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Fall 2019

# HSS 403-467: Science Fiction Film

Nancy Steffen-Fluhr

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**HSS 403-467 SCIENCE FICTION FILM Fall, 2019 (Online)**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Nancy Steffen-Fluhr, Associate Professor, Humanities (Science, Technology & Society Division)  
**OFFICE:** Murray Center (265 CC) **ONLINE OFFICE HOURS:** by appointment.  
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**EMAIL:** [steffen@njit.edu](mailto:steffen@njit.edu)  
**MOODLE:** <http://moodle.njit.edu/> Please visit our course Moodle & update your profile before our first class.

**BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course, we will analyze a set of science fiction films, plus related novels and stories, in order to better understand the underlying cultural assumptions that drive the real-life US technological enterprise. In the second half of the course especially, we will take a closer look at how these assumptions are critiqued in the films of several major directors, with special attention to the idiosyncrasies of visual style.

**TAKING AN ONLINE COURSE AT NJIT:** This is an online course; and all course work, lectures, and projects can be completed online in the Learning Management System, Moodle. You are expected to use Moodle to engage with course content and interact with your classmates. Each week's assignment includes at least one film to see, and, occasionally, a story, novel or essay to read as well. You will be required to take a short quiz, post written responses to questions about each film/reading, and to respond to other students' forum posts. You need to complete these tasks each week by Sunday at midnight, at the latest. For more information, see [FAQs for Online Courses at NJIT](#).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

H.G. Wells. *The War of the Worlds* (1898)

**NOTE:** The complete (free) E-Text of *War of the Worlds* is available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/36>

Online Course Pack (CP) of short stories and essays [Available on our course MOODLE]

**REQUIRED FILM VIEWING:** You are expected to screen the assigned films on your own, at home or in your dorm. The films are widely available at Netflix and Amazon/ Amazon Instant Video, among other sources. If you have trouble finding a given film, please contact me.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ GRADING:**

Weekly Online Discussion Forums	30 points total (2.5 each week x 12 weeks)
Quizzes (0.5 each)	
Required Forum post (1.0 each)	
Two Responses to Others' Posts (0.5 each)	
Midterm exam: <b>Week of October 28</b>	20
One analytical essay on an assigned topic	
Due: <b>November 10</b>	20
Final exam: <b>December 14-18</b>	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100 points</b>

**QUIZES AND EXAMS:** All quizzes and exams are closed book, closed notes, no aids. **You are required to use Respondus for the online quizzes and exams. (See below.)**

**Using Respondus LockDown and a Webcam for Online Exams:**

Respondus LockDown Browser is a locked browser for taking exams in Moodle. It prevents you from printing, copying, going to another URL, or accessing other applications during a test. If a Moodle quiz requires that LockDown Browser be used, you will not be able to take the assessment or quiz with a standard web browser.

**You will be required to use the LockDown Browser with a webcam (Respondus Monitor), which will record you during this course's online midterm and final exams.**

The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Watch [this short video](#) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature. A student [Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#) is also available.

a) Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

<http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=264548414>

b) Once your download has finished, locate the "LockDown Browser" shortcut on the desktop and double-click it. (For Mac users, launch "LockDown Browser" from the Applications folder.)

c) You will be brought to the Moodle login page within the LockDown Browser, click "Login with your UCID" to log in with your NJIT UCID and password and then click Login.

d) Under "My courses", click on the course in which you have to take the exam that requires the LockDown Browser.

- e) After you enter the course, find the exam and click on it.
- f) A confirmation prompt will appear, click the “Start attempt” button. Once a quiz has been started with LockDown Browser, you cannot exit until the Submit all and finish button is clicked.
- g) If you are required to use a webcam (Respondus Monitor), you will be prompted to complete a Webcam Check and other Startup Sequence steps.

**NETIQUETTE:** Throughout this course, you are expected to behave courteously to classmates by being a polite, active participant. You should respond to discussion forum assignments in a timely manner so classmates have adequate time to reply. Respect opinions, even those that differ from your own, and avoid using profanity or offensive language.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** “Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>. Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. *Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.* If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)”

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

<b>S3-8</b>	<b>Unit 1</b> Film to see:	<b>What is SF?</b> Stanton. <i>WALL-E</i> (2008)
<b>S9-15</b>	<b>Unit 2</b> Reading: Film to see:	<b>Them! (Aliens and the War within H.G. Wells)</b> Wells. <i>War of the Worlds</i> (1898) Spielberg. <i>War of the Worlds</i> (2005)
<b>S16-22</b>	<b>Unit 3</b> Films to See:	<b>Alien Transformations Part 1</b> <i>Invasion of the Body Snatchers</i> (1956) <i>Body Snatchers</i> (1993)
<b>S30-O6</b>	<b>Unit 4</b> Readings:  Film to see:	<b>Alien Transformations Part 2</b> CP #1 Nussbaum (on Disgust) from <i>Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions</i> (Cambridge UP, 2003). CP #2 “From Santa Mira to South Africa” <i>District 9</i> (2009)
<b>O7-13</b>	<b>Unit 5</b> Readings:  Film to See:	<b>Alien Transformations Part 3</b> CP #3 Van Vogt. “The Enchanted Village” CP #4 Russell. “Don’t # Make My Black Face Blue” Cameron. <i>Avatar</i> (2009)
<b>O14-20</b>	<b>Unit 6</b> Film to see:	<b>Alien Embodiments</b> Scott. <i>Alien</i> (1979) “Alien Evolution” [documentary: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOeBJuqzI-U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOeBJuqzI-U</a> ]
<b>O21-27</b>	<b>Unit 7</b> Films to See:	<b>Alien Conversations</b> Villeneuve. <i>Arrival</i> (2016) Del Toro. <i>The Shape of Water</i> (2017)
<b>O28-N3</b>	<b>Unit 8</b> <b>ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM [1.5 hour]</b> Film to see:	<b>Welcome to Dystopia</b> <i>Max Headroom</i> (1985 British TV pilot): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRy1oE81dS4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRy1oE81dS4</a>
<b>N4-N10</b>	<b>Unit 9</b> Film to See:	<b>Dystopia, Take One: Metro as Metaphor</b> Saleh. <i>Metropia</i> (2009) [Amazon Prime & <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umxZjifMI2U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umxZjifMI2U</a> ]



development of the individual as a whole person. Our goal is to optimize the college experience and improve the quality of the lives of our students by promoting their mental health and facilitating students' personal, academic and professional growth."

#### [Disability Support Services](#)

"The Disability Support Services office works in partnership with administrators, faculty and staff to provide reasonable accommodations and support services for students with disabilities that have provided our office with documentation to receive services."

#### [The Learning Center](#)

"Our mission is to assist students both in the classroom and beyond by providing tutorial services, academic coaching, academic and personal enrichment workshops and staff and peer support so students can meet the demands of their coursework and are prepared for life after graduation."

#### [Moodle Help Page](#)

Tutorials for students.

#### [Robert W. Van Houten Library](#)

"The Van Houten Library offers electronic and print resources essential to the mission of New Jersey's science and technology university, including a core collection of academic books, databases, and journals, as well as research and consultation services."

#### [Student Financial Aid Services](#)

"Student Financial Aid Services (SFAS) at NJIT is committed to providing you with every opportunity to obtain funding to support your undergraduate educational costs at NJIT."