



## **FMS 598: Film and Television Genres: Sci-Fi Cinema**

**Professor:** Lisa Yin Han

**Email:** lyhan@asu.edu

**Office Hours:** Mondays 11:30-2:30 PM in my Zoom room (<https://asu.zoom.us/j/4104799241>) or by Appointment

### **Course Description**

In this course we will put particular emphasis on four themes important to science fiction films: a) how science and technology influence ideas of social identity and even redefine definitions of humanness, b) scientific responses to global pandemic c) the idea that immigration somehow contributes to dystopian worlds and d) aliens who save humanity.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

Students completing this course will be able to:

1. Analyze the main conventions of science fiction cinema as a genre.
2. Analyze how the four themes listed in the description above are represented in science fiction films
3. Compose and communicate an evidence-based written analysis about two science fiction films grounded in theoretical ideas and critical interpretation.

### **Readings**

All the assigned readings will be available without charge either as Pdfs on the Modules page of the course website, or via online links from this syllabus. To honor copyright law, I ask that you do not share nor distribute these documents. Read the assignments carefully and on time, as they will help you get the most from the lectures and form the basis of our online seminar Yellowdig discussions.

### **Screenings**

You are responsible for viewing six films in this course. Information about where the films are available to stream can be found on the Modules page of the course website.

These six films will analyzed in the PowerPoint/Video presentations and discussed in the Yellowdig seminar.

### **GRADED WORK**

**Final grades will be computed based on the following work:**



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### **Participation (30%):**

Yellowdig is a social media platform designed for higher education. Yellowdig integrates with Canvas, allowing students and instructors to interact and easily share articles, websites, and relevant videos that relate to their course content.

## **How to access Yellowdig**

Make sure to only access Yellowdig through the link in Canvas via the "Yellowdig" page in the left-hand menu in this course. If you access it outside of Canvas, your contributions may not integrate with your course gradebook.

## **How does grading work with Yellowdig?**

Yellowdig automatically tallies your points within the Yellowdig board based on your activity. Your instructor may assign point values for posts, comments, reactions, and instructor accolades, and may set a weekly maximum point value. You will have only one Yellowdig grade for the course because it is a running total.

*Note. Because of how grades work between Yellowdig and Canvas, Yellowdig grades cannot be adjusted until the end of the course. In addition, students cannot work ahead.*

## **First Essay (30%):**

Your first essay will be an analysis of how a sci-fi film other than the six assigned on this syllabus represents one of the four primary themes we are studying in this course. This essay must employ two academic sources, be 4-5 pages in length and follow the MLA Style. Your essay will be evaluated in regard to the clarity and relevance of your thesis, clear and concise writing, relevant use of sources, and adherence to the assignment guidelines. It should be double-spaced and have one-inch margins all-around.

## **Peer Editing (10%):**

I will ask you to edit a classmate's first essay and send them comments and suggestions for revision.

## **Final Draft (30%):**

Your second essay will incorporate analysis of a second sci-fi film into your first essay. In this second essay you will also incorporate suggestions for revision and expansion from the instructor, and from your peer editor. This



second essay must employ four academic sources, be 8 to 10 pages and will be evaluated in regard to the clarity and relevance of your thesis, clear and concise writing, relevant use of sources, and adherence to the assignment guidelines. It should be double-spaced, have one-inch margins all-around, and follow the MLA Style.

## **Grading**

Your grade will be determined based on the following grading schema:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A+	100% - 97%
A	<97-94%
A-	<94-90%
B+	<90-87%
B	<87-84%
B-	<84-80%
C+	<80-77%
C	<77-70%
D	<70-60%
E	<60%
E	59-0

## **Academic Dishonesty:**

You are expected to turn in original work for this course. Quotations or ideas paraphrased from other work must be properly cited. Taking credit for another's ideas or writing is plagiarism, which is a serious violation of the [University's Code of Academic Integrity \(Links to an external site.\)](#). In the "Student Academic Integrity Policy" manual, ASU defines "'Plagiarism" [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly

acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.” Academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration, will not be tolerated. There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty

**Unless followed by a link, all readings listed below are available as Pdfs on the Modules page of the course website.**

### **Module 1: Sci-Fi Film as Genre (Oct 17, 2022)**

Reading: J.P. Telotte and Barry Keith Grant, “The World of the Science Fiction Film” pp. 3-32 <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=201789> (Links to an external site.)

Presentation: Sci-Fi Film as Genre

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

### **Module 2: Revisiting the 1950s' American Sci-Fi Film (Oct 24, 2022)**

Reading: Mark Jancovich “Alien Forms: Horror and Science Fiction in the 1950s”

Film: *It Came from Outer Space* (1953)

Presentation: Revisiting the 1950s' American Sci-Fi Film

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

### **Module 3: Sci-Fi Film and Gender (Oct 31, 2022)**

Reading: Judith Newton, “Feminism and Anxiety in *Alien*”

Film: *Alien* (1979)

Presentation: Gender Politics in Space

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

**First Essay due on Sunday Nov 6, 2022 by 5 p.m. MST.**

**Module 4: Global Pandemic** (Nov 7, 2022)

Reading: Aaron Baker, “Global Cinema and *Contagion*”

Film: *Contagion* (2011)

Presentation: Global Pandemic

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

**Complete Peer Editing and return essay to your classmate by Sunday Nov 13, 2022 at 5 p.m. MST.**

**Module 5: Artificial Life** (Nov 14, 2022)

Reading: Brian R. Jacobson, "*Ex Machina* in the Garden"

Film: *Ex Machina* (2014)

Presentation: Artificial Life

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

**Module 6: Race, Identity, Alienation and the Alien Messiah** (Nov 21, 2022)

Reading: Janani Subramanian, “Alienating Identification: Black Identity in *The Brother From Another Planet* and *I am Legend*”

Film: *Brother from Another Planet* (1984)

Presentation: Race, Identity, Alienation and Subverting the Alien Messiah Trope

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

## **Module 7: Sci-Fi and Immigration** (Nov 28, 2022)

Reading: Nicole L. Sparling, “Without a Conceivable Future: Figuring the Mother in Alfonso Cuarón’s *Children of Men*”

Film: *Children of Men* (2006)

Presentation: Dystopian Fear, Immigration and the Alien Other in Sci Fi

Online Seminar in Yellowdig

**Second Essay due by Sunday Dec 4, 2022 at 5 p.m. MST.**

### **Course Access**

Your ASU courses can be accessed by both [my.asu.edu](https://my.asu.edu) and [asu.instructure.com](https://asu.instructure.com); bookmark both in the event that one site is down.

### **Computer Requirements**

This is a fully online course; therefore, it requires a computer with internet access and the following technologies:

- Web browsers ([Chrome](#), [Mozilla Firefox](#), or [Safari](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) (free)
- [Adobe Flash Player](#) (free)
- Webcam, microphone, headset/earbuds, and speaker
- Microsoft Office ([Microsoft 365 is free](#) for all currently-enrolled ASU students)
- Reliable broadband internet connection (DSL or cable) to stream videos.

*Note:* A smartphone, iPad, Chromebook, etc. will not be sufficient for completing your work in ASU Online courses. While you will be able to access course content with mobile devices, you must use a computer for all assignments, quizzes, and virtual labs.



## **Student Success**

To be successful:

- check the course daily
- read announcements
- read and respond to course email messages as needed
- complete assignments by the due dates specified
- communicate regularly with your instructor and peers
- create a study and/or assignment schedule to stay on track
- access [ASU Online Student Resources](#)

## **Submitting Assignments**

All assignments, unless otherwise announced, **MUST** be submitted to the designated area of Canvas. Do not submit an assignment via email.

Assignment due dates follow Arizona Standard time. Click the following link to access the [Time Converter](#) to ensure you account for the difference in Time Zones. Note: Arizona does not observe daylight savings time.

## **Grading Procedure**

Grades reflect your performance on assignments and adherence to deadlines. Grades on assignments will be available within one week of the due date in the Gradebook.

## **Late or Missed Assignments**

Notify the instructor **BEFORE** an assignment is due if an urgent situation arises and you are unable to submit the assignment on time. I do give extensions for most cases but you must ask for one in order to get one. Otherwise, there will be a 2 point penalty for each day that the assignment is late.

Follow the appropriate University policies to request an [accommodation for religious practices](#) or to accommodate a missed assignment [due to University-sanctioned activities](#).

## **Communicating With the Instructor**

### **Community Forum**

This course uses a discussion topic called "Community Forum" for general questions and comments about the course. Prior to posting a question or comment, check the syllabus, announcements, and existing posts to ensure it's not redundant. You are encouraged to respond to the questions of your classmates.

Email questions of a personal nature to your instructor. You can expect a response within 72 hours.

### **Chat**

The Chat tool in Canvas allows students and teachers to interact in real time. Use Chat only for informal course-related conversations unless your instructor informs you otherwise. Chat is not ideal for questions about assignments; instructors are not required to monitor it and conversations may be buried or lost.

### **Email**

ASU email is an [official means of communication](#) among students, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students bear the responsibility of missed messages and should check their ASU-assigned email regularly.

*All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account.*

## **ASU Online Course Policies**

View the [ASU Online Course Policies](#).

## **Accessibility Statements**

View the [Accessibility section](#) to review accessibility statements for common tools and resources used in ASU Online courses.

If any other tools are used in this course, links to the accessibility statements will be listed below this sentence.

### **Syllabus Disclaimer**

The syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Remember to check your ASU email and the course site often.