

**Carleton University
Winter 2024 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English**

**ENGL 3501B
Literatures and Cultures 1900-now
The Politics and Poetics of Time Travel**

**Prerequisite: third year standing or permission of the department
Preclusions: None**

**Tuesday and Thursday 11:35 am – 12:55 pm
In-person, not suitable for online students**

**Instructor: Adam Barrows
Email: adambarrows@cunet.carleton.ca**

*****This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.*****

Course description

This course explores time travel in twentieth- and twenty-first-century fiction. While most recognizably associated with science-fiction narratives and central to H.G. Wells's foundational novella *The Time Machine*, time travel has appeared in multiple literary genres, proving a remarkably useful device for writers to provocatively explore questions of historical memory, causality, ethical responsibility, and political agency.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to: identify and discuss key themes and formal features of representative works by a range of English language writers of time travel fictions; independently research the work of one writer of time travel fiction; as appropriate, place works by English language writers within their national, cultural, political and historical contexts; conduct secondary research in the service of original literary analysis and argumentation.

Required Texts (all texts are available through Octopus Books: octopusbooks.ca/students)

- Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. Beacon Press, 2004.
Dick, Philip K. *Martian Time-Slip*. Harper Voyager, 2012.
El-Mohtar, Amal & Max Gladstone. *This is How You Lose the Time War*. Saga, 2019.
McQuiston, Casey. *One Last Stop*. St. Martins, 2021.
Turtledove, H. & M. Greenberg. *The Best Time Travel Stories of the 20th-cent.* Del Ray, 2004.
Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Dell, 1991.

Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*. Bantam Classics, 1984.

Evaluation

Attendance: **10%**

Annotated Bibliography: **35%**

Research Paper: **55%**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Attendance

You are expected to attend every class, bring a version of the text (physical or electronic), and readily participate in course discussion. Participation includes having carefully read the assigned pages for the day.

Annotated Bibliography

For this assignment, you will present 6-10 secondary critical sources (please consult me if you need an explanation as to what constitutes a secondary as opposed to primary source). These sources need not necessarily be ones you will cite in your final essay, but they should be related to your essay topic. For each bibliographical entry, you must provide a substantial paragraph in which you summarize the thesis and major evidence of the critic, suggesting ways in which the source affirms or challenges the claims made by other critics included in your bibliography. This assignment will require intensive reading in the critical literature on your chosen author/text. Each source need not necessarily treat time travel as its main subject. The source may not explicitly deal with your author, but in such cases, you must provide a clear rationale in the annotation as to why the source is relevant. At least half of your sources must have a publication date after the year 2000. Due on **March 5th** (electronic submission preferred). Late assignments will be accepted with a 10-point deduction.

Research Paper

This assignment asks you to make an argument about the role of time travel in the work of a twentieth- or twenty-first-century author who is not represented on the syllabus. The paper should be thesis-driven, and your argument must be supported by close textual evidence as well as situated within existing critical debate (which you will have summarized in your annotated bibliography). Your claim must be based on close and original readings of representative texts by the author. In addition, you should discuss your author's work in relation to at least two texts from the syllabus. Papers should be between 8 and 10 pages long (double-spaced 12-point Times New Roman or equivalent).

You have four grading options for submission of the paper, as follows:

Option One: Submit the paper on **April 9** (55%)

Option Two: Submit a proposal on **Feb. 27** (5%), and the final paper on **April 9** (50%)

Option Three: Submit a proposal on **Feb. 27** (5%), a partial draft (at least five pages) on **March 14** (15%), and the final paper on **April 9** (35%)

Option Four: Submit a proposal on **Feb. 27** (5%), a partial draft (at least five pages) on **March 14** (15%), a complete draft on **March 28** (20%), and final paper on **April 9** (15%)

All graded proposals, partial drafts, and complete drafts will receive extensive written feedback from me with clear suggestions for revision. Electronic submission preferred for all assignments. Late papers will be accepted with a 10-point deduction.