

LIBST 1203: Cultural Perspective in Science

3 credits, 3 hours lecture per week

Course description: This course introduces students to the study of science as a cultural activity with the goal of developing their critical thinking and writing skills. Students will learn to be conversant with some of the issues and debates concerning how science, technology, and medicine have shaped and continue to shape beliefs, values, and identities in our world.

Instructor

Dr. Ryan J. Cox

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Office Hours

Mondays 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Wednesdays 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Fridays 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Hours of Instruction

Tues/Thurs 10:30 – 11:50 am Rm S205

Required Resources

[Alien Chic](#) Badmington ISBN 978-0415310222

Further readings, notes and other resources will be supplied through the course Moodle site as required (<http://ilearn.keyano.ca>).

University Wide Learning Outcomes

Through all learning experiences, and continuing at successively higher levels across their university studies, Mount Royal University aims to provide students with the following:

- **Intellectual and practical skills** practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance
- **Integrative and applied learning** demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
- **Knowledge of human cultures and the physical, natural and technological world** focused by engagement with relevant questions
- **Personal and social responsibility** anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Situate science within a number of cultural traditions.
- Describe how culture shapes both scientific thought and identity.
- Discuss the similarities or differences in representations of scientific issues across a number of different cultures and time periods.
- Demonstrate an ability to critically engage significant cultural objects and critique them.

Evaluation

Participation	10%	Ongoing
Response Essays	20%	Ongoing
High Strangeness	10%	February 6, 2018
Critical Review	20%	Mar 27, 2018
Research Presentation	10%	Final Week of Class
Term Paper	30%	April 9, 2018

A grade of C- is required for progression or transfer.

Response Essay

Students are required to complete a series of 4 short essays of 2-3 pages each in which they explore that week's reading in greater detail. Response papers are to be written about the readings in advance of classroom discussion. These essays should advance an argument about the reading. These four essays are to be written at your discretion throughout the semester, however, only one paper can be submitted at a time and at least one response essay must be submitted by the week of Feb. 12. Marked out of 5; handed in at the beginning of the first class of the week. Participation in the Keyano College University Studies Conference may be deemed equivalent to one Response Essay.

Research Essay

For this assignment, you will be expected to write a detailed, well researched, thesis driven essay on one of the topics that will be provided on Moodle. This essay should demonstrate your mastery of the text(s)/topic, your ability to effectively integrate your research into your writing, a familiarity with the

current critical discourses surrounding your topic, and your ability to write at the university level. This assignment will conform to MLA guidelines for research papers.. Length: 6-8 pgs.

Critical Review

Each student will be responsible for a video or digital presentation wherein you will address one of the texts from the list provided on moodle. The texts represent a mixture of critical and creative work, and some texts are bundled together due to length or complexity. The student will be expected to summarize the major points of the texts—argument, plot, etc—and subsequently offer a critical evaluation of the text. Please refer to the provided examples of critical reviews as a further guideline. Videos will be between 10 and 15 minutes in length and should be submitted as a playable movie file (MP4, AVI, MPEG or MOV) via a disk, jumpdrive, email or a link to YouTube. If you submit an uncompiled video file it will be considered late 1 day and you will be given a limited window to re-submit. Students are also expected to submit a hardcopy of their script with the video.

Personal Responses to High Strangeness

You are to write a 4 page personal essay responding to one of these two options.

Option 1:

Using your scientific training, the readings from the course as reference, and your own understanding of the cultural formations of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, attempt to explain one of the following: The Necessity of SETI; The Abduction Phenomenon; Ancient Astronauts; or High Strangeness as part of Extraterrestrial Encounters. Your assignment, should you choose this option, is to take the form of a 4 page personal essay.

Option 2:

On each episode of Dr. Cox's favourite paranormal podcast, *The Bigfoot Collector's Club*, the hosts share a story of "High Strangeness"—an encounter with the paranormal (Bigfoot, Ghosts, UFOs, Mothman, Dogmen, etc) typically with a high degree of surreality—and then ask their guests, "What the hell was that?" Your assignment is to identify a UFO or Extraterrestrial encounter, describe it, and attempt to explain it—What was it? What does it mean? How can you rationally explain what happened? Does it defy your ability to explain? You can use Hynek and Mack as possible models. .

Participation

This course seeks to foster a learning community in which students engage the material actively and gain insight from each other as well as the instructor. The goal is to develop the analytic and argumentative skills necessary for successful scholarly activity by testing those ideas in conversation, to actively position oneself in critical discourses by engaging in discourse, and to demonstrate the collaborative nature of scholarly activity. Students are expected to come to class prepared for classrooms discussions, actively and vigourously engage in those discussions, and generally contribute to the course's critical conversation. ATTENDANCE IS NOT EQUIVALENT TO PARTICIPATION.

Late Policy

Late work will only be accepted until 3pm on the second day following the due date and it will be penalized at a rate of 10%/Day. If work is not submitted by 3pm on the second day following the due date, it will not be accepted and the student will receive a 0(zero) on the assignment. It should also be noted that late material will receive no feedback from the instructor. It is your responsibility to meet the due dates for the assigned material.

Standards for Written Assignments

Learning how to follow house style sheets is one of the most important skills a writer can develop. To aid you in your quest to learn these skills I have provided a document entitled “Standards for Written Assignments” on Moodle. If your paper does not conform to these standards, expect to lose marks.

All work must be TYPED, double spaced, and have proper MLA documentation (unless instructed otherwise). Do NOT submit work to me by e-mail. All students should submit two versions of their assignments: a hard copy submitted at the beginning of the class the day the assignment is due and a digital copy submitted through the appropriate dropbox on moodle by the beginning of that class. If one of these copies is missing the assignment will not receive a grade. Please also understand that digital submission of the work will be treated as acknowledgement that the work is free from plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct and that the work being submitted is in full compliance with Keyano College Policy 110.1: Student Code of Conduct Procedure (Academic Misconduct: cheating and plagiarism).

Sensitivity, Respect, and Subject Matter

Some of the material we will be covering this semester is of a charged nature—whether in terms of form, content or politics. As critics, we cannot shy away from this material; however, we must understand that this material may generate a wide variety of reactions and opinions among our colleagues in the classroom. Thus, it is imperative that we remain aware of, and sympathetic to the reactions and opinions of our classmates. Respect and sensitivity will produce a stronger learning environment and generate better, more nuanced discussions.

Pronoun Usage

Every student deserves the basic respect of being referred to by the appropriate pronouns. To that end, if there are particular pronouns that you wish to use please feel free to let me know either in person or via email. If I misgender you, please feel free to correct me and I will work to avoid doing so in the future. The pronouns that I use are he/his.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Keyano College is located on Treaty 8 lands This area has been and continues to be home to the Cree, Dene, and Metis peoples. As a scholarly community we recognize that we are treaty people and work to live up to the responsibilities that come with that.

Grading System

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	4.0 Scale	Percent	Rubric for Letter Grades
Excellent	A+	4.0	> 92.9	Work shows in-depth and critical analysis, well developed ideas, creativity, excellent writing, clarity and proper format.
	A	4.0	85 – 92.9	
	A-	3.7	80 – 84.9	
Good	B+	3.3	77 – 79.9	Work is generally of high quality, well developed, well written, has clarity, and uses proper format.
	B	3.0	74 – 76.9	
	B-	2.7	70 – 73.9	
Satisfactory Progression	C+	2.3	67 – 69.9	Work has some developed ideas but needs more attention to clarity, style and formatting.
	C	2.0	64 – 66.9	
	C-	1.7	60 – 63.9	
Poor	D+	1.3	55 – 59.9	Work is completed in a general way with minimal support, or is poorly written or did not use proper format.
Minimum Pass	D	1.0	50 – 54.9	
Failure	F	0.0	< 50	Responses fail to demonstrate appropriate understanding or are fundamentally incomplete.

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments	Notes
Jan 6-10	Introduction: What is Culture?			
Jan 13-17	Science and the Big Questions 1: SETI	Drake, Jones, Dvorsky		
Jan 20-24	Science and the Big Questions 2: J. Allen Hynek and the UFO as an object of Scientific Inquiry	Hynek, <i>The UFO Experience</i> (parts 1 & 2, skim actual encounters as desired)		
Jan 27-31	Science and the Big Questions 3: John Mack, The Abduction Phenomenon, and The Culture of Science	Mack, <i>Abduction</i> (Chapters 1 & 2, at least two of the case studies)		
Feb 3-7	Science and the Big Questions 4: Bob Lazar, Naruto, Running at Groom Lake	Badmington Chapters 3, 4	High Strangeness Due Feb 6	
Feb 10-14	Science as Religion 1: Chariots of the Gods!	Daniken, <i>Chariots of the Gods?</i>		
Feb 17-21				Family Day/Reading Week: No Class
Feb 24-28	Science as Religion 2: Ancient Aliens, Theory, and the Crisis of Humanism	Selected episodes of <i>Ancient Aliens</i> (in class); Richter,		

		"Traces of the Gods"		
Mar 2-6	Science as Religion 3: Raelians and other UFO Cults as Cultural Phenomenon	Sentes and Palmer, "Presumed Immanent"		
Mar 9-13	The Alien as Metaphor 1: It's not about them, it's about us	Pohl, "The Day After the Day the Martians Came;" Verhoeven, <i>Starship Troopers</i> ; Badmington Chapter 2		
Mar 16-20	The Alien as Metaphor 2: Red Scares and Atomic Age Extraterrestrials	Wise, <i>The Day the Earth Stood Still</i>		
Mar 23-27	The Alien as Metaphor 3: Alien Queens, Ellen Ripley, and Maternal Anxieties	Cameron, <i>Aliens</i>	Critical Review Due Mar 26	Last Day to Withdraw, March 27
Mar 30-Apr 3	The Alien as Metaphor 4: Repositioning the Other	Honda, <i>Invasion of Astro-Monster</i> ; Houseman and Shannon, "Ayanisach"		
Apr 6-9	Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Presentations, Summations, Conclusions		Research Presentations Due this week, Term Papers due April 9	Last Day of Classes: April 9
Apr 16-20				

Performance Requirements

Student Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as a student to contact the Office of the Registrar to complete the forms for Withdrawal or Change of Registration, and any other forms. Please refer to the list of important dates as noted in the Academic Schedule in the Keyano College credit calendar.

More specific details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Student Attendance

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a student's learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating the

administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and / or notes that may be due.

Academic Misconduct

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating)
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work
- The deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications
- The willful distortion of results or data
- Substitution in an examination by another person
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

In order to ensure your understanding of the concept of plagiarism, you must successfully complete the online Plagiarism Certificate at ilearn.keyano.ca. Then print the certificate, sign it, and show it to each of your instructors. Your course work will not be graded until you show this signed certificate. If you completed this certification previously, show evidence to your instructor.

Specialized Supports

The Student Academic Support Services (SASS) department: Accessibility Services, Skill Centre and Wellness Services, work together to support student success at Keyano College.

Accessibility Services (CC167) supports student success through group and individualized instruction of learning, study and test taking strategies, and adaptive technologies. Students with documented disabilities, or who suspect a disability, can meet with the Learning Strategists to discuss accommodation of the learning barriers that they may be experiencing. Students who have accessed accommodations in the past are encouraged to visit our office at their earliest opportunity to discuss the availability of accommodations in their current courses. Individual appointments can be made by calling 780-791-8934

Skill Centre (CC119) provides a learning space where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff. Students visiting the centre have access to one-to-one or group tutoring, facilitated study groups, and assistance in academic writing. The Skill Centre's Peer Tutor program provides paid employment opportunities for students who have demonstrated academic success and want to share what they have learned. Tutoring is available free to any students registered at Keyano College on a drop in basis, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Additional evening hours are subject to tutor availability and are posted in the Skill Centre.

Wellness Services (CC260) offers a caring, inclusive, and respectful environment where students can access free group and individual support to meet academic and life challenges. Mental Health

Coordinators offer a safe and confidential environment to seek help with personal concerns. The Mindfulness Room in CC260 is available as a quiet space for students to relax during regular office hours. Wellness Service welcomes students to participate in any of the group sessions offered throughout the academic year addressing such topics as Mindfulness and Text Anxiety. Individual appointments can be made by calling 780-791-8934.

Please watch your Keyano email for workshop announcements from our Student Academic Support Services team.