

Class Expectations and Policies

Sci-Fi Literature

Robert Greene

Course Description: Students study the works of contemporary science-fiction writers. They examine themes such as warfare (human combat and biological), utopias and the apocalypse. Students explore these concepts by reading the literature, watching film adaptations and participating in class discussions. Students develop their own points of view through extensive expository and creative-writing assignments.

The Basics

We're going to explore the sci-fi genre through various sub-genres, specifically cyberpunk, time travel, military sci-fi, alien encounters and dystopias. To do this, we'll be perusing novels, short stories and films, among other things. We'll discuss the impact of sci-fi on popular culture and its use as a tool to predict the human experience in the years and centuries ahead.

There is a lot of reading and writing in this course; be prepared. You are expected to work hard and contribute to the class to the best of your abilities. I expect you to conduct yourself as intelligent, responsible, courteous and interesting human beings.

Quizzes: There will be a quiz nearly every Friday, covering the topics, literature and concepts discussed during the week.

Projects: You will be responsible for various writing assignments throughout the semester, as well as one independent-reading project during the semester. Various other projects and presentations also will be assigned.

What You Will Need: At the bare minimum you will need a notebook and pen/pencil for every class. It would behoove you to have a folder or binder in which to collect class handouts. Also useful would be a Flash drive and/or a free e-mail account (such as Hotmail, Yahoo or G-Mail).

Classroom Policies

Attendance: If you are absent from class, for any reason, it is your responsibility to seek out and complete any missed assignments, lecture notes, tests, quizzes, etc. Make-up sessions are held in room C2024, after school every Tuesday or by appointment. There will be no make-up time during school hours.

The date your make-up work will be due depends on when you were late and why. Students who are absent without excuse (skipping) may not make up missed work. Generally, you will have about a week to make up work.

Tardiness: If you are not in class by the time the final bell rings, you are late and will be marked as such. If an administrator or another teacher makes you late, get them to write you a pass. If you are late because you splashed water on yourself in the bathroom, fell down an elevator shaft or got your arm caught in a locker, tell me and we'll talk. Two unexcused late arrivals in a quarter will result in an after-school detention. Each subsequent late arrival also will result in a detention.

Assignments: Assignments are expected in class on the day they are due, neat, complete and ready to hand in. Late assignments will lose 10 points for every day they are late, and that *includes* weekends. After 10 days, late assignments are considered dead and will count as a zero in the grade book. (In the event of an unexpected absence or calamity, you can e-mail me your assignment in order to get it in on time.) My e-mail address for student questions and work is teachergreene@gmail.com.

Homework due the day after it is assigned does not have to be typed. I understand students may have difficulty accessing computers with little notice, so neatly completed, hand-written assignments are acceptable. If I can't read it, I can't—and won't—grade it. Typed work is at all times preferable.

Long-term assignments, for which the deadline spans more than an overnight, **MUST** be typed. Problems with computers, disks, Internet connections, printers, copiers, monitors, flying monkeys, etc. are not acceptable

excuses for missing or late work. Students must plan accordingly and get their work in for the deadline. If there is a real problem, like a family emergency, get me in the loop as fast as you can and we'll talk. The acceptable format for a typed assignment is Times New Roman font, at size 12, double-spaced.

Participation: Students are required to participate, to the best of their ability, in each and every class. Participation, which includes attendance, on-time assignments, etc., will make up roughly 30 percent of your grade. This is a foundation-level class, not an easy class, so every day counts.

Respect: I will not tolerate a demonstrated lack of respect directed toward me or any student. We are here to learn from each other and, for that, we need a safe space in which to work. Comments and ideas are not to be described as "gay," "stupid," "retarded" or with any other negative adjective. Don't call each other names or make negative comments about each other. Disrespectful comments or behavior toward anyone in the class will result in a detention, or worse.

Plagiarism: According to Webster's, plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." Do your own work. Students caught plagiarizing will receive an automatic zero on the assignment in question, and parents, coaches and administration will be notified.

Detention: Any detentions given in class will be served with me after school, at my convenience. Students, and their parents, will be given a choice of dates in order to make transportation arrangements easier. Failure to show up at an assigned detention will result in a referral to school administration.

Grading: Quizzes are entered into my rank book twice. Most writing assignments will count twice, unless the length and work required merits more or less. Most projects will count three times. Class participation will count as 30 percent of your classroom grade, homework will count as 40, quizzes as 30. Exams will be factored in as 25 percent of the whole.

Cell Phones: Congratulations, you have a cell phone. Keep it silent and in your pocket or purse; it is not to be used in class. There is a school-wide policy in place that governs cell phones and I ascribe to it. The same goes for iPods and iPod clones; there may be certain times they will be allowed, otherwise keep them in your bag, purse or pocket.

Restroom Pass: The restroom pass should be used sparingly. If you need it, get up quietly, grab the pass, sign out on the restroom log and hit the head. Put the pass back in its place, do whatever the pass policy instructs, and return to your seat. Only one student is allowed out of the room at a time.

Food: Food is not allowed in the classroom. Water bottles are acceptable but keep them on the floor, away from the electronics.

Computers: Computers in this room may not be used for anything other than legitimate classwork. Inappropriate use can result in a detention. Computers will be taken care of and loved as if they were your own. Use of the computer lab for this class is a hard-fought privilege, which can be revoked. That means no MySpace, Facebook, Line Rider, Flash games, that DOS-based IM thing, etc. This policy is the result of The Children's Internet Protection Act, a federal law enacted by Congress in December 2000. This law requires schools and public libraries to monitor your Internet use and keep you away from sketchy sites.

Books: Treat any books you are issued in class with care, and return them promptly at the end of the unit.

General neatness: Be a good camper. Pack out or pick up your trash. Leave the room as least as pretty and clean as you found it.

Web site: I maintain a Web site at SoylentGreene.us where I post many class handouts, notes and assignments.

The following books, stories and films may be used in this class.

- “Z for Zachariah”
- “Caught in the Organ Draft”
- “Logan’s Run” (film)
- “Terrafied”
- “Soylent Green” (film)
- “Firefly” (TV pilot)
- “Silent Running” (film)
- “Neuromancer”
- “Johnny Mnemonic”
- “Cyberpunk”
- “Burning Chrome”
- “Blade Runner” (film)
- “Hackers” (film)
- “War Games” (film)
- “The Winter Market”
- “Hacker Manifesto”
- “Primer” (film)
- “Singularity”
- “A Sound of Thunder” (film and story)
- “The Time Machine” (film and story)
- “Space: Above and Beyond” (TV pilot)
- “Ender’s Game”
- “Battlestar Galactica” (TV pilot)
- “Starship Troopers”
- “Mars is Heaven”
- “2001: A Space Odyssey” (film and novel)
- “Image of the Gods”
- “The Day the Earth Stood Still” (film)
- “The Goblin Reservation”

I have read and understand Mr. Greene’s classroom policies and expectations.

Student: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____