COURSE SYLLABUS
HONORS 200: The Shaping of the Modern Mind
How to Survive the Apocalypse

Course Information
HONORS 200-016
The Shaping of the Modern Mind
Spring 2018
HON 195
TR 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Instructor Information
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Office Hours: TR 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Course Description
Why does the popularity of post-apocalyptic fiction endure? How has this science fiction sub-genre evolved over the last seventy years? What does the end of the world tell us about ourselves? What is with the recent cultural obsession with zombies? In this course, we will address these questions and more by reading novels that imagine the end of the world as we know it. The word *apocalypse* comes from the ancient Greek meaning “to reveal,” so considering this context, we will focus on what post-apocalyptic novels attempt “to reveal” about American culture. As part of this exploration, we will consider how characters who survive apocalyptic events—caused by disease, nuclear war, cometary collision, and zombie invasion—are represented by focusing on identities of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. We will also consider the thematic moralizing that is common to post-apocalyptic fiction within the various novels’ historical and cultural contexts. In addition, we will discuss several short articles about cultural theory that will help situate our discussions of the novels, and we will extend our examination of the post-apocalypse to other mediums within the genre, including film, TV, and graphic novels. You do not need to have any background in reading or writing about literature or post-apocalyptic texts to succeed in this course.

Will this course help you survive an apocalypse? It certainly won’t hurt your chances ...
Course Objectives
By the end of this course, you should be able to:
▪ Identify and critique the conventions of the genre of post-apocalyptic fiction
▪ Describe how the genre of post-apocalyptic fiction has changed historically
▪ Analyze post-apocalyptic fiction through the lens of race, ethnicity, class, and gender
▪ Produce a sustained literary analysis of multiple texts using evidence for support
▪ Evaluate the effectiveness of your study habits
▪ Survive an apocalyptic event with your humanity intact

Required Books (Available through eCampus)
Niven, Larry and Jerry Pournelle. Lucifer’s Hammer. [978-0449208137]
Steward, George. Earth Abides. [978-0345487131]
St. John Mandel, Emily. Station Eleven. [978-0804172448]

Canvas
Although most courses at UWM use D2L as the learning management system, we will be using Canvas in this course. You will need to create an account using your UWM email address. In class, we will walk through this process. Here is the URL: https://canvas.instructure.com.

Attendance
It is important to your success as a student and to our success as a class that all students attend class on a regular basis. Therefore, for every absence beyond two, your final grade in the course will be reduced by one grade level (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). Please note that there is no difference between an excused and an unexcused absence. In other words, if you are not in class, you will be counted as absent, regardless of why you are not there. Plus, we will miss you.

Reading
I’m going to be honest with you: this course requires a lot of reading. The good news is that I chose books that I think will both interest you and result in fruitful class discussions. To ensure that you finish each and every reading, I strongly recommend that you read a little bit every day. Yes, every single day. For example, consider Emily St. John Mandel’s Station Eleven. It’s 333 pages. We’ll be reading and discussing it over the course of two weeks. Simple division tells us that if you read about 25 pages per day over 14 days, you’ll be able to finish the novel within two weeks. Just 25 pages per day! You might even get hooked and read more than you intended, and that’s okay. I think you’re more likely to read 25 pages daily than to cram in 100 pages before class, and discussions just don’t work well if you haven’t read the material. By the end of the semester, you will have read over 1700 pages of fiction!

Final Grades
Your final grade will be determined as follows:
▪ 30% In-Class Activities
• 20% Homework Assignments
• 20% Midterm Essay
• 20% Final Essay
• 5% Course Reflection
• 5% Pattern Journal

In-Class Activities
We will be doing a variety of in-class activities when we meet, which will include, among other things, large-group discussions, small-group work, peer review, quizzes, course-related games, and in-class writing. You should expect that at every class period, at least one in-class activity or assignment will be assigned that contributes to this portion of your final grade. You cannot make up missed in-class activities because, well, you kind of have to be there.

Homework Assignments
I will be assigning 12 homework assignments in this course that will ask you to extend or apply concepts from the readings or from class. Each homework assignment will be different, but all of them will require you to do 1-2 pages of writing. Some assignments may be fun, some may be interesting, but all will be challenging. I will provide specific prompts for each of the assignments at least one week before the due date. The good news is I will drop the lowest two homework assignment grades, which will make the final grades easier for all of us to calculate.

Midterm and Final Essays
You will be required to write two interpretive essays during the semester that focus on the novels we’ll be reading. The purpose of the essays is for you to develop a sustained analytical argument that extends beyond our classroom discussions. The in-class activities and homework assignments throughout the semester are designed to prepare you for the kind of thinking and analyzing you will need to be successful on these essays. The particulars of the essays will be distributed well in advance of the due date, but you can expect to write essays of 4-6 pages each. You will have an opportunity to revise the essays and to provide and receive feedback from your peers about the essays.

Course Reflection
Plenty of good research supports the importance of self-reflection for learning, so I’m going to listen to the experts on this one and ask you to think back on what you learned in this course at the end of the semester. The course reflection will be in the form of a 2-3 page essay, and I’ll provide the particulars well in advance of the due date.

Pattern Journal
Pattern is an easy-to-use mobile and web app that allows you to track your study habits. I think the developers at Purdue University put it best: “Pattern is a simple way to measure your study habits, providing you analytics and insights to become a better learner.” Another way to think of Pattern is like a Fitbit for learning. Instead of recording steps, Pattern allows you to log how much time you spend reading, writing, studying, attending class, etc. I am requiring you to use
Pattern in this class because, as with Fitbit, understanding your habits can help you be more successful in reaching your goals. Each week, you will need to: 1) track in Pattern how much time you spend on this course, and 2) submit a PDF of the previous week’s entries to the Canvas assignment folder. In order to receive the full 5% toward your final grade, you just need to complete these two steps each week for all fourteen weeks of the semester. In other words, I will give you credit no matter how many hours you log in Pattern. It’s okay if you spent only a little time on study activities in a given week. Even entering 0 hours gets you credit toward your grade, and you don’t get more credit for logging more study hours. The purpose of the Pattern Journal is to help you monitor your study activities, so be honest! It’s an important virtue anyways. Here is the URL: http://wisc.studypattern.org/.

Final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A = 93-100%
A- = 90-92%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 83-86%
B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%
C = 73-76%
C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%
D = 63-66%
D- = 60-62%
F = 59% or lower

Submitting Documents
Please submit all homework assignments and essays as digital copies in the appropriate Canvas assignment folder. You can expect to receive grades on submitted work within 7 days of the due date. For each day (not including weekends) an assignment or essay is late, the grade for that assignment will be reduced by 10%.

Time Expectations
According to UW System policy, “study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours” (UWS ACPS 4). In other words, a 3-credit course such as this one will require a minimum of 144 (3 x 48) hours of your time. Learning takes time, after all! You may find it necessary to spend additional time on a course; the numbers below only indicate that the course will not require any less of your time:

- 40 hours in the classroom;
- 80 hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, reflecting, journaling, and completing homework assignments; and
- 24 hours preparing for and writing essays.
Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, or passing off someone else’s work as your own, is not acceptable in the academic community. When using the exact words or even the ideas of other people, you need to indicate the source using proper citation—with in-text citations and full citations on a Works Cited page. We will go over citation conventions in class. Students found plagiarizing or engaging in other forms of academic misconduct are subject to severe sanctions, which include a failing grade for the course and a letter in their university file that may lead to suspension or expulsion from UWM. So why risk it? If you have any questions about whether or not something might be considered plagiarism, ask me.

Accessibility Resource Center (ARC)

If you work with an advisor at the ARC, please bring your VISA statement to me within the first week of class. If you are concerned that you might have a physical, emotional, or cognitive disability that could affect your performance in this class, visit the ARC office in Mitchell Hall 112. They’re good folks.

Links to University Policies

Please visit the following link for important university policies that may apply to you:

Final Note

I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus and course schedule as needed. If I do make any changes, I will provide you with the details in a timely manner.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1
1/23  Meet in HON 195
1/24  Read Dewey’s “The Apocalyptic Temper in the American Tradition” (in Canvas)
      Watch “The Science Fiction Wasteland” (in Canvas)
      Submit Assignment 1
1/25  Meet in HON 195

Week 2
1/29  Read Berger’s “Post-Apocalyptic Rhetorics” (in Canvas)
      Watch “Apocalyptic Literature in the 21st Century” (in Canvas)
      Submit Pattern Journal
1/30  Meet in HON 195
1/31  Read Curtis’s “Postapocalyptic Fiction and the Social Contract” (in Canvas)
      Read Kirk and Okazawa-Rey’s “Identities and Social Locations” (in Canvas)
      Submit Assignment 2
2/1   Meet in HON 195

Week 3
2/5   Read Earth Abides (pp. 1-93)
      Submit Pattern Journal
2/6   Meet in HON 195
2/7   Read Earth Abides (pp. 94-165)
      Submit Assignment 3
2/8   Meet in HON 195

Week 4
2/12  Read Earth Abides (pp. 166-263)
      Submit Pattern Journal
2/13  Meet in HON 195
2/14  Read Earth Abides (pp. 264-345)
      Submit Assignment 4
2/15  Meet in HON 195

Week 5
2/19  Read Jay’s “Who Invented White People?” (in Canvas)
      Read McIntosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (in Canvas)
      Submit Pattern Journal
2/20  Meet in HON 195
2/21  Read Lucifer’s Hammer (1-129)
      Submit Assignment 5
2/22  Meet in HON 195

Week 6
2/26  Read *Lucifer’s Hammer* (130-246)
      Submit Pattern Journal
2/27  Meet in HON 195
2/28  Read *Lucifer’s Hammer* (247-376)
      Submit Assignment 6
3/1   Meet in HON 195

Week 7
3/5   Read *Lucifer’s Hammer* (377-488)
      Submit Pattern Journal
3/6   Meet in HON 195
3/7   Read *Lucifer’s Hammer* (489-629)
      Submit Assignment 7
3/8   Meet in HON 195

Week 8
3/12  Read Slotkin’s “Myth and Literature in a New World” (in Canvas)
      Submit Pattern Journal
3/13  Meet in HON 195
3/14  Submit Midterm Essay Peer Draft
3/15  Meet in HON 195

Spring Break
3/20  No Class (Spring Break)
3/22  No Class (Spring Break)

Week 9
3/26  Watch *I Am Legend* (in Canvas)
      Submit Pattern Journal
3/27  Meet in HON 195
3/28  Submit Midterm Essay Final Draft
3/29  Meet in HON 195

Week 10
4/2   Read Hamilton’s “Simulating the Zombie Apocalypse ...” (in Canvas)
      Submit Pattern Journal
4/3   Meet in HON 195
4/4   Read *World War Z* (pp. 1-131)
      Submit Assignment 8
4/5   Meet in HON 195
Week 11
4/9  Read *World War Z* (pp. 132-230)  
     Submit Pattern Journal
4/10 Meet in HON 195
4/11 Read *World War Z* (pp. 231-331)  
     Submit Assignment 9
4/12 No Class

Week 12
4/16 Read *World War Z* (pp. 332-420)  
     Submit Pattern Journal
4/17 Meet in HON 195
4/18 Read Brigham’s “Critical Meeting Places” (in Canvas)  
     Watch *The Road* (in Canvas)  
     Submit Assignment 10
4/19 Meet in HON 195

Week 13
4/23 Read *Station Eleven* (pp. 1-90)  
     Submit Pattern Journal
4/24 Meet in HON 195
4/25 Read *Station Eleven* (pp. 91-173)  
     Submit Assignment 11
4/26 Meet in HON 195

Week 14
4/30 Read *Station Eleven* (pp. 174-241)  
     Submit Pattern Journal
5/1 Meet in HON 195
5/2 Read *Station Eleven* (pp. 242-333)  
     Submit Assignment 12
5/3 Meet in HON 195

Week 15
5/7 Submit Course Reflection  
     Submit Pattern Journal
5/8 Meet in HON 195
5/9 Submit Final Essay Peer Draft
5/10 Meet in HON 195

Finals Week
5/16 Submit Final Essay Final Draft