SYLLABUS: HIST 404-102 and H06 – spring 2012 - Senior Capstone Seminar in History

A History of the Future

Instructor: Lisa Nocks, PhD
Historian of Science, Technology, and Culture
Senior Lecturer, Federated Department of History

My Office Location: Cullimore Hall 322
Contact: 973.596.5360 lisa.nocks@njit.edu lnocks@gmail.com

Required Texts:

   ISBN-10: 0786719044        ASIN: B001G8WJQS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: We explore people’s conception of the future at different points in history. We consider how plague, geological events, astronomical phenomena, political upheaval, and religious fervor have inspired prophecy, speculative fiction, and movements such as spiritualism, millennialism, futurism, trans-humanism, and space exploration and colonization. Readings and viewings come from a variety of disciplines, including history, philosophy, theology, science fiction, space societies, and the news media. In addition to regular participation in class discussions, students are expected to produce short response papers and a final research project on a relevant subject.

ADVISORY: This is a senior capstone seminar. Students are expected to maintain senior college-level attitude and work habits. Research and writing is expected to be on the senior college level. Participation in class discussions accounts for a significant percentage of the grade. All papers will be submitted on Turnitin. This is an in-person course; we use Moodle to store and supplement course materials. Students are to have fulfilled any prerequisites for this course as stated in the course catalog and schedule of senior seminars.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS: Students should work toward the following goals:

- In response to lectures, readings, and viewings, be able to analyze ideas and questions about the Future in the cultural and intellectual context of the respective time periods in which such ideas were popular.
- Make reasoned and informed comparisons between past and current ideas about the Future.
- Be able to articulate a reasoned analysis of readings and viewings in the student’s own words in both short written responses and class discussions.
- Improve research and writing ability.
- Produce a term research project on some particular sub-topic that includes a thesis, historical background, and reasoned analysis.
- Present the results of the term research project to the class in a formal panel presentation.
- Submit a written version of the term project based on research and on feedback received after the class presentation that includes Chicago style footnote citations and bibliography.
- Regularly participate in class discussions of readings and viewings, and contribute to Moodle forums.
RECOMMENDED READING: A bibliography of recommended texts that will be useful for helping you to chooses and research your project, and to enrich the course material will be available on Moodle. Some of these are available in the NJIT libraries; others are available online or other area libraries.

READING/DISCUSSIONS: Comparative Text Approach: This course is organized differently than you may be used to with lower-level history courses. For example, rather than following a strict chronology from antiquity to the present, we focus each week or two on a different topic. Therefore, in discussing people’s ideas about future technologies, or the end of the world, our readings include literature from different time periods. This comparative text approach will provide you with working examples of ways to organize your individual term projects.

AVAILABLE GRADES: A B+ B C+ C D F (missing assignment: 0)
POINT EQUIVALENTS: 91-100 (A) • 86-90 (B+) • 80-85 (B) • 76-79 (C+) • 70-75 (C) • 60-69 (D) • <60 (F)
GRADE DISTRIBUTION:
Project Topic Assignment 05%
Thesis rough Assignment 05%
Formal Thesis Assignment 10%
Short Response Assignment 10%
Attendance and participation* 20% (10% for attendance, 10% for participation) *
Panel Presentation of project¥ 25% NOTE: All written assignments will be posted to Turnitin.
Final paper¥ 25%
Total** 100% (Honors College Students see note below)**

*About Attendance and Participation: You will neither enjoy nor reap the full benefit of this course without regular attendance and participation, which comprises:
  ➢ Arriving on time and not leaving early
  ➢ Participating in discussions for which you have also done the reading
  ➢ Completing assigned Moodle forums, or taking the initiative to start a forum.
  ➢ Not working on other course assignments or email during class…that’s just rude.
This means you may earn A’s on your class work but receive a B for the course because you failed to contribute anything to class discussions or were absent for others’ presentations. See me immediately about extenuating circumstances.

**Albert Dorman Honors College students must produce two extra products:
  • an annotated bibliography of 10-12 select sources from their research
  • a short paper related to one specific aspect of their research not included in the final paper. (See me.)

¥ final project directions are detailed in the document “final project directions” posted on Moodle.

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UNEXCUSED/LATE ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS: Grade reduced ½ step for each 48 hours after due date.
(e.g.: earned: B=Grade posted: C+) This includes absence when you are scheduled for a class presentation.

ABOUT CLASS DISCUSSIONS: Lively discussions always make a course more interesting.
  ➢ You are encouraged to bring to class relevant articles or news to share with the class or to post on Moodle.
  ➢ One objective of a college education is to learn to think critically and analytically, and to express your thoughts clearly. This takes practice.
NOTE: Provided that you are respectful to your classmates and instructor, you are welcome to contribute to all class discussions. It is not necessary to agree with your teacher or classmates to contribute to discussions; disagreeing does not lower your grade. Failure to participate does affect your grade.
EXCUSED ABSENCES: To receive an excused absence, you must provide appropriate documentation when you return from your absence; otherwise your absence is not excused. 3 unexcused absences results in the loss of a grade (e.g. Final grade earned: A/Posted Grade: B) Leaving the area early for holiday breaks is not excused.

EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTATION:
- A doctor’s note (prescriptions and appointment cards do not count.)
- A copy of an employer’s memo to you noting the day/time of event requiring you to miss class.
- An email to me directly from another instructor or advisor explaining why it is necessary to miss my class and noting the day/time of class to be missed.
- A document that authenticates your required absence to attend a funeral.
- Proof of military deployment.

NJIT HONOR CODE: A significant element in your professional and personal development is honesty and integrity. Following the guidelines of the Academic Honor Code of NJIT is good practice. Turning in a paper that includes plagiarism, or that is written by someone else and represented to be yours, or cheating on an examination will result in an F grade for the assignment and possibly for the semester, as well as your incurring administrative sanctions. You will post final written assignments to Turnitin. Directions will be provided.

HOUSEKEEPING:
- Please turn cell phone ringers off or to vibrate. Turn off any other electronic equipment that makes noise before entering class. If you get an emergency call, please quietly leave the room.
- Please be considerate of others who use the classroom after us, and remove all papers and food/beverage containers you brought in when you leave.
- If I must cancel class meeting: I will let you know ahead of time, OR I will contact the History department secretary and post a message. ALSO: check Moodle and email before class for emergency cancellations. (REQUEST: If you would like, you can volunteer to give me your mobile phone # so you can be the contact person in the event of an emergency cancellation (e.g., due to NJ Transit breakdowns.).
- If I am not present at class time: WAIT a FULL 15 minutes, then take attendance; leave after 20 minutes. Leave attendance sheet in my mailbox in the history department office in Cullimore Hall.
- Please only use your laptop for work related to this course during our class meetings. (I may sometimes ask you to use your laptop in class for relevant exercises.)

Have a productive and fun semester!

* I reserve the right to alter assignments and exam dates to accommodate the progress of the class. Updates/changes will be announced in class and will be posted on Moodle.

COURSE CALENDAR – NEXT PAGE

NOTE: The reading assignments below are general. Specific readings to be posted on Moodle. Readings are fluid and based on this semester’s progress with topic discussions.
# COURSE CALENDAR

**H06 – Honors Section – Mondays - 1:00 – 3:55pm**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture/Discussion Topic</th>
<th>Read/View for this date</th>
<th>Assignment Due?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Jan – 23</td>
<td>Course overview</td>
<td>All book Intro’s/prefaces</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Jan – 30</td>
<td>Divination and Astrology</td>
<td>Strathern ch 1; article TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Feb – 06</td>
<td>The End</td>
<td>Continue Strathern</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Feb – 13</td>
<td>Utopia/Dystopia</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Feb – 20</td>
<td>Political/Economic/Social</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Feb – 27</td>
<td>Techno-futures</td>
<td>Begin Samuel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Mar – 05</td>
<td>Time Travel</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Mar – 12</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>HAVE FUN/REST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Mar – 19</td>
<td>Sci-Fi Futures</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mar – 26</td>
<td>Computing Probabilities</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr – 02</td>
<td>Trans-humanism</td>
<td>Additional readings TBA</td>
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<td>Apr – 09</td>
<td>Presentation panels 1-2</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Apr – 16</td>
<td>Presentation panels 3-4</td>
<td>Final Paper/4-09 Pres*</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr – 23</td>
<td>Presentation panels 5-6</td>
<td>Final Paper/4-16 Pres*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Apr – 30</td>
<td>Presentation panels 7-8**</td>
<td>Final Paper/4-23 Pres*</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>May – 07</td>
<td>Exam week-no class</td>
<td>Final Paper/4-30 Pres*</td>
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**NOTE:** Your final paper is due on Moodle 11:55pm 1 week after your presentation. **No exceptions.**

**Depending on class size, one more panel may be added.**

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<td>Book Introductions/prefaces</td>
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More about History at NJIT:

- The history department at NJIT has eight full-time faculty members, and is part of the Federated History Department at NJIT-Rutgers University, Newark. **Because the department is Federated, NJIT and Rutgers students can take history courses offered at either institution.**
- The NJIT History Department also offers a **minor in history.**
- **On the graduate level,** the Federated Department of History also administers a joint Rutgers/NJIT masters program in history, which offers two joint degrees:
  - the Master of Arts (MA)
  - Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT).
  - **Application is made to the program at Rutgers-Newark.**

Pre-Law at NJIT:

The NJIT History Department also administers a new BA program in Law, Technology and Culture that represents the **new focal point for pre-law education at NJIT.** The new program is specially focused on preparing students at a technological university for careers in law and law-related areas of business and government, as well as providing students with a broadly comparative perspective on the nature of legal thought and practice. Special features of the NJIT program include:

- An interdisciplinary curriculum focused on law in relation to technology, media, environment, health, and culture.
- Opportunities for exceptionally well-qualified students to matriculate in an **accelerated BA/JD program with the Seton Hall School of Law.**
- Hands-on internships in law.
- A patent law option available to students pursuing careers as patent attorneys or patent examiners.

Because this is a highly competitive program, applicants should have records of strong academic performance and SAT composite scores in mathematics and critical reading of at least 1200.

The NJIT history department also administers a new minor in Legal Studies.

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