

POLS 171 – Introduction to Political Futures
September 14th, 2015 — December 15th, 2015

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Objective:

The future is frustratingly ephemeral; a concrete promise that, despite its seeming inevitability, is only viewed through a nebulous and hypothetical perspective, even in cases in which more substantial understanding would help, such as in decision making for state apparatuses. When we think of the future we are thinking through a disconnect that can never truly be bridged. Futures Studies aims not to cross this bridge, but to reconcile the impossibility of crossing said bridge using the tools of foresight and long-term planning; Future Studies wishes to construct the bridge we are to cross, without ever seeing the bridge itself.

Simply put, futurists don't *predict* the future, since such prediction is impossible, but instead they aim to theorize the tools with which to live in a future *designed*. As an introduction to futures studies, this course aims to have you specify, clarify, challenge, and expand your image of the future. You will be tasked with thinking outside of your current time and society, to imagine and design a future based on certain perimeters and in the process critically analyzing the present world you experience.

Political Science 171 is, broadly, separated into three parts. Part one consists of three weeks of basic introductory work to get you acquainted with how the Manoa Futures program looks at futures. Part two takes a more in-depth look at the drivers of social, cultural, and political change, paying special attention to drivers outside of the normative discourse. Part three uses media and film to look at how we make sense of our futures, and how such media affects what we can do and how we do it. Throughout the semester, we will use academic articles, current events, fiction, documentaries, and narrative films to enable a varied and unique perspective on the future and our visions of the future.

Assignments:

Weekly Class Discussions (13 x 20 points):

Every week, you'll be required to participate in the online discussions on Lualima. You will be responsible for one (1) original posting and two (2)

responses to another students' post. The original post should be, at the very least, one paragraph, relevant to the topic, and should raise a question or point for discussion. Responses should attempt to answer questions or clarify a related point.

Original posts (worth 10 points) are due by Wednesday every week. Two follow-up responses (worth 5 points each, 10 points total) are due by Friday every week.

Reading Responses (5 x 20 points):

Over the course of the semester, you will be responsible for five reading responses. You can choose the readings you wish to respond to, however it's easier to plan ahead and space the responses out over the weeks. Responses should not merely be summaries — respond to the argument/stance of the author, present reasons for why you support or do not support said stance, and discuss how the reading/idea can be used in the context of your semester project. Please submit 1.5 pages, double-spaced, in MLA format for full credit (20 points each).

Semester Project:

Project Part One: Past and Present of X (50 points):

You will use the semester to think about the future in terms of a topic you're interested in. This requires, first, that you become familiar with both the genealogy and present situation of the topic (for instance, if I am interested in forecasting the future of paper, I first need to look at the history of paper, then at the current state of paper before I go on to forecast its future). For part one of the project, you will:

- Pick a project topic, to be approved by the instructor at the end of week 2.
- Research topic and compile a working MLA-formatted bibliography to turn in to the instructor by the end of week 5.
- Use research to create a presentation (powerpoint, prezi, other media) on the past and present of your chosen topic, to be uploaded to Laulima and shared with peers as part of the weekly discussion assignment for week 9. The presentation should include:
 - What the topic is.
 - The history of said topic.

- The political, cultural, and social importance of said topic.
- The current manifestations of said topic, with current political, social, and cultural state.
- Political analysis of topic.
- Topic-relevant aesthetics and visuals.
- MLA-formatted sources.

Project Part Two: Futures of X (50 points):

Having learned about the past and present of a particular topic, you will use the latter half of the semester to begin theorizing a possible future, relying on foundational futures studies theories and philosophies to construct a forecasted image of a particular aspect of society. For your final project, you will be responsible for an essay, in which you use the information researched during part one, as well as cognizant political philosophies and thinkers, to theorize for the future of X. The paper should give history, political trends and theories, and explain how and why the futures described are possible. An initial rough draft outline is due at the end of week 12.

Requirements:

- 6 pages minimum, double-spaced.
- MLA-formatted with an updated bibliography.
- Extra points may be rewarded for accompanying artifacts of the future or media presentations.

Grading:

Class Discussions (13 x 20 points)	260 points
Reading Responses (5 x 20 points)	100 points
Project Part One (100 points)	100 points
Project Part Two (150 points)	150 points
TOTAL	510 points

A: 459 – 510 points

B: 408 – 458 points

C: 357 – 407 points

MLA Formatting:

MLA formatting is required for all assignments unless otherwise specified. Failure to appropriately cite sources results in an automatic point

deduction. Numerous citation programs exist that take the work out of citing your work. Some suggestions:

- Zotero – Best!
- citationmachine.net
- bibme.org

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please let me know via e-mail AND contact the KOKUA Program at (808) 956 -7511 or at hawaii.edu/kokua.

Learning Through Lulima:

If you are having trouble accessing or using Lulima, please e-mail me so that we can work out any issues. Tutorials are also available on lulima.hawaii.edu.

Attendance, Participation, and Late Policy:

Online classes require self-directed and responsible students. While we will not meet (unless during office hours), I expect that you participate in all discussions and complete all readings. Announcements will be made on lulima weekly concerning current assignments, due dates, and the semester schedule. I will not accept any assignments after the due date except in case of a medical or familial emergency.

Plagiarism:

If you are caught plagiarizing, you will be reported to the UH Office of Judicial Affairs and will receive a failing grade for this class. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- The submission of any copied document from another individual without proper citation.
- The submission of the same document in more than one course without instructor permission.
- Neglecting to cite direct quotes using quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing without proper citation.

Please review the UH Student Conduct Code for further information:
<http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/>

Communication:

I will attempt to answer all e-mails within 24 hours, however please note that replies may be delayed during the evening and weekends. Use proper etiquette when writing and responding to any email correspondence — while emojis are useful in casual social situations, they are not acceptable forms of academic writing. Emails should begin with a proper subject line that includes your class, your full name, and a word or two describing your issue (i.e: POLS171 Vorsino Office Appointment)

Course Schedule:

WK	DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENTS
1	9/14 - 9/18	Introduction - Dator, "What Future Studies Is and Is Not" - Dator, "Futures Studies at UH Manoa" - Dator, "Unholy Trinity + 1"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
2	9/21 - 9/25	Future Methods - "Seven Driving Forces" - Dator, "Hints for Writing Scenarios" - Dator, "The New Normal" - Inayatullah, "CLA"	- Semester Project Topic (Sun) - Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
3	9/28 - 10/2	Governance Design - Tonn, "Non-spatial Governance" - Katyal, "Architecture as Crime Control"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
4	10/5 - 10/9	Economic Futures - Coecklebergh, "Artificial Intelligence and the Economy" - Deetz, "Democracy in An Age of Corporate Colonization"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
5	10/12 - 10/16	Ecological Futures - van Dooren, "Flight Ways" Ch. 1,2 - "Sustaineo 2030"	- Bib. Assignment (Sun) - Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
6	10/19 - 10/23	Technological Futures - McLuhan, "Media is the Message" Intro, Conclusion - Rivero, "Robots are Starting to Break the Law..."	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
7	10/26 -10/30	Queer Futures - Piercy, "Woman on the Edge of Time"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)

		(First half) - Munoz, "Cruising Utopia Intro", Ch. 1, Conclusion	
8	11/1 – 11/6	Feminist Futures - Piercy, "Woman on the Edge of Time" (Second half) - Haraway, "Cyborg Manifesto"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
9	11/9 – 11/ 13	Indigenous Futures - Kanahele, "Rebuilding Native Nations" - Simpson, "Mohawk Interruptus" (video)	Future of X Part one (Sun) - Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
10	11/16 – 11/20	Non-anthropocentric Futures - Stenner, " <i>Das Rad</i> " - "The Ethics of Terraforming" - "The Extinction Crisis" - "Hawaii, Endangered Species Capital of the World"	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
11	11/23 – 11/27	Visions of the Future: Control - Blomkamp, "Elysium" - Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies" - Thanksgiving Holiday!	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
12	11/30 - 12/4	Visions of the Future: Design - Madsen, "Into Eternity" - Timothy Morton, "Hyperobjects" Intro, Conclusion	- Rough Draft Outline (Sun) - Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
13	12/7 – 12/11	Visions of the Future: Culture - Judge, "Idiocracy" - Berardi, "After the Future" Intro, Conclusion	- Discussion Post (Wed) - Discussion Responses (Fri)
14	12/14 - 12/15	- You did it!	- Future of X Final (12/15) - Reading Response (5) (12/15)

* This syllabus is subject to change throughout the course of the semester — please refer to the Lualima website weekly for the most up-to-date schedule.