Spring 2019

LIT 386-102-HM2: Science Fiction

Nancy Steffen-Fluhr

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hum-syllabi

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hum-syllabi/138

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the NJIT Syllabi at Digital Commons @ NJIT. It has been accepted for inclusion in Humanities Syllabi by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ NJIT. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@njit.edu.
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Nancy Steffen-Fluhr, Associate Professor, Humanities Department (STS Division)
OFFICE: Murray Center (265 CC)  
PHONE: Murray Center: x4885  
EMAIL: steffen@njit.edu
MOODLE: http://moodle.njit.edu

CLASS MEETINGS: Thursdays, 6-9pm  
Kupfrian 207

BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, we will analyze a set of science fiction novels, stories, and films in order to better understand the underlying cultural assumptions that drive the real-life US technological enterprise.

REQUIRED TEXTS:  
Mary Shelley  
FRANKENSTEIN  
Ursula LeGuin  
LATHE OF HEAVEN  
+ Online Course Pack (CP) of short stories

NOTE: The complete (free) E-Text of Shelley’s Frankenstein is available at: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/84/84-h/84-h.htm

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: “Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf. Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu.”

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ GRADING:  
Two analytical essays on assigned topics.  
Essay #1: due March 7  
20 points  
Essay #2: due May 9  
20 points  
Midterm exam: March 14  
20 points  
Final exam: May 16  
30 points
Weekly Quizzes  
5  
[10 quizzes @ 0.5 point each]  
Class participation  
5  
TOTAL  
100 points

READING/ DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

NOTE ON READINGS & FILMS: You should have completed the assigned reading and/or seen the assigned film by the date on which it is scheduled for discussion. That is, **You should have finished the novel Frankenstein by next week, January 31.** With a couple of exceptions, you are expected to rent and screen the assigned films on your own, at home or in your dorm. The films are widely available at Netflix and Amazon/ Amazon Instant Video, among other sources. If you have trouble finding a given film, please see me.

J24  
Unit 1 What is SF?  
In-Class Film: “Frankenstein” (1931)

J31  
Unit 2 The “Mad Scientist Plot”: Creators & Creations Part I  
Reading: Shelley. FRANKENSTEIN  
In-class film: Excerpts from “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” (1994)

F7  
Unit 3 Creators & Creations Part II  
Film to rent: “Blade Runner” [See the complete film prior to class]  
In-class film: “Metropolis” [excerpts]

F14  
Unit 4 Creators & Creations Part III  
Reading: CP #1 DelRey. “Helen O’Loy”  
In-Class Film: “Android” (1982)
F21  Unit 5  Creators & Creations Part IV
Films to rent:  “A.I.--Artificial Intelligence” (Spielberg, 2001) [See the complete film prior to class]
              “Robot and Frank” (2012) [See the complete film prior to class]
Reading: CP #2  Turkle. “In Good Company”

F28  Unit 6  Creators & Creations Part V
Films to rent:  “Her” (2013) [See the complete film prior to class]
              “Ex Machina” (2014) [See the complete film prior to class]

M7    ESSAY #1 DUE
M7    Unit 7  Creators & Creations Part VI
In-Class Films:  “The Original” (Westworld TV Pilot, 2016)
                “Be Right Back” (Black Mirror TV Series 2)

NOTE: Begin reading LATHE OF HEAVEN [due March 28]

M14  MIDTERM EXAM  [1.5 hours]
In-Class film excerpts and discussion: “Blade Runner 2049” (2017)

M21  SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

M28  Unit 8  Daoism & the Sustainable Planet
Reading: LeGuin. LATHE OF HEAVEN

A4    Unit 9  White” Worlds: Dystopia, Part I
Readings:  CP #3 Zamyatin. WE (excerpt)
              CP #4 Forster. “The Machine Stops”
              CP #5 Gibson. “Johnny Mnemonic”
Film to rent:  Lucas. “THX 1138” (1971)

A11  Unit 10  Them and Us: Dystopia, Part II
Film to rent:  “Gattaca” (1997) [See the complete film prior to class]

A18  Unit 11  The Fortress World: Dystopia, Part III
Film to rent:  “Code 46” [See the complete film prior to class]

Reading:  CP # 6 Clarke. “The Sentinel”
Films to rent:  2001 (Discussion of Parts 1-3) [See the complete film prior to class]
                “Arival” (2016). [See the complete film prior to class]

May2  LAST CLASS
Film to rent:  “WALL-E” (2008) [See the complete film prior to class]
Reading:  CP #7 Minsky. “Will Robots Inherit the Earth?” (essay)

Review for final exam

May 9  ESSAY #2 DUE

May16  FINAL EXAM