

POLS 342: Uncertain Futures in the Anthropocene

Instructor: Zoe Vorsino
Email: zvorsino@hawaii.edu

The future can only be about conjecture, about uncertainties, and about the unknown. And, increasingly, as technological and social problems accelerate in intensity at a far quicker pace than our understanding and attempts at solving them, it seems prurient to, instead, turn our critical eye to the uncertainties they lead towards.

This class hopes to tease out the intricacies of our possible futures, citing traditional theorists, modern thinkers, and popular media in asking the questions: why is it important to view futures as a plural, as an uncertainty? How do current depictions of futures affect our own attitudes towards them? How can governance systems acknowledge the inherently uncertain future when most are dependent on the assumption of concrete certainties?

ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Responses (x 5)

Throughout the semester, turn in **five** (5) weekly reading responses. While it's up to you to choose *which* texts spark your interest, I'll only accept responses during the week they're discussed. As for content:

- **500 words**, double spaced, Times New Roman (or easily read equivalent), MLA formatted with attached works cited.
- Use these reading responses to both further expound on issues discussed in class, and to tease out your own research interests pertaining to the final paper.
- Turn in all reading responses by Sunday, midnight, via email (zvorsino@hawaii.edu).

Forum Discussion Posts (Weekly)

You will be responsible for one (1) original post in the Lualima discussion forum per week. This post should be **250 words** and include analysis/ response to the leading question/theoretical concept I will ask in the weekly announcement.

Forum Discussion Post Responses (Weekly)

In addition to your original discussion post, you are responsible for responding to *at least* 3 other posts in the discussion with insightful comment, critiques, and tips. These responses should be **100 words** or more.

WEEK 5: Final Paper Proposal

Write a 500 - 750 word proposal for your final term paper, including an MLA formatted works cited page with at least ten (10) outside resources. Feel free to meet with me (either during office hours or through email) prior to this if you need help finding research resources. Proposals should include:

- A summary/introduction of the work to be analyzed.
- A literature review of relevant research and theoretical work
- The method through which you choose to analyze.
- Include both in-text citations and a works cited.

WEEK 10: Final Paper

Prepare an MLA formatted research paper of 1500 – 2500 words, or 6 – 10 pages double-spaced, using both texts from the class and outside sources. This is the fleshed-out version of your midterm assignment, so, while you can't copy yourself verbatim (that's plagiarism) you *can*, and indeed are encouraged to, revisit your arguments and analysis. Final term papers should be research or analysis-based. That is, using texts from the course, analyze a current event or piece of media (or mediums) in the context of political futures. Rubrics and specific assignment guidelines will be uploaded to Lualima.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES**MLA Formatting:**

MLA formatting is required for all assignments. While the most recent iteration of MLA does not require URLs, I DO. So please include them in your works cited. Failure to appropriately cite sources results in an automatic point deduction.

STUDENT SERVICES**KOKUA PROGRAM**

KOKUA provides disability access services to individuals on a case by case basis, and students are not charged for these services. A student's disability status is considered confidential information and is only disclosed to faculty with the student's permission. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please let me know via email and contact the KOKUA Program at (808)956 – 7511 or via the Kokua Program website [HERE](#).

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCESS

It is the policy of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH-M), that faculty and students of UH-M be provided consistent and equitable treatment in resolving disputes arising from the academic relationship between faculty and student(s). The applicability of this policy is limited to those issues directly associated and concomitant with the faculty member's responsibilities as a teacher and the students' responsibilities as a learner. See academic grievance procedures [HERE](#).

MĀNOA ASUH

The Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (ASUH) is the undergraduate student government representing all full-time, classified, undergraduate students at the Manoa Campus. Get involved with the senate, secure funding, or find out more [HERE](#).

LAULIMA

This course will be conducted through Laulima. Resources will be available via the class portal unless noted. If you are having trouble accessing or using Laulima, please email me so we can work out any issues. Tutorials are also available on laulima.hawaii.edu.

PLAGIARISM

If any assignment is found to be wholly or partly plagiarized, you will be reported to the UH Office of Judicial Affairs and will receive a failing grade for this class as per UH Mānoa policies concerning [academic integrity](#).

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.

COMMUNICATION

I'll attempt to answer all emails within 24 hours except for weekends (give me 48 hours for those). Please use proper email etiquette when writing and responding to any email correspondence — while emojis are useful, and often vastly more entertaining, they aren't acceptable forms of academic writing. Emails should begin with a proper subject line that includes your class and a word or two describing your reason for writing (i.e.: POLS 342 Review Question or POLS 342 Help).

READINGS:

- Jim Dator - Futures Series (What is Futures; Futures Studies; Unholy Trinity + 1; Structure Matters; Future of Sovereignty)
- Stafford Beer – Designing Freedom
- Peter Frase – Four Futures: Life After Capitalism
- Politics & Pleasures in Posthuman Times – Stacy Alaimo
- Making Kin in the Ctchuluscene – Donna Haraway