



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

**2016 Winter Session (2016-2017 Academic Year)****ENGL 503A-001 - Feminist Science Fiction and Science and  
Technology Studies - M. Fee****Studies in Prose  
Term 2**

Science studies examines Western science from a variety of perspectives including the postcolonial (is Western science the only science?), the rhetorical and the literary (embedded metaphors are “invisible” to scientists, as they talk about “gold standards” and “Holy Grails”), the historical and feminist (founded in 1660, the Royal Society admitted women first in 1945), and the anthropological (how does “laboratory life” produce knowledge?). Sense is made of such entities as frozen embryos, cloned animals, transgenic plants and DNA databases through a range of genres including fictional narratives. The course will examine the ways in which feminists have used SF (science fiction / speculative fiction) to theorize about gender differences and the ways in which this popular genre has been held at a distance until recently from both science (this isn’t science fiction!), literature, and even feminist science studies. Susan Merrill Squier and others have argued that the disciplines of science and literature were forged as binaries after the Enlightenment in ways that account for the masculinization of science and feminization of literature, as well as the centrality of biology in debates around “life,” “God,” and the “natural” in the 21st century.

**Possible readings:** Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, *Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader*; Mary Shelley – *Frankenstein*; Rokeya Hossain – *Sultana’s Dream*; Charlotte Perkins Gilman – *Herland*; Justine Larbelestier ed. *Daughters of Earth: Feminist Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century*; Octavia Butler – *Bloodchild and Other Stories*; Ursula Leguin – *The Left Hand of Darkness*; Joanna Russ *The Female Man*; Margaret Atwood - *Oryx and Crake* ; Nalo Hopkinson – *Midnight Robber*.

**Theoretical Readings:** Anne Fausto-Sterling (*Myths of Gender*), Sandra Harding (*Sciences from Below*), Mary Midgley. Ian Hacking (*Social Construction of What?*), Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway (*Modest Witness*) and others.