

TERM: Fall 2026

COURSE CATEGORY: ENGL 45XX: Creative Artistry

COURSE NUMBER & TITLE: English 4507: Speculative Fiction

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: MW 1:45-3:25 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Claire Stanford

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

What is speculative fiction? This much-debated term encompasses a whole world of writing, including science fiction, fantasy, magical realism, horror, alternate history, and stories where things are just a little bit weird in the world. In this course, we will read and discuss published work from each of these genres, try out different forms of speculative fiction with in-class and at-home writing exercises, and engage in a full-class workshop for your own piece of speculative fiction. We will look at worldbuilding, generic distinctions (and overlaps), genre tropes and how to subvert them, and more; we will also consider the sociopolitical stakes of speculative fiction and consider the ways that genre writing is not escapism but is in fact commenting on and responding to our contemporary world.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will understand the characteristics, conventions, and techniques in a genre, form, or mode
- Students will be able to write original work in a genre, form, or mode
- Students will be able to critique peer work

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

Junior/Senior Only

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

- DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (LD)
- HISTORY OF LIT, MEDIA, AND CULTURE (LD)
- READING AND WRITING GENRES (LD)
- THEORY, POWER, AND RHETORIC (LD)
- PRE-1800 (UD)
- CREATIVE ARTISTRY (UD)
- RACE, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND POWER (UD)
- UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE (UD)
- 5000-LEVEL SEMINAR (UD)

CORE ATTRIBUTES:

N/A