

**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**

Due to COVID, Office hours are by appointment. Students are encouraged to use MS Teams chat for informal communication with instructor.

**Hours of Instruction**

Monday/Wednesday 1:00 – 2:20 pm

**Required Resources**

[Intimate Alien](#) Halperin, Stanford UP ISBN 978-1-5036-0708-8

[American Cosmic](#) Pasulka, Oxford UP ISBN 978-0-019-069288-9

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 3, 2021
Critical Review	20%	Mar 24, 2021
Research Presentation	10%	Final Week of Class
Term Paper	30%	April 9, 2021

*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

### 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 <b>Progression</b>	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.
<b>Minimum Pass</b>	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 11-17	Science and the Big Questions 1: SETI	Drake, Jones, Dvorsky		
Jan 18-24	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 25-31	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), Halperin, Chapter 4		
Feb 1-7	Science and the Big Questions 4: Bob Lazar, Naruto Running at Groom Lake	Pasulka, Chapters 1-3	High Strangeness Due Feb 3	
Feb 8-14	Science as Religion 1: Chariots of the Gods!	Daniken, <i>Chariots of the Gods?</i>		
Feb 15-21				Family Day/Reading Week: No Class
Feb 22-28	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”, Halperin, Chapter 5		
Mar 1-7	Science as Religion 3: Raelians and other UFO Cults as Cultural Phenomenon	Sentes and Palmer, “Presumed Immanent”		
Mar 8-14	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> ; Halperin, Chapter 2		
Mar 15-21	The Alien as Metaphor 2: Red Scares and Atomic Age Extraterrestrials	Wise, <i>The Day the Earth Stood Still</i> Pasulka, Chapter 4		
Mar 22-28	The Alien as Metaphor 3: The Truth, Where is it?	Selected Episodes of <i>The X-Files</i>	Critical Review Due Mar 24	
Mar 29-Apr 4	The Alien as Metaphor 4: Repositioning the Other	Honda, <i>Invasion of Astro-Monster</i> ; Houseman and Shannon, “Ayanisach”		
Apr 5-11	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 12-14				

## Performance Requirements and Student Services

### 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](#). The Keyano College credit calendar also has information about Student Rights and Code of Conduct. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and 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 to 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 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; and
- 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 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 Code of Conduct Policies.

In order to ensure your understanding of the concept of plagiarism, you must successfully complete the online tutorial found on [ilearn.keyano.ca](http://ilearn.keyano.ca). Then print the certificate, sign it, and show it to each of your instructors. Your course work may not be graded until you show this signed certificate.

**Specialized Supports**

The Student Services department is committed to Keyano students and their academic success. There are a variety of student supports available at Keyano College. Due to the continuing situation with the Covid-19 pandemic, the offered support services will be implemented differently this semester by being provided mostly virtually. In-person service can be requested as needed. All Alberta Health Services guidelines will be followed for in-person appointments—wear a mask, maintain two meters of physical distance, use hand sanitizer, and stay home if you are unwell.

All student services are available during Keyano business hours: Monday to Friday, 8h30-16h30.

**Accessibility Services:** provides accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities, or who suspect a disability, can meet with a Learning Strategist to discuss their current learning barriers and possible accommodations. Students who have accessed accommodations in the past are encouraged to contact us to request them for the semester. Please note that requesting accommodations is a process and requires time to arrange. Contact us as soon as you know you may require accommodations. For accessibility services supports and to book a virtual appointment, please contact [accessibility.services@keyano.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@keyano.ca).

Accessibility Services also provides individual and group learning strategy instruction for all students, as well as technology training and supports to enhance learning. Meet with a Learning Strategist to learn studying and test-taking strategies for online classes. Schedule an appointment with the Assistive Technology Specialist to explore technology tools for learning. Book an appointment today by emailing [accessibility.services@keyano.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@keyano.ca)

**Wellness Services:** 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. All individual appointments will continue virtually.

Wellness Services welcomes students to participate in any of the virtual group sessions offered throughout the academic year addressing topics including mindfulness and test anxiety.

Individual virtual appointments can be made by emailing [wellness.services@keyano.ca](mailto:wellness.services@keyano.ca).

**Library Services:** provides students with research and information supports as they engage in their studies. Library staff are available to support you both virtually and in person throughout the semester. For a detailed list of library supports and services, go to [www.keyano.ca/library](http://www.keyano.ca/library). For any inquiries, please email [askthelibrary@keyano.ca](mailto:askthelibrary@keyano.ca).

[Begin your research with the Library's FIND page. Search for sources using OneSearch, the Library's Catalogue, or by searching in a specific database selected from the A-Z Database List.](#)

[Individual support with the Information Librarian is available virtually. Appointments can be requested by using the Book A Librarian online form.](#)

Research and Subject Guides are helpful resources when beginning your research or addressing other information needs. To view a subject or course specific guide, go to the Subject Guide webpage [here](#).

To access additional research resources, including Citation Guides (APA, MLA, Chicago, or IEEE), go to the [Research Help Library page](#).

The Loanable Technology collection is available to support students in their online learning pursuits. Items available for borrowing include mobile projectors, webcams, noise cancelling headphones, Chromebooks, and laptops. For an up-to-date list of technology available for borrowing, go to the Library's [Loanable Technology webpage](#).

**Skill Centre:** Provides academic support services to students registered in credit programs at Keyano College in the form of tutoring, assignment/lab support, writing support groups, facilitated study groups, workshops, and study space. This service is free and is available for all Math, Sciences, Humanities and Trades courses offered at Keyano.

While most courses are being offered online, the Skill Centre will be offering mostly virtual services and in-person sessions as requested. Please email [Skill@keyano.ca](mailto:Skill@keyano.ca) to get in contact with our Academic Content Specialists. The Skill Centre is located in CC-119 at the Clearwater Campus.

For the most up to date information on how to book a session, please view the [Keyano Skill Centre homepage](#).

**Academic Success Coaching:** offers you support and access to resources for your academic success to help you to find the Keys to your Success. The Academic Success Coach will work with you to develop an academic success plan, develop your study and time management skills, and connect you with the right resources here at Keyano. [Academic.success@keyano.ca](mailto:Academic.success@keyano.ca) is the best way to access resources during virtual service delivery. The Academic Success Coach is located in the Skill Centre in CC-119 at the Clearwater Campus.

### **E-Learning**

Technology and internet will impact your online learning experience. It's important that you are able to watch an online video and other course materials, take online quizzes, and participant in a live class with your instructor and other students.

Keyano College operates in a Windows based environment and having the correct tools for online learning is important. Here's a list of recommended system requirements.

### **Internet Speed**



Minimum Internet speeds of 5 Mbps.  
 Recommended Internet speeds of 25 Mbps (especially if you are sharing your internet at home).  
 Check your internet speed with [Fast.com](http://Fast.com).

#### System requirements:

Microsoft Windows	Apple
<p><b>Minimum Requirements:</b></p> <p>A Windows 10 <b>computer/laptop</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 4GB of RAM.</li> <li>10GB+ available hard drive storage.</li> <li>Enough available hard drive space to install the Microsoft Office suite (approximately 3GB). <a href="#">Microsoft Office</a> software is free to all Keyano students and employees.</li> <li>Microphone, webcam and speakers. A headset with a microphone is recommended.</li> <li>System updates must be regularly installed.</li> <li>Anti-Virus / Anti-Malware software</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minimum Requirements:</b></p> <p>A Macintosh (V10.14 and above) <b>computer/laptop</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 4GB of RAM.</li> <li>10GB+ available hard drive storage.</li> <li>Enough available hard drive space to install the Microsoft Office suite (approximately 3GB). <a href="#">Microsoft Office</a> software is free to all Keyano students and employees.</li> <li>Microphone, webcam and speakers. A headset with a microphone is recommended.</li> <li>System updates must be regularly installed.</li> <li>Anti-Virus / Anti-Malware software.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommended Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8GB of RAM</li> <li>A method of backing up/synchronizing to local or cloud-based storage such as OneDrive is highly recommended. This is included if you complete the setup of KeyanoMail and download MS Office using your Keyano email for free.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommended Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8GB of RAM</li> <li>A method of backing up/synchronizing to local or cloud-based storage such as OneDrive is highly recommended. This is included if you complete the setup of KeyanoMail and download MS Office using your Keyano email for free.</li> </ul>
<p>Chromebooks are <b>not</b> recommended as they are not compatible with testing lockdown browsers.</p> <p>A Microsoft Surface or iPad or iPad Pro may be possible alternatives in some program areas.</p>	

#### Specific Department Requirements:

Business and OA programs require Windows 10.  
 Other programs may utilize Windows based tools as well.

#### Computer Software

Students will be able to get access to Microsoft Office 365 for free using Keyano credentials by [clicking here](#).

#### Recording of Lectures and Intellectual Property

Students may only record a lecture if explicit permission is provided by the instructor or by Accessibility Services. Even if students have permission to record a lecture or lecture materials, students may not share, distribute, or publish any of the lectures or lecture materials, this includes any recordings, slides, instructor notes, etc. on any platform. Thus no student is allowed to share, distribute, publish or sell course related content (instructor, or students) without permission. It is important to recognize that the Canadian Copyright Act contains provisions for intellectual property. The [Academic Integrity Policy](#) provides additional information on Keyano College's expectations from students as members of the intellectual community.

**ITS Helpdesk**

If you are having issues with your student account, you can contact the ITS Helpdesk by emailing [its.helpdesk@keyano.ca](mailto:its.helpdesk@keyano.ca) or calling 780-791-4965.