

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 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 patterns and causes. Science fiction stories often deal with these same themes, but through speculative or imaginative rather than factual content, including futuristic or alternative visions of reality, social relations, science, and technology. Science fiction stories are simultaneously critical and innovative in their focus on the possibilities of social relations, cultural processes, and lived experiences. Their imaginative elements are often plausible within current scientific paradigms, and many science fiction creators explore the potential consequences of social, cultural, scientific, and/or technological changes in society. This course will deal critically with the intersection between social science theory and the science fiction genre, thereby offering an alternative approach to the study of culture and society.

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.
4. Use generative-AI to produce a sociologically informed science fiction short story.

Course Content

Week / Session	Topics or Themes
Week 1	Introduction to social science fiction
Week 2	Theories and definitions of science fiction
Week 3	Science, art, and writing about the social world
Week 4	The SF construction of reality
Week 5	Identification: us and/vs them
Week 6	Gendered worlds
Week 7	Queering reality
Week 8	Eutopia and Dystopia
Week 9	Human-technology relations; Social and natural environments
Week 10	Information, big data, surveillance
Week 11	From enhancements to transhumans and AI
Week 12	Sociological imagination + creative SF writing
Week 13	One-on-one feedback sessions

Course Assessment

CA1 (Test/Quiz)	: 10%
CA2 (Analytic Essays)	: 60%
CA3 (Short story assignment)	: 20%
CA4 (Class participation)	: 10%

Total -----
100%