of contexts.

**Reading and writing are both acts of inquiry and communication. With that in mind, this course offers you:**

- opportunities to identify, develop, and express concepts;
- to engage in conversations with the ideas of others;
- to critique and construct arguments through original writing projects about the texts we read.

Writing is also a process, and since this course fulfills part of your composition requirements, we will emphasize drafting, revising, and editing as critical practices in developing thoughtful

To accomplish these goals, this course places attention on understanding different approaches to literary analysis, applying literary analysis methods to diverse media and cultural contexts, and developing argumentative writing skills.

**Together, we will consider questions including:**

- Is there only one way to read a text?
- What are the tools, lenses, or methods that might be useful for producing original insights into and debatable claims about a text?
- Why might we want to interpret literature at all?
- What interpretive tools or methods are more or less effective for thinking through the projects of individual texts?
- What is required for careful or “close” reading, and are their other methods, such as “distant” reading which also have value for our interpretive practices?
- How do you use different genres or discourse conventions to make your writing work?
- How can you contribute to critical conversations about texts as cultural objects?

Finally, English 2012 emphasizes critical thinking, which rests on a process of careful and engaged reading of texts in a variety of forms and the use of writing as conversation and discussion to explore, express, and argue about ideas as well as their place in the larger world.

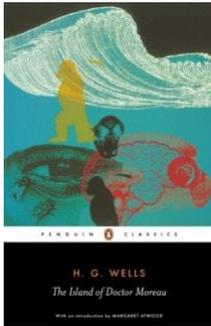
### **What’s the theme of this course? The Posthuman (or ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, MINERAL)**

According to historian Michel Foucault, “man” was invented at the turn of the nineteenth century. This course will explore the cultural, artistic, and political dimensions of this seemingly outrageous claim as it pertains to the study of literature. Of particular interest to this exploration will be the relations literature describes, and in describing often shapes, between humans and non-humans, humans and nature, and, of course, humans and “other” humans. How are humans socially constructed? How do we account for our humanity and that of others? How does literature help us understand ourselves and our “others”? Can it show us how to reinvent ourselves? Readings will include works of literature written over the last two centuries that celebrate, qualify, critique and otherwise trouble the nature of what we call “humanity.” This course develops skills of critical reading and writing that are essential to majors and non-majors alike.

To pursue this line of inquiry, we will focus on four novels, each of which takes up the question of what it means to be human, to interact with other species, and to exist. We will also engage with the work of theorists of literature such as Rob Nixon, N. Katherine Hayles, and Cary Wolf, who investigate humanity's impact on environment in the Anthropocene and explore definitions of posthumanism. In practicing these critical skills, we will read nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature that makes humanity's connection to and distinctions from animals, environment, and objects a central literary project. Together, we will ask such questions as: what defines humanity? How are other species different from and related to humans? What is the relationship between humans and the environment? And how does inhuman intelligence, such as that of androids, trouble our understanding of what it means to be human? We will interrogate not only how these authors attempted to think about humanity through the forms of their texts, and what it means to live in a posthuman age, but whether those forms encourage us to emphasize one critical approach over another.

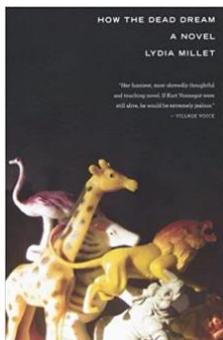
### What texts should you buy?

**BE AWARE:** If possible, please purchase these exact editions of the texts. New and used copies are available for less than \$30 total for this course. If you do not purchase or have scanned versions of these editions, your page numbers will not match and, in fact, the text itself might be different from what we are reading in class.



*The Island of Doctor Moreau*  
By H. G. Wells  
Patrick Parrinder, editor  
Introduction by Margaret Atwood  
Penguin Classics, 2005

ISBN: 9780141441023



*How the Dead Dream*  
By Lydia Millet  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009

ISBN: 9780156035460

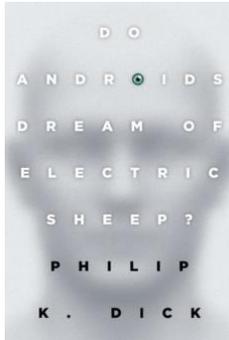


*Orxy & Crake*

By Margaret Atwood

Knopf Doubleday, 2004

ISBN: 9780385721677



*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep (basis for Bladerunner)*

By Philip K. Dick

Random House, 1996

ISBN: 9780345404473

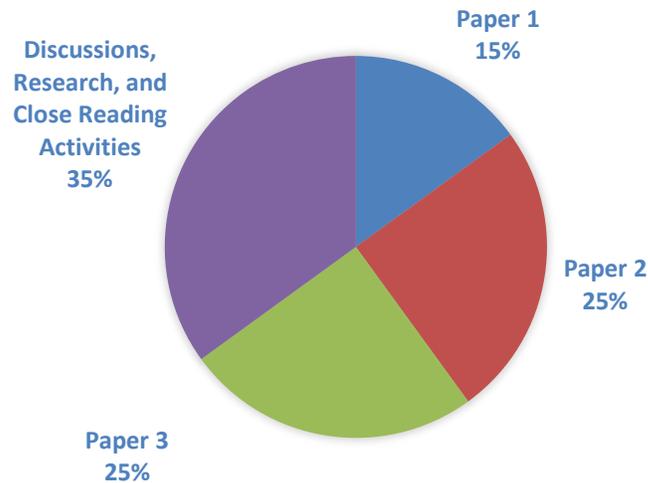
**What texts will be provided to you on Canvas?**

All other texts will be provided to you on Canvas as scanned Adobe (.pdf) files. You can find links to download the additional readings in the Modules. On the course calendar, these texts are indicated in parenthesis, like so (C).

**How will we evaluate your progress in this class?**

Grading for this course is designed around a combination of assignments that demonstrate that you have acquired the Outcomes (listed below on page 5 of the Syllabus) that this course emphasizes:

- Reading critical texts will enable you to **recognize** different theoretical approaches to literary analysis.
- Discussion activities are where you **apply** key literary concepts, **practice** textual analysis on a variety of texts, and **explain** how they contribute to interpretations of literature.
- Class participation will ask you to engage in all these activities, **analyzing** and **articulating** your analyses with and to classmates.
- Longer essays are an opportunity to **generate** and **organize** your ideas, cite sources, revise your writing, and practice the conventions of academic writing.
- Each of the activities in this course are designed and chosen to help you achieve the outcomes of the course listed below.



**BE AWARE:** This course is reading and writing intensive. This term, you will write on a weekly basis, either discussion posts, short responses, or longer essay assignments. As a Gordon Rule Course, one of the major goals for this course is to strengthen your writing skills. Writing a variety of assignments and on a regular basis is the way to do that. If you are used to waiting until the night before a paper is due to write your draft, that method will not lead to success in this course. I emphasize and teach that writing is process. The best way to grow and develop as a writer, and to turn in successful work, is to work on your projects a little bit each day.

**By the end of the semester, you will be able to:**

**CRITICAL OUTCOMES:**

**Recognize different critical and theoretical approaches to literary analysis**

- o define the distinction between theoretical and critical conversations
- o Read texts with multiple critical approaches
- o recognize that there are many valid interpretations of a texts
- o assess the effectiveness of some critical methods over others
- o appraise critical arguments and identify their components
- o formulate new interventions into critical conversations

**INTERPRETIVE OUTCOMES:**

**Evaluate texts in diverse media and cultural contexts using those approaches**

- o comprehending and analyzing texts
- o recognizing genre expectations
- o practice textual analysis on a variety of texts
- o become a better critical reader able to connect ideas and texts, ask questions, and identify assumptions and values
- o extrapolate from theoretical and critical conversations to offer original interpretive insights
- o Develop applicability of approaches to personal experience/cultural contexts
- o Reflect on applicability of approaches to texts, courses, and own lives

**WRITING OUTCOMES:**

**Write interpretative arguments of texts using those approaches**

- o selecting, narrowing, and focusing topics
- o generating and organizing ideas
- o learning how to use evidence effectively
- o learning the conventions of academic writing
- o find, evaluate, read, and incorporate (summarize, attribute, paraphrase) secondary sources
- o citing sources, avoiding plagiarism
- o revising and editing written projects for ideas, organization, logic, as well as lower order concerns, such as grammar
- o develop basic research skills specific to the study of literature (e.g. library databases, citation and documentation conventions, evaluation and use of secondary sources)

## PROFESSIONALISM AND PARTICIPATION POLICIES

### How will you succeed in this course?

- 1) Because **this course is reading and writing intensive**, the best route to success is to develop the habit of reading and writing a little bit each day. Reading ahead is always wise and strongly recommended. Taking notes as you read is also recommended. Our duty with what we read is to interpret, objectively, the most meaningful and valuable points *in* the text, and to then compare and evaluate differing interpretations to formulate an analytical payoff *for* the text.
- 2) **Participation, which includes discussion posts and short assignments, is 35% of your total grade.** That is sufficient to either pull your grade up or pull your grade down depending on your active participation. Be prepared to offer evidence from your reading, to think with others by offering substantive ideas in discussion, and to develop your writing.
- 3) Each time you log into class be **prepared to think critically and carefully** about difficult problems. Argument is not always about fighting over what you “know” is right. Rather, argument is often about helping others explain an important point, entering a conversation, or helping others *help us* to understand this point. Argumentation is a way to illuminate important ideas that we have in common, to challenge received wisdom, and to rethink a world view.

### Useful techniques to enhance your class participation skills:

- get into the habit of rereading; some students think that having to reread a text is “bad” or shows that one is a “bad” reader. In fact, rereading is an important critical skill, one that I encourage you to develop!
- write your questions down and be prepared to raise your ideas in discussion with your classmates
- on the discussion boards, address your comments to the whole class, not just to me
- use your classmates preferred names and pronouns
- identify suggestions for things you would like to discuss (e.g., confusing passages, key terms)
- feel free to ask questions if anything is unclear
- turn work in on time

### How to think about preparing:

- the text is your evidence to back up your argument and claims
- learn to take notes to capture your thinking as you read
- if you don’t want to write in your text, write on post-it notes, flags, or in a separate notebook.
- prepare for discussions by identifying specific examples from the reading
- identifying this *textual evidence* will help you contribute to discussion, and also to help others think rigorously and responsibly through textual problems
- Always include textual evidence in your discussion posts.
- think of our conversations as an exercise in **critical analysis, reasoning, and persuasion**

## ENVIRONMENT OF MUTUAL RESPECT:

I emphasize and require an **environment of mutual respect** in our class interactions.

### To help build an environment of mutual respect in the classroom:

- Each time you log into class, bring a positive attitude, respect for your class-mates and our discussions, a sincere desire to understand, and a willingness to work towards common goals.
- While we might address controversial, and occasionally even uncomfortable, subject matter, it is crucial that we speak to one another respectfully and endeavor to listen attentively to the ideas of others.
- Listening attentively is an active form of learning, not passive reception. In this class, “listening” takes the form of reading the lecture content and your classmates’ comments in discussion as closely as you would the primary text assigned for that week.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What if I can't turn work in on time? (LATE WORK)

You will do a lot of reading and writing in this course. All work must be turned in on the date specified, **unless you have spoken with me prior to the deadline**. If you have an emergency, I understand that. Emergencies happen. Please communicate with me as soon as possible so that we can plan together how you might complete your assignment. **I am always open to and generous with allowing extensions IF you contact me in advance of the deadline.**

### OK, but what if I still turn in late work? (LATE WORK)

If you do turn in late work and have not spoken with me in advance, then **a one half letter grade deduction per day late will be applied (e.g., if the work is two days late, the work would drop from an A to a B)**. Once the deadline passes, then rules for late work will be applied. What this means is that, **once an assignment is more than 20 days late, the assignment is no longer eligible to earn any points (20 days X .5 grade = 100 points lost)**. In other words, you cannot wait until the last week of the class to “catch up” or turn everything in. By that point, the work from early in the course will no longer be eligible for credit. That said, it is usually better to turn in something in late rather than have a zero in the gradebook. Be aware of due dates and write them in your calendar at the start of the term.

### And what if I joined the class late in the term? (ADDING THE CLASS LATE)

If you joined the course after the first day of the term, it is your responsibility to reach out to me immediately to let me know if you will need additional time to catch up any work from the first days of class. This course is content rich and has many learning outcomes, as listed on page 5 of this syllabus. Therefore, we begin immediately and do not have time to slow down. Those who join late must take responsibility for catching up. Joining the course late does not give a student *carte blanche* to turn in every subsequent assignment late. It's your responsibility to get caught up, keep up with deadlines, and to move forward with the rest of the course at the pace detailed in the Course Schedule.

### **What kind of assignments should I expect to do? (ASSIGNMENTS)**

There will be short writing assignments in addition to reading and essay assignments. For these and the longer essays, you will be informed of the expectations and instructions for the assignment well in advance of the due date. **If you see an assignment is due and coming up in the next week, read ahead in the Modules to find the instruction links!** We will also work together to peer review assignments in advance of the due date. We will conduct peer review in the online environment. Peer review not only helps you to think about writing as a process (not something you do the night before!), but it will also teach you to provide constructive criticism to colleagues, a valuable skill both in college and in your future professions. You are always welcome to ask me questions about assignments in class, by email, or in office hours. I'd rather have you ask a question than be confused or spend time working on the wrong assignment.

### **How will I find out about assignments and changes to the syllabus? (CHANGES)**

**Assignments and instructions will be delivered in Canvas via the Modules because this is an online course.** Reading my emails thoroughly and being aware of all deadlines is also your responsibility. If you have questions about the class, I always recommend checking your syllabus and assignment first or asking a classmate! The answers to your questions can frequently be found in this way. If you still need to email me with a question, however, feel free to do so. I'm happy to help!

## **RESOURCES**

### **What is academic misconduct? How do I avoid it? (**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

In order to avoid plagiarism, please follow these procedures in all your assignments:

- If you reproduce statements verbatim, place them in quotation marks and explicitly state the author's name and cite your source. In the case of a block quotation, forego quotation marks (per MLA guidelines) but make sure to indent the quotation and clearly cite your source.

- If you reproduce or rephrase the general idea (not verbatim), forego quotation marks but still explicitly state the author's name and cite your source.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

## **What other resources are available to you as a student at FIU?**

**New to Canvas?** During FIU's transition to canvas, Learning Management Systems (LMS) will provide 24/7 Canvas support for all users.

You can find that information here: <https://canvas.fiu.edu/support.php>

or here: <http://lms-help.fiu.edu/>

If you have questions about how to navigate Canvas pages, your browser settings, or anything else having to do with Canvas, you can contact LMS.

**Disability Resource Center:** I am committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students who I recognize may learn, participate, and engage in different ways. The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

- The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students.
- If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305/348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center (GC) 190.
- Please also notify me of any DRC accommodations as soon as possible. We can then work together to best coordinate your accommodations for this course.

Whether or not you have a DRC plan for academic accommodations, if you anticipate any issues related to the requirements, structure, or format of this course, please reach out to me so we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation and success in this course.

**Digital Accessibility Resources:** Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course. Please visit [Blackboard's Accessibility Commitment](#) webpage for more information. For additional assistance please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

**Violence and Harassment Resources:** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses 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, sexual orientation, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can file a complaint through FIU's Equal Opportunity Programs & Diversity Office. You may file a complaint with one of the Title IX coordinators listed below. Alternatively, you may file an anonymous complaint using our Ethical Panther Reporting Line, Convercent by calling 844-312-5358 or online at <https://compliance.fiu.edu/hotline.html>

**Crisis Resources:** You can also find the appropriate resources at the Dean of Students Office (305-348-2797). If you are in crisis, you can find the appropriate resources at Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Counseling & Psychological Services provides free and confidential mental health services to students that will facilitate and enhance their personal learning, emotional well-being, and academic skills development, contributing to their success at Florida International University.

CAPS Modesto Maidique Campus  
UHSC 270  
305-348-2277

CAPS Biscayne Bay Campus  
WUC 320  
305-919-5305

**Food insecurity resources:**

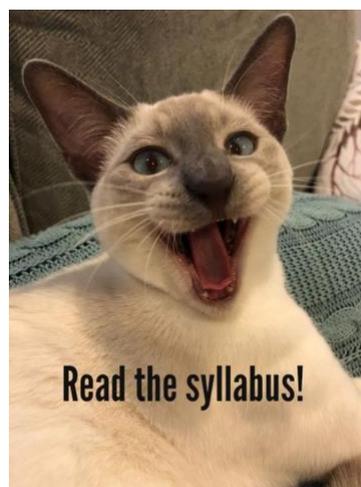
The Student Food Pantry is an initiative to address the prevalence of food insecurity on campus. This project assists students who are experiencing financial difficulty to purchase groceries. No proof of need is required and students can access the pantry once a week.

Modesto Maidique Campus  
DM 166  
305-348-6995  
Biscayne Bay Campus  
WUC 307  
305-919-5620 Ext. 4

In addition to campus programs and services, additional resources are available in the community.

**LOOKING FORWARD TO A TERRIFIC TERM!**

**(In conclusion, my cat Mulligan would like to remind you all where you can find the answers to many of your questions!)**



**KEY:** W = Wednesday; F = Friday; C = Available on Canvas

All readings should be completed *before* the day they are assigned on this calendar.

Do not wait to do the reading until the day they are due!

## **English 2012: Schedule of Discussions and Readings**

### **MODULE 1: ANIMAL STUDIES**

#### **Week 1 – Introductions**

W: Introductions, Syllabus, Canvas how-to pages

W: Introduction Activity and Syllabus Quiz due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read H. G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (Chs. 1-8)

F: Read Bennett and Royle, "Animals" (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #1 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

#### **Week 2 – Evolution**

W: Lesson: Introduction to "close" reading and noticing "textual echoes"

W: Read Charles Darwin, excerpt document from *The Origin of the Species* (C)

W: Explore one of the websites listed in the instructions for the Darwin Research Activity

W: Darwin Research Activity due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read H. G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (Chs. 9-15)

F: Read John Glendening, "Green Confusion" (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #2 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

#### **Week 3 – Degeneration**

W: Lesson: Identifying and developing claims about key words

W: Close Reading Activity #1 due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read H. G. Wells, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (Chs. 16-End)

F: Read E. E. Snyder, "Moreau and the Monstrous" (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #3 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

#### **Week 4 – Detachment**

W: Lesson: Authorial intention vs. textual evidence and historical context

W: Introduction to Paper #1 instructions

W: Close Reading Activity #2 due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read Lydia Millett, *How the Dead Dream* (Parts 1 & 2)

F: Read "A Conversation with Lydia Millett" on *Willow Springs*

<http://willowspringsmagazine.org/interview/lydia-millet-willow-springs-interview/>

F: Read Ella Soper, "Grieving Final Animals" (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #4 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

#### **Week 5 – Empathy**

W: Lesson: Components of a thesis

W: Lesson: Introductory Paragraphs: best practices

W: Read Lydia Millett, *How the Dead Dream* (Parts 3-5)

W: Read David Foster Wallace, "Consider the Lobster" (C)

W: Discussion Post & Response #5 due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: DRAFT Paper #1 Thesis and Introduction for peer workshop due by 12 pm midnight uploaded to Canvas. Canvas will automatically match you up with a partner by the following morning.

#### **Week 6 – Connection**

W: MEAL Plan: paragraphs in the body

W: Digital peer review of Paper #1 Thesis and Introduction due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read Lydia Millett, *How the Dead Dream* (Parts 6-9)

F: Read Oliver Volker, "Metaphors We Die By" (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #6 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

## MODULE 2: ECOCRITICISM

### Week 7 – Unsustainable Future

W: Paper #1 due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read Bennett and Royle, "Eco"

F: Read Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Preface, Chs. 1-3, and "The Other Road") (C)

F: Read "The EcoModernist Manifesto":

<http://www.ecomodernism.org/manifesto-english/>

F: Watch "Unsustainable Development" video on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY9HEvE31Iw>

F: Discussion Post & Response #7 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

### Week 8 – Slow Violence

W: Introduction to Paper #2

W: Explore one of the websites listed in the instructions for the Environment Research Activity

W: Environment Research Activity due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Read Rob Nixon, excerpts from *Slow Violence* (C)

F: Read Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (Parts 1-4)

F: Discussion Post & Response #8 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

### Week 9 – Extinctathon

W: Catch up on Reading!!!

F: Begin watching *Chernobyl* on HBO, episode 1, "1:23:45"

F: Read Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (Parts 5-8)

F: Discussion Post & Response #9 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

### **Week 10 – Remnants**

W: Continue watching *Chernobyl* on HBO, episodes 2-3, “Please Remain Calm” and “Open Wide, O Earth”

F: Read Allison Dunlap, “Eco-Dystopia” (C)

F: Read Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (Parts 9-end)

F: Discussion Post & Response #10 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

### **Week 11 – Melting Down**

W: Paper #2 due Wednesday by 12 midnight on Canvas

F: Finish watching *Chernobyl* on HBO, episodes 4-5, “The Happiness of Mankind” and “Vichnaya Pamyat”

F: Read Rob Nixon, “Slow Violence, Neoliberalism, and the Environmental Picaresque” (C)

F: Discussion Post & Response #11 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

## **MODULE 3: THE POSTHUMAN**

### **Week 12 – Mutation**

W: Introduction to Paper #3 Instructions

W: Use time wisely today to read ahead; Friday’s reading is LONG!

F: Read Bennett and Royle, “Mutant” (C)

F: Read N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman* (C)

F: Read Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (Chs. 1-4)

F: Discussion Post & Response #12 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

### **Week 13 – Cyborg**

W: Read Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto” (C)

W: Watch *Ex Machina* (film) through any streaming service

W: Android Research Activity due by Wednesday at 12 pm midnight on Canvas

F: Read Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (Chs. 5-13)

F: Discussion Post & Response #13 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

**Week 14 – HUMAN INHUMANS**

W: Outline of Paper #3 due uploaded to Canvas by 12 pm midnight for Dr. Huseby to give feedback

F: Read Jordana Greenblatt, "More Human Than Human" (C)

F: Read Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (Chs. 14-end)

F: Discussion Post & Response #14 due Friday by 12 midnight on Canvas

**Week 15 – WRAPPING UP**

W: Study day to work on your final paper!!!

F: Final Paper uploaded to Canvas by 12 pm midnight December 6th

F: Course Wrap Up & Evals