Some of the best and, in some senses, most reasonable descriptions of extraterrestrials occur in science fiction novels. These can range from the 18 inch long creature in Mission of Gravity to the solar system size creature in The Black Cloud. Your assignment is to read one science fiction novel, which relates to this course. You will then turn in a report about the book (details below). Some suggested novels are given in the following list. However, you are free to choose novels not on the list; just get my approval before you start reading.

Approved novels:
In the Ocean of Night, Gregory Benford
Great Sky River, Gregory Benford
Iceborn, Gregory Benford and C. Carver
Mars, Ben Bova
Mission of Gravity, Hal Clement
Iceworld, Hal Clement
2010, Arthur Clarke
Rendezvouz with Rama, Arthur Clarke
The Songs of the Distant Earth, Arthur Clarke
Neptune Crossing, J. Carver
A Thunder on Neptune, G. Eklund
Dragon’s Egg, Robert Forward
The Listeners, James Gunn
The Black Cloud, Fred Hoyle
The Jupiter Theft, Don Moffitt
Ringworld, Larry Niven
Contact, Carl Sagan
The Ophiuchi Hotline, J. Varley
The Cassiopeia Affair, C. Zerwick and H. Brown
Instructions on substance of report:

- Provide a minimum 1 page story synopsis.
- Provide a minimum 1/2 page description of the principle alien life forms in your story. - **OR-**
- Provide a minimum 1/2 page description of how the story relates to this course.
- Comment on the realism of the alien life forms and their living environment (minimum 1 paragraph). - **OR-**
- Comment on the realism of the scenario presented in the story (minimum 1 paragraph).
- If humans interact with the life forms in your story, how was first contact made? (minimum 1 paragraph) - **OR-**
- If human contact has not been made, but the book discusses some alien life form, speculate on how we might discover life forms like the ones in your book. (minimum 1 paragraph) - **OR-**
- If no specific alien life form is presented in your book, speculate on alternate ways humans might react to the scenario in your book. (minimum 1 paragraph)
- Science fiction authors often use the vehicle of alien beings to teach us lessons about ourselves. What lessons were there in your novel? Were any contemporary themes explored in the book? (minimum 1 page)