

COURSE CONTENT

Course Code / Title	: HS4030 Social Science Fiction
Pre-requisites	: HS1001 Person and Society HS2001 Classical Social Theory HS2002 Doing Social Research HS3001 Contemporary Social Theory HS3002 Understanding Social Statistics
No. of AUs.	: 4
Contact Hours	: 52

Course Aims

Sociologists of everyday life study how people create, share, and use aspects of popular culture. Sociologists are often interested in the significance of popular culture in terms of themes such as gender, sexuality, inequality, social problems, social relations, environmentalism, self and identity, economy, social control, and so on. However, sociology is dominated by the study of historical and contemporary lived reality, often in search of 'truth.' Science fiction as a genre often deals with the same themes, but through fictional and imaginative content, including futuristic or alternative visions of science and technology. Science fiction is simultaneously critical and innovative in its focus on lived reality. Its imaginative elements are often plausible within current scientific paradigms, and many genre writers explore the potential consequences of social, scientific, and technological changes in society. This course will deal critically with the intersection between social science theory and science fiction literature, thereby offering an alternative approach to the study of everyday life.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and discuss of the connections between science-fiction texts and current social and scientific theories and practices.
2. Analyze and interpret SF texts.
3. Apply the sociological imagination to describe potential consequences of current social practices.

Course Content

Week 1 Introduction to "social science fiction"

Week 2	Theories and definitions of science fiction
Week 3	The SF construction of reality
Week 4	Categorizing and identifying us and/vs them
Week 5	Gendered categories and identities; Queering categories and identities
Week 6	Enhancements/Cyborgs/Transhumans
Week 7	Utopian and dystopian characterizations of the now and near-future
Week 8	The dystopian turn: Artificial intelligence
Week 9	The dystopian turn: Consumption, information, big data, surveillance
Week 10	Human impact and its potential consequences on the natural environment
Week 11	Applying the sociological imagination
Week 12	Science fiction, imagination, future
Week 13	Multimedia portfolio presentations

Course Assessment

Reading responses (x5)	: 25%
Analytic posts (x2)	: 20%
Analytic responses (x2)	: 10%
Film analysis	: 35%
Seminar participation	: 10%
Total	----- 100%