



ENG 1100: Crossing Cultures with Text | Section 100  
**Alternative Futures:  
 Literatures and Games of Color**  
 Autumn 2022 | Ohio University | Dr. Edmond Y. Chang

ENG 1100  
 Section 100  
 CN 6305  
 TuTh  
 11 AM-12:20 PM  
 Grover W123  
 Autumn 2022  
 Ohio University

Dr. Edmond Y. Chang  
 331 Ellis Hall  
 Office Hours:  
 TuTh 12:30-1:30 PM  
 or by appointment  
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“So here is why I write what I do: We all have futures. We all have pasts. We all have stories. And we all, every single one of us, no matter who we are and no matter what’s been taken from us or what poison we’ve internalized or how hard we’ve had to work to expel it—we all get to dream.”  
 —N.K. Jemisin

SHEREE THOMAS, editor of the collection *Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction from the African Diaspora*, writes that speculative “genres have always offered readers, bold, extraordinary ways by which to examine society. The results have often been visionary, with writers acting as unflinching voyeurs who deliver engaging, sometimes scathing critiques of our traditions, values, nightmares, and dreams.” This course will introduce students to literatures and indie games of color as political and vernacular theory, as strategies for thinking critically about the past, present, and future in order to imagine what this world (and others) would be like under different conditions and configurations of race, gender, sexuality, ability, nation, environment, and other formations. We will explore and articulate the ways that these texts are forms of worldbuilding, worldmaking, and imagining otherwise. We will explore and analyze the intersections of literature, genre, identity, and media with particular attention to creators of color, speculative texts, and perspectives from different parts of the world.

A REQUIREMENT for this class is a well-developed curiosity about the world, about the culture we live in, and about the cultural productions we imagine, produce, and consume. In other words, this class is about reading, critiquing, and analyzing our culture through different literatures and texts. We will engage different practices enjoying and analyzing literature and other media, as well as develop literary, feminist, queer, and intersectional strategies, habits, and perspectives of reading, thinking, and writing. Foremost, we will read and research with pleasure and for pleasure. We will also close read for analysis. And lastly, we will read and deploy literature and media as theory, as dramatizing the concerns, wonders, struggles, and politics of lived life and experience.

SPECIFICALLY, our course goals and learning objectives include:

- Students will be able to describe elements of another culture, such as history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.
- Students will be able to recognize complex interactions between different cultures, including their own, and identity markers like race, gender, class, sexuality, ability, religion, and other difference.
- Students will be able to apply literary and analytical principles, terminology, and methods to identify and discuss features of intercultural texts.
- Students will be able to craft thoughtful questions and answers around intercultural texts that reflect varied cultural perspectives and indicate an understanding of and empathy for other perspectives.
- Students will be able to analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate intercultural texts to articulate insights about their own cultural rules and biases and develop approaches to mitigate them.

“Do work that matters. *Vale la pena.*”  
 —Gloria E. Anzaldúa

“My weapon is literature.”  
 —Chinua Achebe

“First sentences are doors to worlds.”  
 —Ursula K. Le Guin



**Required Course Texts & Materials**

- Nguyen, *She Kills Monsters (Young Adventurer’s Edition)*.
- Okorafor, *Binti*.
- Short readings will be available via Blackboard.
- Web access and an active Ohio University email account.



### Course Requirements

- Presentation & Roundtable (20%)
- In-Class Quizzes (10%)
- Online Reflections (10%)
- Creative Responses (10%)
- Final Reflection (20%)
- Class Participation (30%)

- Students will be able to communicate concepts and evidence related to the role that language, identity, and representation play in the mediation of cultural interaction and cultural conflict.
- Students will be able to interact with others who are culturally different from themselves in an open and supportive way.

IN OTHER WORDS, we will use literature, other mediums, and popular culture as vernacular theory to think, talk, write about and to interrogate the world around us. We will spend the semester asking and addressing difficult, challenging, and sometimes discomfoting ideas, questions, and topics, focusing on different identities, bodies, histories, desires, experiences, and even struggles and violences. Whether on the page, screen, on campus, or in the community, we will explore and engage multiple perspectives, levels of familiarity with the material, and heady and heartfelt responses. In other words, our class will be a safe, respectful, but not necessarily comfortable space. While pushing boundaries and comfort zones are essential to critical thinking, making connections, and intellectual and personal freedom, see me with concerns and queries, for reasonable accommodations, and for further resources on campus.

### Requirements & Grading

Your grade should not be the sole exigence or motivation for this class. It is the hope of the course that you walk away from the class with something more. Find some pleasure and some edification and some knowledge from this class (or any class really) and success is usually not far behind. With that in mind, your grade will be a reflection of engagement, effort, close reading, critical thinking, writing, and participation.

#### Critical Question Presentation and Roundtable (20%)

You will be a required to sign up in small groups for an oral presentation and roundtable during the course of the semester. For your presentation, you will read the texts assigned for a particular week, summarize and articulate two or three main points from the week’s scholarly or critical text (as assigned), generate a critical question connecting the theory to the text, and contribute to in-class and online discussion for the week. Curations should have a group presentation plan, a substantive framing post, may include media, and each group member must contribute to the discussion and post.

#### In-Class Quizzes (10%)

There will be seven or more in-class five-minute quizzes at various times during the semester. These quizzes serve as a review of the week’s main ideas, terms, texts, and readings. These quizzes might include identifications, fill-in-the-blanks, definitions, and short answers.

#### Online Reflections (10%)

There will be seven or more online reflections required over the course of the term. These reflections are short reactions, responses, meditations, and provocations that engage the week’s texts on a critical, analytical, or theoretical level. Reflection opportunities will be posted to the class Blackboard. These online responses will be evaluated on completion and your critical, analytical engagement with the prompt.

#### Creative Responses (10%)

Over the course of the semester, you will write a short-short story, create a drawing, and generate a critical review as an alternative way to explore and

“No hables a menos que puedas mejorar el silencio.”  
—Jorge Luis Borges



“Some of my favorite places I have been in my life exist only in dreams.”  
—Nisi Shawl

“When I read great literature, great drama, speeches, or sermons, I feel that the human mind has not achieved anything greater than the ability to share feelings and thoughts through language.”  
—James Earl Jones

demonstrate the ideas and goals of the course. These creative responses will be evaluated on completion and your critical, thoughtful engagement with the prompts.

### Final Reflection (20%)

At the end of the semester, you will complete a 4-6 page analytical reflection paper that ask you to respond to the readings, the theoretical texts, and to assess your own work and performance in class. The final reflection is cumulative and based on the class readings, online reflections, other media, and in-class and Blackboard discussions.

### Participation and Preparedness (30%)

Preparedness and participation form a large component of your final grade. It is essential that you prepare, attend, and participate in class. Missing class may seriously compromise your ability to do well in this class. Moreover, negative participation will hurt your participation grade. Participation is determined by 1) your **respectful** presence in class and interactions with me and others, 2) your **willingness** to discuss, comment, and ask questions, 3) your **preparation** for class, which includes having the required materials and doing all of the assigned reading or work for class, 4) your **engagement and collaboration** in group work, presentations, office hours, and course events, and 5) your completion of all **required threads** and overall care and use of the class *Blackboard* or “Bb”—bookmark the address, check and respond regularly, and think of the blog as an extension of class:

[https://blackboard.ohio.edu/ultra/courses/\\_605908\\_1/cl/outline](https://blackboard.ohio.edu/ultra/courses/_605908_1/cl/outline)



### MLA Paper Formatting

- 1) 1” margins top, bottom, left, and right on each page.
- 2) Single-spaced block header on the first page only with your name, date, course, my name:  

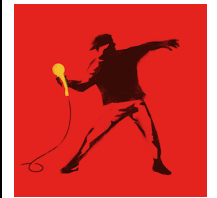
Student Name  
ENG 1100  
August 23, 2022  
Dr. Chang
- 3) Appropriate title.
- 4) Print single-sided. Papers are double-spaced with paper page numbers in the upper right hand corner; no extra space between paragraphs.
- 5) Standard Times Roman Font, 12 point only.
- 6) Correct MLA citation and bibliographic format. A paper turned in without a bibliography automatically fails and will be returned with no comments.

### Attendance

**Attendance is required.** If you are absent, you miss the explanation of an assignment, the discussion of a reading, the chance to participate, and overall, the class as a community of learning. Also, you are expected to be in class on time. In the first minutes of class I may make important announcements, establish the agenda for the day, begin immediately with an important lesson, or field questions. If you come in after we start class, even by only a few minutes, you are late and will be mark as such. Chronic or conspicuous attendance problems will negatively affect your overall participation grade for the class. **Moreover, absences for more than 14 class sessions (50% of class time or more, in person or online) will result in a failing grade regardless of reason. All absences are your responsibility.** If you know you are going to miss class, please let me know (via email) as soon as possible and make any necessary arrangements. When you do miss class, always find another student to get class notes or see me during office hours in order to make up missed work in a timely manner. You are always responsible for all material covered during your absence.

### Assignment Format

All papers must be typed or produced on a word processor. All documents should be saved in Microsoft Word format (or if necessary Rich Text Format). All papers must follow the manuscript format outlined by the assignment. Unless instructed otherwise, **all papers must use MLA citation and documentation conventions.** All papers must be neatly printed (in black), stapled in the top, left-hand corner if necessary, and should not be three-hole punched. Papers that do not follow these format guidelines will not be accepted. They will be returned unread to you. Papers will be regarded as late until they are resubmitted in the proper format. **Always make a backup copy of every paper you turn in,** lest you be one of the unhappy people whose paper is eaten by the computer. You may even want to take the precaution of e-



### Late Assignments

All assignments must be done completely and turned in on time. Late assignments will be penalized half a grade for every day that they are late. So, if your essay is late by one day and you received a B- for your work, then your final grade would be a C+. Moreover, I will not comment on late work. However, you still need to complete late work or you will receive a zero. If you miss class on the due date of a paper, you must notify me and make arrangements to get the paper to me as soon as possible. **Unless previously arranged, I DO NOT accept assignments via email.** Remember that a paper has not been officially handed in until it is in my hands. Never turning anything in late is always the best policy.



mailing your paper to yourself as an attachment during the drafting process and certainly before you exit the document and leave the computer. Or you may want to invest in cloud-based file storage like OneDrive (which all OU students have already have access) or DropBox.

## Evaluation Rubric

Over the course of the quarter, your assignments will receive feedback and comments that will identify what you are doing well and what still needs improvement. Your grades assess your fulfillment of the assignment, the quality of work, detail, analysis, and argumentation, overall effort, and finally, style, polish, and risk taking. Consider the following evaluation rubric as signposts or a kind of legend to your progress and evaluation:

- **Outstanding (A/A+):** Offers a very highly proficient, even memorable demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), including some appropriate risk-taking and/or creativity.
- **Strong (B+/A-):** Offers a proficient demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), which could be further enhanced with revision, additional support, and creativity.
- **Good (B-/B):** Effectively demonstrates the trait(s) associate with the course or assignment goal(s), but less proficiently; could use revision to demonstrate more skillful and nuanced command of trait(s).
- **Acceptable (C/C+):** Minimally meets the basic course or assignment requirement, but the demonstrated trait(s) are not fully realized or well-controlled and would benefit from significant revision.
- **Inadequate (D/D+):** Does not meet the course or assignment requirement; the trait(s) are not adequately demonstrated and require substantial revision on multiple levels.



Contact  
Dr. Chang

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E-mail:  
[change@ohio.edu](mailto:change@ohio.edu)  
Google Chat:  
EDagogy

## Finding Help

My office and office hours are listed in the left sidebar. I am available during that time or by appointment (which can be held virtually). I encourage you to come see me early in the term even if it is just to talk about the class, about the assignments, or about school in general. I may ask you to meet with me when I think a conference would be useful. My office is located on the third floor of Ellis Hall (east of Alden Library), Room 331.



**Email** is the best way to contact me. I will do my best to answer your emails and Bb posts, usually **within twenty-four hours**. If there is an emergency and you need to reach me, please contact the main English office in 201 Ellis Hall. Furthermore, when time permits, I will supplement my office hours with virtual hours via Google Chat (**nickname: EDagogy or edagogy@gmail.com**); if I am



## Learning (With) Technology

Unless you have an official accommodation, the use of technology in our classroom is a privilege, not a right. Mobile devices like phones, media players, and cameras should be off and put away. Computers and tablets should be used for note-taking, in-class work, and readings only. Print is generally preferred for course texts and readings, but full-size e-versions are acceptable provided the student is able to readily highlight, annotate, and index. Finally, be conscientious and respectful in the use of the course website and social media and post no material from class to the internet or non-class sites without explicit permission from the instructor and the class. Keep in mind these three rules:

- 1) Use the Right Tool for the situation and the task—keep it simple and elegant,
- 2) Practice Best Practices—it must improve or enhance your learning,
- 3) Be a Good Neighbor—it cannot distract or detract from others' learning.

Inappropriate use and abuse of technology in class will result in the taking away of technology privileges for the offending student and/or class as a whole.

logged in, during reasonable hours, you are more than welcome to discuss the class or ask questions. Please, when you initiate an IM conversation, **use a greeting**, please identify yourself to me, and be **patient** because my responses may not be immediate.

You can also find additional writing and academic help at the Writing Commons on campus, a good resource for this class and other classes. The Writing Commons is located in the Academic Advancement Center (AAC) on the second floor of Alden Library and offers a variety of services including help with reading, writing, brainstorming ideas, organization, citation, and research. See <https://www.ohio.edu/university-college/academic-achievement-center> to make an appointment and for more information. Further resources, both on- and off-campus can be found on the Links page of the course website: <http://www.edmondchang.com/courses/1100/links.html>.

## Accommodations

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should see me or contact me **in the first week of class** to discuss their specific needs and provide written documentation from Student Accessibility Services. If you are not yet registered as a student with a disability, please contact Accessibility Services at 740-593-2620 or visit the Accessibility Services office in Alden Library 230. The OU Accessibility Services website is: <https://www.ohio.edu/accessibility>.

## COVID-19

All students are required to abide by the university's pandemic strategies and protocols, which are updated and outlined: <https://www.ohio.edu/coronavirus>. Please follow all guidelines and recommendations regarding masking, social distancing, testing and symptom reporting, and vaccination. If you have physical or mental health concerns, changes in employment, housing, or responsibilities, or face other challenges, insecurities, or problems, please seek out Ohio's health services: <https://www.ohio.edu/wellness/student-resources>, counseling center: <https://www.ohio.edu/student-affairs/counseling>, or see me for further help, resources, or accommodations.

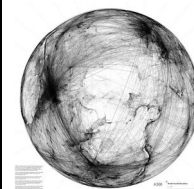
## Academic Integrity

All students are required to uphold the highest academic standards. Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing—as long as you cite them. Many students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, so feel free to ask questions at any time. For our class, plagiarism includes:

- a student failing to cite sources of ideas
- a student failing to cite sources of paraphrased material
- a student failing to cite sources of specific language and/or passages
- a student submitting someone else's work as his or her own
- a student submitting his or her own work produced for another class

If you have any doubt about how to cite or acknowledge another's writing, please talk to me. Any plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in failure of an assignment or of this course. It is always better to be safe than sorry. Please review the Ohio University's Academic Misconduct page at <https://www.ohio.edu/communitystandards/academic/students.cfm>.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."  
—Albert Einstein



"Video games render social realities into playable form."  
—Alexander Galloway

"When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young."  
—Maya Angelou

## Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

Ohio University and this course are committed to a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment. Title IX makes clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, and so on. As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter and am required by law to share with the University any information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on campus. For more information about policies and resources or confidential reporting options, see the Office of University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance: <https://www.ohio.edu/equity-civil-rights/> or the Division of Student Affairs page on Student Conduct & Community Standards: <https://www.ohio.edu/student-affairs/community-standards>.

syl-la-bus: *n* 1: a summary outline of a discourse, treatise, or course of study or of examination requirements 2: subject to change

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### Week 1: August 22-26: INTRODUCTION, CLOSE READING, RACE

Introduction to the Course, Outcomes, & Syllabus

Close Reading, Analysis vs. Interpretation

Du Bois, "The Comet" (1920)

Gray, "Race," *Keywords*

### Week 2: August 29-September 2: GENDER

Hossain, "Sultana's Dream" (1920)

Lewton, "Feminist Visions of Science and Utopia in Rokeya Sakhawat

Hossain's *Sultana's Dream*," <https://www.ladyscience.com/features/feminist-visions-science-fiction-utopia-rokeya-hossain>

Khan, "Muslim Women are Building New Worlds in Science Fiction,"

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/muslim-women-are-building-new-worlds-in-science-fiction-and-changing-the-confines-of-the-genre/2020/07/17/ddea6a6e-c7aa-11ea-a99f-3bbdff1af38\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/muslim-women-are-building-new-worlds-in-science-fiction-and-changing-the-confines-of-the-genre/2020/07/17/ddea6a6e-c7aa-11ea-a99f-3bbdff1af38_story.html)

Halberstam, "Gender," *Keywords*

### Week 3: September 5-9: CLOSE PLAYING

*September 12* (2010):

<http://www.onseriousgames.com/september-12th-a-toy-world-newsgame/>

(PC only)

*Evicted* (2019): <https://tigercollins.itch.io/evicted>

Chang, "Close Playing, a Meditation on Teaching (with) Video Games"

<http://www.edmondchang.com/2010/11/11/close-playing-a-meditation/>

Consalvo, "There is No Magic Circle"

### Week 4: September 12-16: LATINX

Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths" (1941) &

"On Exactitude in Science" (1946)

Carneiro, "Brain Transplant" (1978, *Cosmos Latinos*)

Bell & Molina-Gavilán, "Introduction," *Cosmos Latinos*

Rodriguez, "Latino/a/x," *Keywords*

### Week 5: September 19-23: UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA

S.P. Somtow, "The Thirteenth Utopia" (1979)

Octavia Butler, "Bloodchild" (1984)

Humann, "Genre and Justice in Octavia Butler's *Bloodchild*"

Cherniavsky, "Body," *Keywords*

Mon 8/22  
First Day of Classes

### August

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sign Up for  
Presentations

### September

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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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Mon 9/5  
Labor Day

**Week 6: September 26-30: WORLDS**

Sanders, "When This World Is All on Fire" (2001, *Walking*)  
Dillon, "Imagining Indigenous Futurisms"  
Warrior, "Indian," *Keywords*  
Hao Jingfang, "Invisible Planets" (2013, *Invisible Planets*)  
Liu Cixin, "The Worst of All Possible Universes and the Best of All Possible Earths," <https://www.tor.com/2014/10/30/repost-the-worst-of-all-possible-universes-and-the-best-of-all-possible-earths-three-body-and-chinese-science-fiction/>

**Week 7: October 3-7: ORIENTALISM**

*Robot Stories* (2003)  
Prashad, "Orientalism," *Keywords*  
McPherson, "Digital," *Keywords*

**Week 8: October 10-14: ASIAN**

Yang and Pham, *Level Up* (2011)  
Mathison, "Introduction: Growing Up Asian in Young Adult Fiction"

**Week 9: October 17-21: QUEER**

Nguyen, *She Kills Monsters* (2012)  
Somerville, "Queer," *Keywords*  
Adams, Reiss, Serlin, "Disability," *Keywords*

**Week 10: October 24-28: ASIAN PLAY**

*Yellow Face* (2019): <https://mikeyren.itch.io/yellowface>  
*Intimate, Infinite* (2014): <https://radiatoryang.itch.io/intimate-infinite>  
Tchen, "Asian," *Keywords*

**Week 11: October 31-November 4: BLACK**

Okorafor, *Binti* (2015)  
Okorafor, "Organic Fantasy"  
Chideya, "Hugo Nominee Nnedi Okorafor,"  
<https://www.npr.org/2016/08/20/490771640/hugo-nominee-nnedi-okorafor-breaks-down-her-sci-fi-writing>

**Week 12: November 7-11:**

Jemisin, "The City Born Great" (2016)  
<https://www.tor.com/2016/09/28/the-city-born-great/>  
Bereola, "A True Utopia: An Interview With N. K. Jemisin,"  
<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/12/03/a-true-utopia-an-interview-with-n-k-jemisin/>  
al-Maria, "The Righteous Guide of Arabsat" (2017, *The Djinn*)  
Murad & Shurin, "Introduction," *The Djinn Falls in Love*

**Week 13: November 14-18: BLACK PLAY**

SweetXHeart (2016): <https://cattsmall.itch.io/sweetxheart>  
*Hair Nah* (2017): <http://hairnah.com/>  
Gray and Leonard, "Introduction," *Woke Gaming*  
Narcisse, "The Natural: The Trouble Portraying Blackness in Video Games," <http://kotaku.com/the-natural-the-trouble-portraying-blackness-in-video-1736504384>

October

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30	31					

November

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December

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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Week 14:** November 21-25: INDIGENOUS PLAY

*When Rivers Were Trails* (2019):

<https://indianlandtenure.itch.io/when-rivers-were-trails>

LaPensee, "Cultural Expression in an Indigenous Video Game"

Byrd, "Other Games, Other Histories"

<https://romchip.org/index.php/romchip-journal/article/view/69>

**Week 15:** November 28-December 2: FUTURE

*Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021)

*Everything, Everywhere All At Once* (2022)

Chang, "Musings on Asianfuturism,"

<http://www.edmondchang.com/2020/04/27/musings-on-asianfuturism/>

Davis, "How Black Women Are Reshaping Afrofuturism,"

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2020/04/24/how-black-women-are-reshaping-afrofuturism/>

<https://www.alluvium-journal.org/2017/03/15/the-altermundos-of-latinfuturism/>

Merla-Watson, "The Altermundos of Latin@futurism,"

<https://www.alluvium-journal.org/2017/03/15/the-altermundos-of-latinfuturism/>

**Week 16:** Finals Week

11/23-11/27

Thanksgiving Recess

Creative Response:  
Critical Review Due

Final Reflection Due