

**CLC 1060**  
**Back to the future! World Visions of "Things to Come"**  
**Fall/Winter**

**The University of Western Ontario**

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**Course Description:**

How has the “the future” been imagined in ancient texts and in ever more contemporary and global visions of things to come? To begin to answer this question, we first look at the ways in which canonical spiritual and philosophical texts invite us to imagine “time” itself, as well as humanity’s place within the cosmos. For, what are we doing here anyways and for how long? Are we always moving forwards, and not backwards? Are we simply twirling towards freedom or just our end? Are we mere tinkerers, voyagers, exiles, builders of utopia, or destroyers of worlds? Again, to answer such complex questions, we call on various philosophers, writers and scientists from past and present. Likewise, we will do a deep dive into the rich panorama of future-minded world literature, film and culture. I will ask you to consider Icarus, Frankenstein, the cyborg, AI, the Anthropocene and the Trans and Post-human beyond (even, yes, “aliens”). You will be expected to screen films, documentaries and television shows and to read short stories, novels and a play from across the globe: all of this, it is expected, will ultimately allow us to approach the many futures of the past, and to come to terms with our own projections for our foreseeable futures.

**Learning outcomes**

- The student will identify major trends and representative creators who have shaped the imagining of the future at different junctures in our cultural past and present.
- The student will recognize varied theoretical approaches to cultural studies analysis.
- Both in class discussion and in written assignments, the student will examine the filmic, historical, and social contexts as well as the form (or aesthetic structure) of the cultural artifacts studied in class.

**Required Texts (Available at the university bookstore)**

Huxley. *Brave New World*.  
 Lem. *Memoirs Found in a Bathtub*  
 Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*  
 Heinlen. *Starship Troopers*.  
 Wilk. *Oval*  
 Butler. *Dawn*.

**Grading Policy**

Final exam.....	20%
Midterm exam 1.....	7.5%
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Quizzes.....	10%
Final paper.....	23%
Journal.....	10%
Oral Presentation.....	10%
Dramatic interpretation.....	10%
 Total:	 100%

The following scale will be used to determine grades in the course:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A+	90-100%
A	80-89%
B	70-79%
C	60-69%
D	50-59%
F	Below 50% or assigned when course is dropped with academic penalty.

In order to earn an A in this course, students have to comply with the following criteria:

- near perfect attendance & excellent and consistent preparation in class;
- active and thoughtful participation in individual and group activities;
- outstanding ability to move easily from theory to application; that is, to apply the concepts, terms and strategies studied in class;
- high levels of competency during exams, oral presentations, class discussions and written assignments.

If you are unable or unwilling to commit your time and effort at this time, consider taking the course when your schedule is a little lighter, or your job or family responsibilities allow you to spend the required time to succeed in this course.

If you miss class: Communicate with another classmate to keep up. No need to write to me, make sure you come prepared next class. You have 3 absences to use for unexpected events.

Please take names of 2 classmates to contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

### **Assignments**

Students must complete all assignments by the designated date. **No late homework will be accepted.** In case of absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact a classmate or the instructor and obtain the necessary information. In addition, there will be some pop quizzes, an oral presentation and a final paper.

### **Midterm and Final Exam**

There will be 2 in-class midterm exam (15% of the final grade). It will be made up of short comprehension questions and a short-essay question.

The final exam (20% of the final grade) is structured in the same manner but is of wider extension. It will cover the material covered throughout the course.

Please go to the course website for sample questions and the grading rubric for the essay portions of the exams.

### **Final Paper**

In three parts (all formatted according to MLA standards):

1. The proposal consists of a two paragraph document; it must include a description of the chosen topic, the intended focus, and a possible thesis. An exploratory list of scholarly primary and secondary sources should also be included. The proposal will be discussed at a private conference with the professor during office hours or any other adequate time.
2. The first draft (6 pages) should include a strong introduction that lays out a clear plan of action for the final paper. This draft should also then carry out the first half part of the stated plan.
3. The final paper (10-12 pages) is due on the last day of class. Playing off the proposal and first draft, the final paper should reflect a strong focus on works by one or two of the authors studied in class. This should be an original critical essay consisting of the student's own interpretation, but drawing on scholarly secondary sources (a minimum of 3) that are relevant to the argument.

The argument must be clear, coherent, and well supported while engaging closely with the text/s. The thesis or main idea/s must be clearly stated in the paper's introduction. The paper is not a summary.

\*Late paper will be automatically penalized 10 points for each day beyond the due date.\*

### **Oral Presentation**

Each student must choose 1 or 2 texts (depending on length) or a film from one of the class sessions. The student will carry out a detailed analysis of the chosen text/s. The student will then be required to carry out a presentation based on their analysis and thereafter lead a discussion with their own questions and prompts for the class. This presentation should last between 7 and 10 minutes and is worth 10% of the final grade. More info on this component as well as the rubric will be posted on OWL.

### **Journal**

At the beginning of each week (with no possibility of extensions unless justified by medical or compassionate reasons), each student will hand in a personal reflection on the reading/s of the day. The text (150-200 words) should demonstrate the students understanding of the readings. The students may focus on particular aspects they have found to be interesting and/or on the connections to texts from the course and beyond. Do not worry about the grammar or composition. This is a free thought exercise and so feel free to explore your creative side by adding your own illustrations or poetic/philosophical touches! Having collected these reflections, the professor will assign a pass/fail grade, and return them to the students at the beginning of each week. The students are asked to hold on to these entries in order to submit them all together towards the end of the term as part of their individual writing portfolio. Along with these entries, the student is asked to submit an evaluation (2-3 pages, double spaced, MLA formatting) of the themes and topics they have encountered throughout the course, of their own writing and thought processes throughout their term.

### **Final Creative Project**

Based on one of the literary or filmic texts seen in class, the students will form (3-4 person) groups in order to put together a (5-10 min) filmic dramatic interpretation to be presented to the class on the last day of classes. You may make use of as many resources as you see fit (cell phones, camcorders, DSLRs, animation, puppets, photographs, voice over narration, interpretative dance etc.). Each group must also provide a two page (double spaced, times new roman, 12 font size) justification and discussion of the development of the project, the form, the content and relevance of the interpretation to the original text. Students will be motivated to upload their creations to social media such as Youtube.com.

### **Class Participation**

As in any literature/film course, class participation is crucial. The class participation grade will be based on both the quantity and quality of student contribution. Students are expected to **come prepared to class**.

### **Group work ethics and evaluation**

Collaborative learning is one of the most powerful tools we have to provide students with a comfortable environment in which they can explore, discuss and rehearse their ideas. However, the

many advantages cited can be neutralized by certain behaviors. Students will have to abide to the following rules: 1. Always bring your written assignments. 2. Come to class prepared to discuss your readings. 3. Write down the questions or problems you encountered while reading the texts. 4. Do not monopolize the discussion. 5. Offer constructive criticism without being judgmental. 6. If there are problems of any nature in your group, bring them to my attention as soon as possible. 7. Build the group as a "community of learners" by meeting outside of class to talk about assignments or prepare for exams.

### **Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is **mandatory**. Regular class attendance is essential for successful completion of the course. Students are allowed **(3)** absences per semester (screening or seminar session). For any absences beyond this, a student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by 1%.

Every **three (3)** tardies will be counted as **one (1)** absence. In order to receive full credit for daily attendance, students must stay in class for the entire duration of the class period.

### **Due dates for Graded assignments**

Exams: If you missed a midterm or exam you will be able to take a make up only if you have a document excuse of an extraordinary circumstance, otherwise you will receive a 0 for the exam.

Final paper: Due in class. Grade lowered 10 points per day is late. After 3 days max. grade will be C.

**Absences will only be EXCUSED by showing proof of EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION or by presenting a letter from the Dean of Students. There are no exceptions.**

This class requires that the student invest a great deal of time and energy preparing the readings and materials. You are expected to attend all weekly classes.

### **Electronic devices**

Not allowed in class. Computers should be off unless I request you to use them in the context of a special activity. If you have a disability that requires special equipment please communicate with me ASAP.

### **OWL**

OWL will be used to send out group messages, post announcements, and make **class documents** easily available to everybody. Students are responsible for checking their e-mail and Blackboard regularly, and **print out the necessary documents on time**.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to maintain high standards at UWO. Cheating is not tolerated on either exams or homework. Anyone caught cheating, copying from others, or allowing others to copy their work is subject to receiving an "F".

### **Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated**

Plagiarism is the presentation as one's own, the ideas and writing of another. Plagiarism is academically dishonest and subjects the offending student to penalties up to and including expulsion. Students must make appropriate acknowledgements of the original source where material written or compiled by another is used.

Plagiarism and cheating are violations of the Student Discipline Code (see Bulletin of Courses) and may be dealt with by both the instructor and the Judicial Affairs' Officer. Procedures for addressing cheating and plagiarism are found in the Bulletin. Questions about academic dishonesty and the policy should be addressed to the Office of the Vice President, Student Services.

**Students with disabilities**

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this class, please let me know as soon as possible and also contact the Services to Students with Disabilities office.

If you require assistance in the event of an emergency, you are advised to establish a buddy system with a buddy and an alternate buddy in the class. Individuals with disabilities should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate and the instructor.