

**FILM 305 L01**  
**Topic in Genre**  
**International Science Fiction Since 1965**  
**Winter 2011**

Block Week Mon-Fr 9:00-17:00

**Instructor:** Prof. George Melnyk  
**Office**  
**Location:** SS218  
**Office Phone:** 403-220-7562  
**E-Mail:** gmelnik@ucalgary.ca  
**Office Hours:** Mon-Fri 8:30-8:55 and 17:00-17:25

**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. This book is to be read prior to the commencement of the course.

**Course Description**

This course is an examination of the science fiction genre as it has developed internationally over the past 40 years. Because this genre has been a staple of film since the silent era it has developed a number of conventions, which this course will explore in detail, including the relationship of SF film to SF literature and to other film genres. However, the conventions of genre are challenged by the distinct cultural grammars of diverse national cinemas and this course seeks to explore this site of contestation and how a genre is impacted by national cultural norms. The course also has a historical dimension since it will study the evolution of the genre within national cinemas over a 40 year period and how technological change both within film (special effects) and in society in general (digital universe) has changed the content and the form of the genre. The films studied will be British, American, Japanese, Australian, Russian and South African with an emphasis on Canadian Science Fiction films.

This course is an intensive workshop-style experience with the viewing of 13 films over 5 days that will require stamina and pacing to maximize the learning experience.

**Objectives of the Course**

To guide students to an understanding of genre and the theory of genre.

To introduce students to science fiction as a genre in both film and literature.

To develop a cultural studies approach to science fiction film using the concept of national cinemas.

To relate science fiction as a genre to other film and literary genres.

### **Internet and electronic communication device information**

Laptop computers and other similar electronic devices are allowed in the class for making notes only. They are not to be used for non-academic and non-course-related purposes during the lecture and the lab.

### **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 with in the Detailed Course Outline available on Blackboard after Dec. 15.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

#### **1. Textbook Assessment** (Due 9 a.m. in class Tuesday January 4, 2011)

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

#### **2. Course In-class Test** (Thursday January 6, 2011 16:00-17:30)

This is a closed-book test that will consist of three questions that will be answered in 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 screenings, and the class discussion and introductions. Each question will be worth 15% of the final grade for a total of 45% for the assignment.

#### **3. Take-Home Exam** ( Due Tuesday, January 11, 2011 by 16:00 in SS 218)

Students will receive a Take-Home Exam at the conclusion of the course on Friday, January 7, 2011. The exam will consist of four questions each of which will be worth 10% of the final grade for a total assignment value of 40%. Each question will be

answered in short essay form. The exam is due at the instructor's office (SS218) at 16:00 p.m.

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**

Please note: If your class is held in the evening, the Registrar's Office will make every attempt to schedule the final exam during the evening; however, there is NO guarantee that the exam will NOT be scheduled during the day.

### **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. Failure to complete any assignment on time without documentation of a medical emergency or equivalent reason will result in a reduced grade. Any assignments submitted after 4 p.m. on January 11, 2011 will receive a grade of 0.

### **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://www.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: [www.efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca)

### **Grading System**

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

(Revised, effective September 2008)

	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

### **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 (MacEwan Student Centre 4<sup>th</sup> floor, [efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://efwr.ucalgary.ca)) 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 Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) 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.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

### **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/cfreb>

### **Schedule of Lectures and Readings**

The **Detailed Course Outline** listing lecture and film screening times, and due dates for assignments plus requirements for assignments and the daily required readings will be available on Blackboard for download after Dec. 15, 2010 and in hard copy on the first day of class.