

CCA 281 / SNC 227

Brave New World and Nineteen Eighty-Four: Diverging Dystopias

Course Description

On January 25, 2017, the *New York Times* published an article, “George Orwell’s ‘1984’ Is Suddenly a Bestseller,” which reported that Orwell’s classic novel had suddenly seen an enormous spike in sales, as had other dystopian novels, including *Brave New World*. Indeed, the adjective “Orwellian,” a reference to the way language can be twisted into pretzel logic by the powers that be, has become a commonplace of contemporary discourse and, as anyone familiar with *The Hunger Games* can tell you, dystopian fiction—a dystopia is an imagined “bad” society, the shadow of utopia, an imagined “good” society—has been big in young adult literature for a number of years. But *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Brave New World* stand, by a strong consensus, as the *definitive* dystopian novels of the last hundred-some years. This is at least in part due to the fact that both novels are so well written—such riveting pieces of literary art; but it is also due to the perceived prophetic power the novels seem to share, although each posits a different kind of grim future for humankind.

This course will engage closely with these two masterworks (and related subtopics) from three liberal arts perspectives. We will consider them from the perspective of artistic interpretation genre, and form, the perspective of philosophy and ethics; and the perspective of social analysis -- the organizational possibilities of communities and societies. We will find, among other things, that the two books are often mentioned together, along with the question of which provides the more apt description of our current situation. We will also find, I think, that studying the contextual background of the two novels—in fields such as, say, genetic engineering, neuro-pharmacology, and destructive obedience—educates us about topics of historical and contemporary concern such as eugenics,

utilitarianism and the manipulation of “the masses” through propaganda. Finally, I think we will find that a close study of all this prods us to think deeply about who we are now as society and act conscientiously about where we are going.

Learning Outcomes

Please note that this course may be taken by three different constituencies of students:

--SCPS students in the BAPS (Bachelor of Arts in Professional Studies) Program may take the course in fulfillment of the BAPS Program's 6-credit hour Liberal Arts in Action requirement. **For info on the learning outcomes associated with this 6-credit hour BAPS version of the course see the first box on p. 4 of this syllabus, headed Learning Outcomes for BAPS Liberal Arts in Action students (Section CCA 281-805, 6 credit hours)**

--SCPS students in the BAIFA (Bachelor of Arts with Individualized Focus Area) Program may take the course for as many as three BAIFA competences (or 6 credit hours, each of the four BAIFA competences offered by the course being worth two credit hours) or two BAIFA competences (or 4 credit hours) or for as few as one BAIFA competence (2 credit hours). For info on the BAIFA competences offered by the course, **see the second box on pp. 4-5 of this syllabus, headed Learning Outcomes / Competences for BAIFA students.**

--DePaul students from colleges other than SCPS may take the course for 4 credit hours of Liberal Studies credit in the Liberal Studies Program's Arts & Literature domain. **For info on the learning outcomes of the LSP's Arts & Literature domain, see the box on pp. 5-6 of this syllabus, headed Learning Outcomes for students taking the course for credit in the Liberal Studies program's Arts & Literature domain.**

Required texts

The following required texts are available for purchase at the Loop Campus bookstore (Barnes & Noble) and other booksellers:

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. Harper Perennial, 2006. ISBN 978-0-06-085052-4 [Note: Huxley's novel comes in many editions. Be sure to acquire this edition and not another. An electronic version—as long as it's this Harper Perennial edition—is acceptable, if you prefer that to a hard copy]

Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel*. Berkley/Harcourt Brace, 2016. ISBN 978-0-452-28423-4 [Note: Orwell's novel comes in many editions. Be sure to acquire this edition and not another. An electronic version—as long as it's this Berkley/Harcourt Brace edition—is acceptable, if you prefer that to a hard copy]

Readings Posted on Electronic Reserve

Several readings for this course are posted at the DePaul University Library website as Electronic Reserves in the Ares system. Links to those readings are embedded in the course.

Electronic links and film excerpts

Some of your course material take the form of YouTube videos or excerpts from films. The YouTube links are embedded in the course and the film clips appear as screenable videos within the course.

Learning Outcomes for BAPS *Liberal Arts in Action* students (section CCA 281-805, 6 credit hours)

This section of the course satisfies the Liberal Arts in Action requirement of the Liberal Learning core curriculum of SCPS's BAPS (Bachelor of Arts in Professional Studies) majors. Students who successfully complete this section will be able to *compare typical questions, methods of inquiry and kinds of evidence in the liberal arts*. Specifically, students will be able to

- identify, compare and contrast the questions, methods of inquiry and kinds of evidence that characterize three liberal arts approaches to knowing; and
- compare and contrast the uses of writing in each of these approaches.

The three liberal arts approaches emphasized by this course are artistic interpretation; ethical inquiry; and social analysis.

Learning Outcomes / Competences for BAIFA students (2 credit hours per competence)

BAIFA students may register for as few as one or as many as three of the competences below.

A1X: *Interpreting the Arts* (section 281-802, 2 credit hours)

Can analyze a dystopian fiction (or one of its chief features) in terms of form, content or socio-historical context.

1. Focuses on *Brave New World* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a dystopian fiction.
2. Analyzes the selected text (or one of its chief features) in terms of form, content or socio-historical context

A3X: *Reflection & Meaning* (section 281-802, 2 credit hours)

Can ponder and analyze a dystopian fiction (or one of its chief features) in terms of its ethical or spiritual implications.

1. Focuses on *Brave New World* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a dystopian fiction.
2. Ponders and analyzes the selected text (or one of its chief features) in terms of its ethical or spiritual implications.

H1X: *Communities & Societies* (section 281-803, 2 credit hours)

Can ponder and analyze the implications for individuals and groups of the social order depicted and dramatized by a dystopian fiction.

1. Identifies and describes the social order depicted and dramatized by *Brave World* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
2. Ponders and analyzes the implications for individuals and groups of the social order in question.

A4: *Ethics in the Contemporary World* (section 281-804, 2 credit hours)

Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems.

1. Identifies and describes an ethical issue or problem.
2. Describes the distinctive assumptions of two ethical systems.
3. Analyzes the problem by comparing and contrasting how these two different systems would apply to that particular ethical issue or problem.

Learning Outcomes for students taking the course for credit in the Liberal Studies program's Arts & Literature domain

Outcome 1. Students will be able to explain, in well-written prose, what a work of art is about and/or how it was produced (i.e., they should be able to explain the content of that work and/or its methodology of production).

Outcome 2. Students will be able to comment on the relationship between form and content in a work.

Outcome 3. Students will be able to assess the formal aspects of their subject and put those qualities into words using, when appropriate, specialized vocabulary employed in class and readings.

Outcome 4. Students will be able to contextualize a work of art. They will be able to do so with respect to other works of art in terms of defining its place within a broader style or genre. They will also be able to contextualize a work of art in terms of contemporaneous aesthetic, social or political concerns, discussing how these might shape the work's reception and how that reception might differ amongst various people and historical periods.

How the course addresses these Liberal Studies Arts & Literature outcomes:

The four outcomes above relate directly to the course emphasis on the following four topics:

Course topic 1. Comprehending both what's happening within the narratives as well as those moments at which the narratives allude to, satirize or critique other works of literature and/or trends in the wider world (in areas such as biological science, ethics and politics).

Course topic 2. Brave New World is profoundly intertextual, which is to say that Huxley's text places itself in dialogue with other texts, particularly certain plays of Shakespeare. Orwell's novel becomes, at a key juncture, metatextual, incorporating, as it were, a book-within-the book. Students will be expected to note and comment in writing (as well as class discussion) on how at least some of these formal features relate to the content of the work.

Course topic 3. Students will learn and be able to apply to their study of these works specialized literary vocabulary such as that mentioned in topic 2 above, as well as concepts and terminology relating to satire, basic ethical theory and the intellectual tradition of utopian thought.

Course topic 4. The course will contextualize *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in relation to utopia as a genre and dystopia as a sub-genre of speculative fiction. The course will also scrutinize Huxley and Orwell in their respective historical moments and ponder the socio-political issues the two authors saw their novels as addressing.

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The Liberal Studies Program's description of the Art & Literature

domain: Courses in the Arts & Literature domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts by developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning, and through critical and/or creative activity come to experience art with greater openness, insight, and enjoyment. These courses focus on works of literature, art, theatre, or music as such, though the process of analysis may also include social and cultural issues. Students who take courses in this domain choose three courses from such choices as literature, the visual arts, media arts, music, and theater. No more than two courses can be chosen from one department or program.

Organization of the course

This course is organized into 10 modules, each of which lasts a week.

Week/ Module	Read	Screen	Turn In
1 The Transformation of the Everyday	<p>Sargent, “Good Places and Bad Places”</p> <p>Module 1 Introduction & Overview, sections I-III</p> <p>Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i> chapters 1-3</p> <p>Module 1 Introduction & Overview section IV</p>		<p>Discussion</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Journal Entry</p>
2 The “Civilized” and the “Savage”	<p>Huxley, chapters 4-8</p> <p>Module 2 Introduction & Overview</p> <p>Huxley, chapters 4-8</p> <p>Module 2 Introduction & Overview, section I</p> <p>Module 2 Introduction & Overview, section II</p> <p>Levine, “The world of eugenics” (Ares)</p> <p>Module 2 Introduction & Overview, section III</p>	<p>Clips from <i>The Tempest</i></p> <p>Clips on the Zuni</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Journal Entry</p>

	<p>Elliott, "Satire" http://faculty.humanities.uci.edu/avasant/teaching/e10-satire/Satire-Elliott-Britannica.html</p> <p>Miner, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" (Ares)</p> <p>Module 2, sections V-VIII</p>		
3 Feelies and Feelings	<p>Huxley, Brave New World, chapters 9-13</p> <p>Gardner, "Explainer: the Myth of the Noble Savage" (Ares)</p> <p>Sanford, "The Shadow" (Ares)</p> <p>Kay, "Notes on Utilitarianism"</p> <p>Chandler, "Notes on Working in Genres" (posted to Course Q&A)</p>		<p>Discussion</p> <p>Journal Entry</p>
4 Agon	<p>Huxley, Brave New World, chapters 14-18 (conclusion of the novel)</p>	Harris,	Discussion

	<p>Module 4 Introduction & Overview: Agon</p> <p>Appleyeard, “Eugenics 1: the Right to be Unhappy” (Ares)</p> <p>Westacott, “Kantian Ethics in a Nutshell: the Moral Philosophy of Immanuel Kant”</p> <p>https://www.thoughtco.com/kantian-ethics-moral-philosophy-immanuel-kant-4045398</p>	<p>TED Talk, “Science Can Answer Moral Questions”</p>	<p>Journal Entry</p>
<p>5 <i>Brave New World</i>: Implication and Imagination</p>	<p>Attwood, “Everybody Is Happy Now” (Ares)</p> <p>Stevens, “The Door in the Wall” (Ares)</p> <p>Higdon, “The Provocations of Lenina in Huxley’s <i>Brave New World</i>”</p> <p>file:///C:/Users/home.000/Desktop/JK%20DePaul%20docs/BNW%20Higdon%20article.pdf</p> <p>(Optional supplementary reading)</p>		<p>Discussion</p>

	Lewis, "Our minds can be hijacked: the tech insiders who fear a smartphone dystopia (Ares)		
6 Completing Your Midterm Paper		<i>George Orwell: A Life in Pictures</i>	Midterm Paper
7 "The clocks were striking thirteen": Opening <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>	<p>Module 7 Introduction & Overview</p> <p>Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>, pp. 1-83</p> <p>Bildner, "Diego, Frida, and Trotsky (Ares)</p> <p>(Optional supplementary reading) McMullan, "What does the panopticon mean in the age of digital surveillance" (Ares)</p>	"1935: <i>Triumph of the Will</i> – the Power of Propaganda"	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Journal Entry</p>
8 Lovers in a Dangerous Time	Module 8 Introduction & Overview	<i>Optional Supplementary</i>	Discussion

	<p>Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>, pp. 84-171</p> <p>Turner, "Wilhelm Reich: The Man Who Invented Free Love" https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/jul/08/wilhelm-reich-free-love-orgasmatron</p> <p>Litwack, "Totalitarianism," Preamble and Introduction https://www.iep.utm.edu/totalita/</p>	<p>screen- ing: Galbraith , "The Age of Uncertai- nty Episode 8: the Fatal Competit- ion"</p>	<p>Journal Entry</p>
<p>9 "Under the spreading chestnut tree"</p>	<p>Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>, pp. 171- conclusion</p> <p>Module 9 Introduction & Overview</p> <p>Prudchenko, "What Are the effects of a Frame Narrative?" https://penandthepad.com/effects-frame-narrative-1733.html</p> <p>United Nations Human Rights office of the High Commissioner, "Feinstein report: UN expert calls for</p>	<p>Conclud- ing excerpt from 1984 (the film)</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Journal Entry</p>

	<p>prosecution of CIA officers and other US Government officials”</p> <p>https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15397&LangID=E</p> <p>Cohen, “Don’t Put A Torturer in Charge of the CIA”</p> <p>https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2018/03/16/don-put-torturer-charge-cia/9v6t8gy340jKpZZrsQJr5L/story.html</p>		
10 Aldous, Eric and Us	<p>Sabini & Silver, “Critical Thinking and Obedience to Authority” (Ares)</p> <p>McLeod, “The Milgram Experiment”</p> <p>https://www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html</p> <p>Letters of Note: “1984 vs. Brave new World”</p> <p>http://www.lettersofnote.com/2012/03/1984-v-brave-new-world.html</p> <p>Postman, “My dad predicted Trump in1985—it's not Orwell, he warned, it's Brave New World”</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/feb/02/amusing-ourselves-</p>		

	to-death-neil-postman-trump-orwell-huxley		
11			Final Paper

Assessment of Learning

Evidence Students Will Submit

Discussions

Students are expected to contribute in a substantive, timely and interactive fashion to the Discussion posted for each module/week of the course. To receive full credit (3 points) for a given module's Discussion, you must make a contribution that is

- a. **Substantive:** This means that you offer a considered opinion, a thought-provoking speculation and/or new information. A substantive contribution does more than simply indicate "I agree" or "Me too";
- b. **Interactive:** This means that, in addition to posting your own view(s), you respond to at least two other students and that you do so by, again, saying something more than "I agree" or "Me too".
- c. **Timely:** This means that you make your first post by the halfway point of the week (according to the due date for 'First post' listed in your Calendar for each week/module); and that you make at least two additional posts later in the week (preferably before the last hours of the last day of the week).

Journal Entries

Each week (excepting weeks 5, 6, 10 and 11), students will submit a journal entry (about 1.5-2 typed, double-spaced pages in length or around 400-500 words) addressing questions provided in each module. This will make for a total of 7 journal entries by course's end. **A single journal**

entry is worth a maximum of 5 points. To receive full credit, a journal entry must:

1. Respond to all 5 questions and do so in coherent paragraphs (though those paragraphs may be brief);
2. Show attentive engagement with the questions;
3. Show attentive engagement with the pertinent course materials;
4. Get the answer correct (in the case of those questions where a correct answer is sought);
5. Provide at least one piece of thoughtful reflection.

Midterm and Final Papers

--*SCPS students registered in the Bachelor of Arts in Professional Studies (BAPS) program (6 credits)* will, by the end of the course, submit two short papers (each about 1500 words or about 6 typed, double-spaced pages long) addressing each of the three liberal arts perspectives highlighted in the course. They will submit one such paper at Midterm time (week 6) and another such paper at Finals time (week 11). This totals up to two short papers by the end of the course. For information on paper topics, see below.

----*SCPS students registered in the Bachelor of Arts with Individualized Focus Area (BAIFA) for three competences (6 credits)* will, by the end of the course, submit two short papers (each about 1500 words or about 6 typed, double-spaced pages long) addressing each of the three competences for which they're signed up. They will submit one such paper at Midterm time (week 6) and another such paper at Finals time (week 11). This totals up to two short papers by the end of the course. For information on paper topics, see below.

--*SCPS students registered in the Bachelor of Arts with Individualized Focus Area (BAIFA) for two competences (4 credits)* will, by the end of the course, submit two short papers (each about 1,000 words or about 4

typed, double-spaced pages long) addressing each of the two competences for which they're signed up. They will submit one such paper at Midterm time (week 6) and another such paper at Finals time (week 11). This totals up to two short papers by the end of the course. For information on paper topics, see below.

--SCPS students registered for one competence (2 credits) will submit one short paper (about 500 words, or two typed, double-spaced pages long) addressing that competence at either midterm time (week 6) or finals time (week 11); the choice is up to the student. This totals up to one short paper by the end of the course. For information on paper topics, see below. For information on paper topics, see below.

--Non-SCPS students taking the course for credit in the Liberal Studies Program's Arts & Literature domain will, by the end of the course, submit two Papers (each about 1,000 words or about 4 typed, double-spaced pages long). In each paper, students will address two different essay topics. For information on paper topics, see below.

Re topics for papers: Students will choose topics from an array of essay questions prepared by the instructor. The instructor will provide one array of such questions for the Midterm paper and a second array of such questions for the Final paper. The instructor will see to it that the essay questions are attuned to the needs of specific groups of students. SCPS students will be provided with questions attuned to specific SCPS program requirements. Liberal Studies students will be provided with questions attuned to the LSP's Arts & Literature domain learning outcomes. Also, it's always possible for a student to write on a topic of her/his own choosing, providing the instructor approves it.

Point-wise, the breakdown is as follows:

For 6 credit hour students

- Discussion: 33 (11 Discussions x 3 points)
- Journal: 35 (7 Journals x 5 points)

- Short Paper (Midterm): 30
- Short Paper (Final): 30 •
- **Total: 128 points**

For 4 credit hour students

- Discussion: 33 (11 Discussions x 3 points)
- Journal: 35 (7 Journals x 5 points)
- Short Paper (Midterm): 20
- Short Paper (Final): 20 •
- **Total: 108 points**

For 2 credit hour students

- Discussion: 33 (11 Discussions x 3 points)
- Journal: 35 (7 Journals x 5 points)
- Short Paper (Midterm or Final): 30
- Total: **98 points**
-

Criteria for Assessment of Short Papers

Assessment Rubric for Midterm & Final Papers

A designates work of high quality. An A paper:

- develops an argument cogently and creatively across the length of an essay;
- reflects thorough understanding of and engagement with pertinent texts (audiovisual and/or print) and the issues at hand;
- draws insightful connections and/or generates thoughtful questions concerning the topic and the specified materials;
- cites sources consistently in appropriate citation style;
- is virtually free of grammar lapses.

- meets length and competence/liberal arts perspective requirements specific to the number of credit hours for which you're registered
- **B designates work of good quality. A B paper:**
 - develops an argument effectively across the length of an essay;
 - reflects adequate understanding of and engagement with pertinent texts (audiovisual and/or print) and the issues at hand;
 - draws clear connections and/or generates apt questions concerning the topic and the specified materials
 - cites sources consistently in appropriate citation style;
 - is mostly free of grammar lapses.

C designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment. A C paper:

- develops some ideas but does so in a superficial or simplistic manner;
- reflects limited understanding of or engagement with pertinent texts (audiovisual or print) and the issues at hand;
- draws connections, some of which are unclear, and/or raises questions, some which are inapt, concerning the topic and the specified materials;
- cites sources inconsistently and/or occasionally uses appropriate citation style;
- contains several grammar lapses.

D designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirements set forth in the assignment. A D paper:

- shows little development of ideas;
- reflects little or no understanding of pertinent texts (audiovisual and/or print) and the issues at hand;
- does not draw clear connections or raise coherent questions concerning the topic and the specified materials;

- does not cite sources appropriately;
- contains numerous grammar lapses.

Such work is expected to conform to college-level standards of mechanics and presentation. In assessing such work, your instructor strives to be clear, flexible, forthright and empathetic.

Course Grading Scale:

The grading scale is based on 100 percent of the required assignments. Thus (in terms of percentages):

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	

Please note: Grades lower than a C- do not earn credit or competence in the School for New Learning.

Due Dates

Due dates in the course are firm and must be adhered to if you expect to succeed. If you have a problem meeting a due date, you should contact your instructor. **Assignments that are late will receive reduced points. Assignments which are more than one week late will receive zero points.**

Discussion Forums

Discussion Forums are an important component of your online experience. This course contains discussion forums related to the topics you are

studying each week. For requirements on your participation in the Discussion Forums, please see "Course Expectations" in the syllabus.

A Course Q&A discussion forum has also been established to manage necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. This is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers throughout the course. Please feel free to answer any question if you feel you know the answer; this sharing of information is valuable to other students.

College and University Policies

This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:

[Academic Integrity Policy](#) (UGRAD)

[Academic Integrity Policy](#) (GRAD)

[Incomplete Policy](#)

[Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences](#)

[Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability](#)

[Protection of Human Research Participants](#)

[APA citation format](#) (GRAD)

Additional Course Resources

[University Center for Writing-based Learning](#)

[SNL Writing Guide Dean](#)

[of Students Office](#)

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary. If a change occurs, it will be clearly communicated to students.

Credits

This course was designed and produced by John Kimsey and staff at SCPS (School for Continuing & Professional Studies) Online of DePaul University.

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