



Imagining Climate Changed Futures (i.e. Making Cli-Fi) Project

Due dates:

1. Progress check-ins with Dr. Sip in class on Monday, May 7
2. Final product (Part I of project) due by the beginning of class Monday, May 14 (need to either post to blog or find another way to share with the entire class)
3. Analysis essay (Part II of project) due by the beginning of class Wednesday, May 16
4. Collaboration evaluation form (if working as a group) due by the beginning of class Friday, May 18

Overview: Climate change is impacting every dimension of human and nonhuman existence on the planet—from ocean acidification to extreme weather events to impacts on food production, from arctic ice melt to rising sea levels, from changes in the insurance industry to the psychological and emotional impacts on individuals (especially young people) ... the list goes on and on. Moreover, these impacts, along with the choices that we (as humans, and specific communities of humans) continue to make will put us on different pathways into the future.

How do we, as environmental writers and artists imagine possible futures in the context of climate change? How do we create occasions for “shared imagination”? How do we communicate the complexity of such futures? These are difficult questions, and they require all the tools of literature, art, and the humanities in general. **In this assignment, you will work individually or in a group create a work of cli-fi (that is, a work of culture—broadly conceived—that imagines, or creates occasions for others to imagine, a possible future, or futures, as affected by climate change).** Your cli-fi must in some way be based in natural science or social science secondary research about climate change.

Part I, Creating Cli-Fi: In this part of the project you will **create a work of cli-fi**. I encourage you to be experimental, explorative, and speculative in how you consider undertaking this task. **Your original work of cli-fi could take many forms—it could be a podcast, a novel or short story collection, a game, a performance/work of drama, a film, a graphic novel, an interactive exhibit or website, etc.**

Scope/scale: If you choose to pursue a large project—for instance, an entire novel or graphic novel—that cannot be carried out because of time constraints, you should create a substantive and representative sample of that work and then supplement it with an explanation of the important elements of the rest of the work (for instance, if you wanted to write a novel, you could write a chapter and plot outline and a short synopsis of the rest of the novel).

Collaboration: **I encourage you to work with one or more of your classmates to collaboratively create a work of cli-fi!** There are many benefits to doing this, one of the most important being that creative collaboration is a crucial skill to develop for almost any career or discipline. **If you do choose to collaborate, the final product that you create should be significantly more robust because it will have more than one creator.** Moreover, each group member must write his/her own essay about the project as well as complete a group evaluation form.

Evaluation: Do not be overly concerned with your proficiency as a creative writer/narrative artist. For example, if you have a great idea for a graphic novel, but you do not know the first thing about drawing, that's fine. If you want to design a game, but never have before, give it a try. If you want to create a work that blends fictional writing and photography, but don't think you're "good" at either, it doesn't matter. I will not be evaluating your original work based on its technical or artistic proficiency with your chosen medium. Rather, I will be evaluating the vision with which you approach the project, the attempt you make in trying to carry it out, the thoughtfulness you put into the work, and the thoroughness of the research you conduct. For example, if you want to think about how you might write a series of short stories about future sea level rise in Florida, you'll need to do ample research about the social, ecological, political, economic effects of sea level rise in Florida and its connection to climate change.

Part II, Analysis essay

This will be an at least 3-4-page (same formatting we've been using all year) essay in which you analyze your cli-fi (content, style, form), analyze other works of cli-fi, explain the similarities and differences between your work of cli-fi and other works of cli-fi, and explain the research you conducted and how it informed your envisioning of the future. The essay must also include a works cited list of sources you consulted when doing research. So, KEEP TRACK OF WHAT YOU FIND!

I will distribute more guidelines for the essay portion of the project next week.

Part III, collaboration evaluation form

If you choose to collaborate on this project, you will fill out a brief collaboration evaluation form that will ask you to answer a few short questions and reflect on the experience of working with a group.