DC370/470 Syllabus Winter Intercession 2015

Monday thru Thursday 5pm-9pm in 14EAS, Daley 214, 11.30.15-12.10.15

Syllabus is subject to change.

Summary:
Advanced study in cinema focusing on a specific genre each quarter such as: Science Fiction, Film Noir, Comedy, Action-Adventure, Nonfiction, etc. The topic will be Blade Runner: Science Fiction and what it means to be human. Screenings of films leading to Blade Runner and films after Blade Runner will be the central content of this course.

Late Assignments:

Please see me if you are having difficulties submitting assignments.

Texts:

No text. Readings are available on D2L.

Office Hours:

Monday 9:00am to 11:00am via Skype. Skype ID: robertmsteel
Other times are available by appointment.

Class 1, 11.30

Syllabus and D2L

Introduction: What does it mean to be human? Why Blade Runner?

Screening: On the Edge of Blade Runner (:53), Blade Runner (Director's Final Cut) (1:57)

Discussion: Let's talk about that unicorn.

Class 2, 12.1

Introduction: The philosophical implications of humanity in science fiction

Screening: Star Trek: The Changeling (:50), Logan's Run (1:58)

Discussion: The rules of the game and how they define who we are.

Class 3, 12.2

Introduction: Control: the prescience of Logan's Run and THX1138

Screening: Twilight Zone: Eye of the Beholder (:26), Future Shock (:42), THX1138 (1:28)

Discussion: What are the limits of control?

Class 4, 12.3

Introduction: Robots and how they define who we are or who we should be

Screening: How Robots Will Change the World (:40), Westworld (1:28), robot shorts (Singularity-8:41, The Decelerators-4:51, Therefore I Am-6:37, Changing Batteries-5:02, The Naturalist-11:58, Memorize-7:12)

Discussion: How are robots used as narrative devices?

Homework

Viewing (Completed by 12.7): Metropolis. Shorts: Zari, Similo, The Trail's End, Future Hero, Flesh Computer, Wire Cutters.

Reading (Due 12.7): Meditations on Blade Runner, Blade Runner-What it Means to be Human in a Cybernetic State, Characters/BLADERUNNER, What to Think About Machines That Think, Why We Love Androids on TV, Did Google Hire Ray Kurzweil to Produce Skynet?, Dystopian Movie Tropes/Everything You Will Find In Them.

Discussion Board(Due 12.7): Science fiction allows us to view ourselves in a different way. In 25-50 words, how does the human condition evidence itself in non-humans?

Cellphone/Webcam Self-Interview (Due 12.7) (1-2 minutes): What are your initial thoughts on the works screened this week?

Image (video or audio) share(Due 12.7): Choose one image or one piece of music that conveys your impressions of work viewed during Week 1. Defend your choice in 50 words or less (paper or audio recording).

Grad Presentations (due 12.9): Create a 20-minute lecture/screening on an aspect of science fiction cinema that you will present in class on 12.9. Online students will create a 20-minute lecture on video. See me for details.

Class 5, 12.7

Introduction: Fate, Determinism, and Free Will

Screening: Alphaville (1:39) or TBA, Gattaca (1:45)

Discussion: How does technology affect Free Will?

Class 6, 12.8

Cellphone/Webcam Self-Interview and Image Share Screenings.

Introduction: The Singularity and Ray Kurzweil

Screening: Transcendent Man (1:24), Robocop (1:44)

Class 7, 12.9 Grad Presentations

Presentations

Introduction: Cyberpunk

Screening: Dark City (1:58)

<u>**Class 8, 12.10**</u>

Introduction: What does science fiction allow us to do as storytellers?

Screening: Never Let Me Go (1:44) Snowpiercer (2:06)

Homework due December 30

Discussion Board: In 25-50 words, how is identity constructed in the human-machine integration?

Cellphone/Webcam Self-Interview (1-2 minutes): Is the Singularity near? Why?

Image (video or audio) share: Choose one image or one piece of music that conveys your impressions of work viewed during Week 2. Defend your choice in 50 words or less (paper or audio recording).

Creative project: This project is designed to be a creative response to the films, conversations and readings from this class.

Examples include:

Create a short (2-3 minute) robot-centric science fiction film using found footage.
or
Create a collage of 30-40 images meaningful to the films and topics presented in the class (Tumbler, Word Press, or any gallery software of your choice, delivered as a pdf) with a 2-page written defense of your choices.
or
Create a PowerPoint/Keynote presentation (10-12 pages, delivered as a pdf) on your response to "What does it mean to be human"?
or
Write an 8-10 page screenplay with a robot as the protagonist.
or
Any other ideas are welcome. Please check with me for approval.

Undergrad Grading:

Discussion Board (20 points total):
1 25-50-word posting and 3 meaningful responses to other postings, 10 points
1 25-50-word posting and 2 meaningful responses to other postings, 7 points
1 25-50-word posting and 1 meaningful response to other postings, 4 points
1 25-50-word posting, 2 points

Cell Phone/Webcam Self Interview (20 points total):
10 points each

Image Share (20 points total):
10 points each

Creative Project (40 points total):
40 points

A 93-100 Excellent work A- 90-92 B+ 87-89 B 83-86 Above satisfactory work B- 80-82C+ 77-79 C 73-76 Satisfactory/good work C- 70-72D+ 67-69 D 63-66 Unsatisfactory work D- 60-62F 59-61 Substantially unsatisfactory work

Grad Grading:

Discussion Board (20 points total):
1 25-50-word posting and 3 meaningful responses to other postings, 10 points
1 25-50-word posting and 2 meaningful responses to other postings, 7 points
1 25-50-word posting and 1 meaningful response to other postings, 4 points
1 25-50-word posting, 2 points

Cell Phone/Webcam Self Interview (20 points total):
10 points each

Image Share (20 points total):
10 points each

Presentation (20 points):

Creative Project (40 points total):
40 points

A 93-100 Excellent work A- 90-92 B+ 87-89 B 83-86 Above satisfactory work B- 80-82C+ 77-79 C 73-76 Satisfactory/good work C- 70-72D+ 67-69 D 63-66 Unsatisfactory work D- 60-62F 59-61 Substantially unsatisfactory work

Course Policies

Attendance

Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops 1 point after any unexcused absence. Four absences for any reason, whether excused or not, will constitute failure for the course.

Attitude

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse

DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Cell Phones/On Call

If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undisruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment.

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.
To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: csd@depaul.edu.
Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.
Phone number: (312)362-8002
Fax: (312)362-6544
TTY: (773)325.7296