Syllabus

SCIENCE FICTION AND (INTERNATIONAL) POLITICS - 58530

Last update 18-08-2013

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: International Relations

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr Oded Lowenheim

Coordinator Email: oded.lowenheim@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday 10:30-12:00

Teaching Staff:
Dr. Oded Lowenheim
Course/Module description:
The literary genre of science fiction (SF) can be used as a critical futuristic mirror. Since the 19th century, science fiction writers dealing with various aspects of social and political criticism are using fantasy literature, "speculative" and futuristic descriptions. This course introduces students to the field of science fiction by discussing several genres within it, such as utopia - dystopia, alternate history, encounters with alien civilizations, technology and politics, and more. We will explore the political aspects found in science fiction and ask how we can highlight and understand aspects and directions of contemporary "realistic" politics through these stories. To this end we will focus on several works of science fiction, both written and filmed. Well ponder about the power and influence of social and political criticism like this, and see how we can learn about different historical periods from science fiction written during them. The purpose of the course is not necessarily to provide an answer to the big question of "life, the universe, and everything" (this answer, of course, has been given elsewhere...), but to raise more specific questions for discussion, and present different approaches discussed in the context of science fiction literature.

Course/Module aims:
Expansion of political thinking ability and familiarity with the science fiction genre introducing narrative tools. Similarly, thinking about fundamental political issues through allegorical and literary tools.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
Submit a seminar paper that will be an analytical article on an issue which illustrates a link between politics SCI-FI, or write a SCI-FI story / screenplay which will be informed by political thought and terms.

Attendance requirements(%):
80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: discussions in class, watching parts of movies, reading SCI-FI novels.

Course/Module Content:
(1) IR as narrative and political imagination.
(2) What is the relationship between science fiction IR?
(3) Science Science Fiction and Politics: SETI, UFO and the world state.
(4) Friendly aliens? "Childhoods End" and Independence Day
How to write a seminar paper and research proposal in this course
Miserable aliens and the state of emergency: scenes from the movie District 9
The lack of ability to communicate with Extraterrestrial Intelligence? "Solaris" and "Roadside Picnic"
The tragic vision of human political destiny: A Canticle to Leibowitz by Walter Miller
(nano) technology and international politics
War, peace and Nano - Technology: The Forever Peace by Joe Haldeman.
The deep internalization of War: A Taste of Armageddon, Star Trek
Alternate History of the Jews in America: "The Plot Against America" by Philip Roth and "The Yiddish Policemens Union" by Michael Chabon
Alternate History of Israel
"Manuscripts do not burn"? Read "Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury.

Required Reading:


Abigail E. Ruane and Patrick James The international relations of Middle Earth:Learning from The Lord of the Rings (University of Michigan Press, 2012).

Day Independence:

(4) (חייזרים טובים? "קץ הילדות" ו)

(5)

(6) (חייזרים אוטללים ומצב החירום: צפייה בקטעים מהסרט)
- Greg Bourke, “Bare Lifes Bare Essentials: When All Youve Got is Hope,” Law, Culture and the
Humanities (February 2012), pp. 1-24.


Trek Star, Armageddon of Taste A: (ההפנמה העמוקה של המלחמה)

12. החישובים התלופת של מדינת ישראל. דון-בַּהֲקָגָהוֹנִי גַּד אלמרקַה של פלייפר רוח-ו-אין

13. חטיבה 11. הסטודיה לתלופת של מדינת ישראל: יואל גסטיני, תל אביב (כונת, 2013); יואב גبسي, הרצל

14. "כתב די אוכם נשרפים?" קורא את פורניז 451 על ידי ברגניר.

Additional Reading Material:


Raymond Duvall and Jonathan Havercroft, *Taking sovereignty out of this world: space weapons and empire of the future,* Review of International Studies 34

Day Independence- (חייזרים מיטיבים? "קץ הילדות" -)


9 District (חייזרים אומללים וצמצום החירום: צפייה בקטעים מהסרט "The Road")


Missouri Review, Volume 7, Number 2, 1984, pp. 218-237


11. הקוסמוגרפיה העומדת 있게ידים במחזור: דיוו- occasione עם אמריקה של פיליפ רות ו-איגוד


Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 20 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 70 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 10 %
Other 0 %