

Film Studies FILM 305.15 L01
International Science Fiction Since 1965
Winter 2014
Block Week, RFSMT 9:00-17:00

Instructor: Prof. George Melnyk
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Office Hours: RFSMT 8:30-8:50 a.m. and 17:00-17:30 p.m.

Course Description

This course is an examination of the science fiction film genre as it has developed internationally over the past 45 years. Because this genre has been a staple of cinema since the silent era, it has developed a number of conventions, which this course will explore. These conventions are challenged by those of other genres, which are integrated into the storytelling of science fiction film. International science fiction is also framed by distinct cultural grammars that have been developed by national cinemas. Because of the time span of the course the historical evolution of the science fiction genre is evident in terms of technical innovation and cultural interest. The films that will be studied are British, American, Japanese, Australian, Russian, South African, and Canadian.

Additional Information

Pre-session required reading is J.P. Telotte, *Science Fiction Film* (2001) which is available on-line as a U of C library INTERNET book.

Objectives of the Course

To guide students to an understanding of the genre;

To introduce students to the diversity of the genre;

To develop a broad cultural studies approach to the genre using the concept of national cinemas;

To relate science fiction cinema to other cinematic and literary genres.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptop computers and other electronic devices are allowed in the class for making notes only. These devices are not to be used for non-academic and non-course-related purposes during the lectures and labs. If, in the judgment of the instructor, the use of any device is determined to be a distraction to other students, the device will have to be turned off.

Textbooks and Readings:

J.P. Telotte, *Science Fiction Film* (2001) PN1995.9 S26 INTERNET.

A list of required daily readings available on-line will be posted in the Detailed Course Outline available on Blackboard after Dec. 15, 2013.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. Textbook Assessment (Due at 9 a.m. in class on Saturday, January 4, 2014)

This is a 600-800 word report in which you assess the book, *Science Fiction Film*. You will discuss the following **three areas**: 1) What I learned about SF film that I didn't know before; 2) which film discussed in the book was the most interesting for me and why; 3) what did the author get wrong about SF film in general as far as you are concerned. Each area is worth 5% of your final grade for a total of **15%**.

2. Course In-class Test (Monday, January 6, 2014 15:30 – 17:00)

This is a closed-book test that will consist of three questions that will be answered in short essay form. The test questions will refer to the content of the course up to the time of the test, which includes the textbook, the assigned daily readings, the films screened, and the instructor's lectures and class discussion. Each question will be worth 15% of the final grade for a total of **45%**.

3. Take-home Exam (Due Friday, January, 10, 2014 at 16:00 in SS218)

Students will receive a Take-Home Exam at the conclusion of the course on Tuesday, January 7. The exam will consist of four questions, each of which will be answered in short essay form. Each question will be worth 10% of the final grade for a total assignment value of **40%**. The exam is due at the instructor's office (SS218) no later than 16:00 on January 10, 2013.

You do not need to complete all the assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.
Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late except when documentation of a medical emergency or similar event is provided. **ANY ASSIGNMENTS RECEIVED AFTER 9:00 A.M. ON MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014 WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO.**

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100

A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be

able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following

university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The **Detailed Course Outline** listing lecture and film screening times, and due dates for assignments plus requirements for each assignment, and the daily required readings will be available on Blackboard for download after Dec. 15, 2013 and in hard copy on the first day of class.