Dr. Benjamin Goldberg   big@usf.edu
TTh 9:30 – 10:45   Office Hours: via Zoom
SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE LECTURES   (email for appointments!)

AMS 6254 / HUM 4261/6939: UTOPIA AND SCIENCE FICTION

This is a course that explores the idea of *utopia*—a perfect place and society—through works of science fiction. In this course we will address not only the meaning of utopia, but explore how it has been conceived, attempted, thought about, and represented in literature and film. We will find that in order to talk about utopias, we must also discuss and understand the idea of *dystopia:* the opposite of a utopia, a place and society that is full of suffering. Finally, we will be concerned not only with fictional representations, but about the ideas of utopia in real life.

Course Objectives

Students completing this course should be able to:
1. Think critically about the meaning and history of utopias
2. Understand the various ways in which utopias have been represented and explored in film and literature.
3. Critically analyze, interpret, and discuss various kinds of texts.
4. Write clearly and persuasively through both contextualization and close reading/interpretation of texts.

Required Readings

> The Dispossessed – Ursula K. Le Guin
> The Player of Games – Iain M. Banks

> All other readings will be available in PDF on Canvas.

Films

Each student will be able to screen these films/

> BRAZIL – dir. Terry Gilliam
> Info will be sent out on the date!
> Black Panther – dir. Ryan Coogler
> @ https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/usf272137/watch/6c46a9b4b0230805?referrer=direct

Online Learning

There are a few important components to making this online class a success:

1. ***Make sure to attend the synchronous lectures***. Each module has one or mores lecture where we will meet as a class--these will help us build our learning community, as well as allow a more traditional lecture format with the ability to ask questions and get feedback in real time. You will receive an invite to a conference from BigBlue Button via Canvas. You just click the link and will be prompted to log into the conference--make sure to DISABLE your audio--we will communicate via chat (otherwise it gets too crazy!). *ALTERNATE SYSTEMS MAY BE USED IF THERE ARE TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS--PLEASE MONITOR YOUR EMAIL AT ALL TIMES!* **The schedule of online attendance is as follows:**
    - ***January 11 - Intro on Utopia***

- *January 18 – What is Utopia?*
- *January 25 – What is Utopia?*
- *February 1 – The Dispossessed*
- *February 8 – The Dispossessed*
- *February 15 – 1984, Utopian Film*
- *February 22 – Brazil & Dystopia*
- *March 1 – The Player of Games*
- *March 8 – The Player of Games*
- *SPRING BREAK: MAR 14-20*
- *March 22 - The Player of Games*
- *March 28 – Utopia and Film*
- *April 4 – No class*
- *April 12 – Black Panther and Utopia*
- *April 19 – Guest Lecture TBA*

2. ***Make sure to follow along each module***. Each module contains two basic sorts of assignments.
   a. First, there are videos, readings, and audio recordings relating to the theme of each unit. Each student must read, listen, and watch these. If you have any issues accessing this material, please don't hesitate to get in touch!
   b. Second, there are discussion assignments--these require each student to come up with discussion questions relating to the theme of the module, as well as reply to other student's questions. I have posted an initial question for each discussion topic to get us started--feel free to reply to this question or to your own!

3. ***Make sure to stay in touch!*** If you are confused, or have ANY questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch! Please email me at big@usf.edu or contact me via Canvas email. I will reply ASAP! There are also many resources if you need help with technology, disability issues, or any other academic issue. Here are some helpful links:
   a. Disability Services: http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-disabilities-services/
   b. CANVAS help:
      i. Quickstart Guide: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2036
      ii. Student Video Guide: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-3891
      iii. Student Guide: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-4121
   c. Technical Problems: For technical questions and support, contact the IT Help Desk at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.
      i. To resolve your issue quicker, please include the following information:
      ii. Course ID if the problem occurred within a course.
      iii. What you were trying to do when the problem occurred.
      iv. The exact wording of any error you received.
   d. Academic Support Services: http://www.usf.edu/student-success/undergrads/
   e. The Library has many helpful resources as well: http://www.lib.usf.edu/
   f. LinkedIn Learning has a suite of learning tutorials for a variety of software applications and topics.
      i. To access, login to MyUSF and go to the Learning and Teaching Tools menu.
      ii. Select Online Training (LinkedIn Learning).

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of the University of South Florida's commitment to the academic honesty and personal integrity of its university community. Academic integrity is grounded in certain fundamental values, which include honesty, respect, and fairness. Broadly defined, academic honesty is the completion of all academic endeavors and claims of scholarly knowledge as representative of one's

own efforts. The process for faculty reporting of academic misconduct, as well as the student's options for appeal, are outlined in detail in **USF Regulation 3.027**.

Academic Grievance Procedure

The purpose of these procedures is to provide all undergraduate and graduate students taking courses at the University of South Florida an opportunity for objective review of facts and events pertinent to the cause of the academic grievance. An "academic grievance" is a claim that a specific academic decision or action that affects that student's academic record or status has violated published policies and procedures, or has been applied to the grievant in a manner different from that used for other students.

Disability Access

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Students Accessibility Services (SAS) (SVC 1133) in order to receive academic accommodations. SAS encourages students to notify instructors of accommodation needs at least five (5) business days prior to needing the accommodation. A letter from SAS must accompany this request.

Disruption to Academic Progress

Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. Disruption of the academic process (**USF Regulation 3.025**) is defined as the act, words, or general conduct of a student in a classroom or other academic environment which in the reasonable estimation of the instructor: (a) directs attention away from the academic matters at hand, such as noisy distractions, persistent, disrespectful or abusive interruption of lecture, exam, academic discussion, or general University operations, or (b) presents a danger to the health, safety, or well-being of self or other persons.

Food and Housing Insecurity

We recognize that student facing financial difficulty in securing a stable place to live and/or in affording sufficient groceries may be at risk of these financial issues affecting their performance in classes. Students with these needs are urged to contact Feed-A-Bull (**feedabull@usf.edu** or **their website**), or Student Outreach and Support (**socat@usf.edu** or **their website**).

Religious Observances

All students have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices and beliefs (**USF Policy 10-045**). The University of South Florida, through its faculty, will make every attempt to schedule required classes and examinations in view of customarily observed religious holidays of those religious groups or communities comprising USF's constituency. Students are expected to attend classes and take examinations as determined by the university. No student shall be compelled to attend class or sit for an examination at a day or time prohibited by his or her religious belief. However, students should review the course requirements and meeting days and times to avoid foreseeable conflicts, as excessive absences in a given term may prevent a student from completing the academic requirements of a specific course. Students are expected to notify their instructors at the beginning of each academic term if they intend to be absent for a class or announced examination, in accordance with this Policy.

Sexual Misconduct / Sexual Harassment

USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence (**USF Policy 0-004**). The USF Center for Victim Advocacy is a confidential resource where you can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help you without having to report your situation to either the **Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities** (OSSR) or the **Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity** (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report. Please be aware that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF Policy, educators must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and

domestic/relationship violence. If you disclose any of these situations in class, in papers, or personally to an educator, he or she is required to report it to OSSR or DIEO for investigation. Contact the USF **Center for Victim Advocacy**: 813-974-5757.

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor the Learning Management System for each class for course-specific communication, and the main USF, College, and Department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information (**USF Policy 6-010**). For additional guidance on emergency protective actions and hazards that affect the University, please visit **www.usf.edu/em**

Grades

100-95% A	<94-90% A-	<90-87% B+	<87-84% B	<84-80% B-
<80-77% C+	<77-74% C	<74-70% C-	<70-67% D+	<67-64% D
<64-60% D-	< 60% F			

In this course, turnitin.com will be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment.

For a more detailed look at this process visit http://www.turnitin.com.

First Day Attendance (10%)

Everyone must introduce themselves in the online discussion (*First Day Attendance and Learner Introductions).* YOU MUST DO THIS BEFORE THE START OF THE SECOND WEEK!

2 Close Reading/Interpretation Papers (50%)

Length: No more than 5 pages (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt)

Everyone must write two close readings of one (or a few) scenes from one of the books (either *The Dispossessed* or *The Player of Games*) and from one of the movies (either *Brazil or Black Panther*).

What is a close reading? A close reading is a careful, detailed analysis of some part of a text—be it a scene from a movie, or a few passages from a novel. The reading analyzes the text not just in terms of what it says explicitly (eg, the words on the page and adjectives used, the colors and sets of a film, bits of dialogue or interaction, etc), but in terms of what it implies, what it might say about the meaning of the novel or film, or of life, what it assumes about the world, and so on.

A close reading makes sure to interpret not just what is explicit—the content of dialogue, the actions of the characters—but also what is implicit—the description or representation of clothing, scenery, sound, or the choices of specific words and phrases. Close readings often interpret scenes symbolically, in terms of the analogies and metaphors used, the references to other literature or films made, and in terms of how we might read 'in between the lines.'

Due Dates (to be turned in through Canvas):

1. **First Close Reading: 2.17.22 before 12am**
2. **Second Close Reading: 4.19.22 before 12am**

Final Essay (40%)

Length: No more than 14 Pages (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt)

Everyone must turn in at the end term a research paper on the topic of the course (utopia and science fiction). You must examine a film, television episode, book, or comic, either discussed in class or outside of it, and analyze its conceptualization and representation of utopia and utopian ideas. Your paper should offer a clear, specific interpretation of the film and its use of utopia.

YOU MUST GET YOUR CHOICE APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR BY THE END OF THE SPRING BREAK, ON OR BEFORE APRIL 20

Your essay must include at least two close readings of different passages or scenes from your chosen text, and you must use these scenes to support your overall interpretation and argument. Your paper may take up any (or none) of the issues, ideas, and themes discussed in the course. Your essay must contain at least three outside, secondary sources.

Due (to be turned in through Canvas): MAY 2 by 12 pm

COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings are found online or via Canvas in PDF format. If you have trouble, email me!
(big@usf.edu)

January 11 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)
BRITISH LIBRARY ON MORE'S UTOPIA
http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/utopia/more1/moreutopia.html

READ:
- Thomas More's Utopia - the island of Utopia
- Thomas More's Utopia - the Utopian alphabet
- Thomas More's Utopia - pomp, circumstance and wealth
- Thomas More's Utopia - the prince of Utopia
- Thomas More's Utopia - engagement and marriage
- Thomas More's Utopia - communal living
- Thomas More's Utopia - celebration of life and death
- Thomas More's Utopia - laws
- Thomas More's Utopia - town and country living
- Thomas More's Utopia - moral philosophy and religion
- Thomas More's Utopia – education

January 13 – What is Utopia? - Readings
Zarka – The Meaning of Utopia
Levitas – Bloch on Abstract and Concrete Utopia
Kellner – Bloch Utopia Critique
Kellner Ohara – Utopia and Marxism in Bloch

January 17 – NO CLASS MLK DAY

January 25 – What is Utopia? 2 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

January 27 – What is Utopia? 3 - Readings
Claes/ Sargent – 20th C from Utopia Reader:
  H. G. Wells, A Modern Utopia 312-319
  Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Herland 319-329
  B. F. Skinner, Walden Two 372-390
  "Walden Two Revisited" 390-398
"'Nonesuch,' excerpted from *Utopia Drive: A Road Trip Through America's Most Radical Idea*." (Erik Reece, Macmillan, August 2016)
  http://us.macmillan.com/excerpt?isbn=9780374710750'
  http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/08/utopia-erik-reece/494741/

February 1 – What is Utopia? 4 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

February 3 – The Dispossessed 1- Readings
Read Chs. 1-13 of The Dispossessed

February 8 – The Dispossessed 2 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

February 10 – The Dispossessed 3
        Curtis – Skepticism and Utopia
        Bierman – Ambiguity in Utopia
        Davis – Dynamic and Revolutionary Utopia
        Sabia – Individual and Community
        Le Guin - Response

February 15 – The Dispossessed 4 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

February 17 – 1984, Utopian Film - Readings
        Claes/ Sargent – 20th C from Utopia Reader:
                George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four 398-407
        1984 Film, Two minutes of hate: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvGmOZ5T6_Y

        CLOSE READING PAPER 1 DUE!

February 22 – 1984, Utopian Film - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

February 24 – Brazil Screening at your home! And Readings
        A LINK WILL BE SENT!
        Moylan - Dystopia
        Erikson – Brazil 1984

March 1 – Brazil & Dystopia - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

March 3 – The Player of Games 1 - Readings
        Iain M Banks, A FEW NOTES ON THE CULTURE
                http://www.vavatch.co.uk/books/banks/cultnote.htm
        Read Chs. 1-2 of The Player of Games
        Kulbicki – Banks Culture Utopia

March 8 – The Player of Games 2- Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

March 10 - The Player of Games 3 - Readings
        Read Chs. 2-4 of The Player of Games
        Jacobs – Ambiguous Utopia of Banks
        Labuschagne – Deconstructing Utopia in Player of Games

        *** SPRING BREAK: MAR 14-20 ***

March 22– The Player of Games 4- Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

March 24 – The Player of Games 5 - Readings
        Rumpala – AI and Politics
        Lippens- Scientific Peace in Player of Games
        Brown – Intervention in Liberal Utopia in Banks

March 29 - The Player of Games 5 - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

March 31 – Utopia and Film - Readings
  Tietgen - Political Utopias in Film
  Fitting – Taxonomy
  Atkinson - Visualization of Utopia

April 4 – Utopia and Film - Readings
  Moylan – Utopia
  Utopia (Encyclopedia Entry)
    https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Utopia

April 12 -- Black Panther and Utopia - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

April 14 – Black Panther and Utopia - Readings
  Robinson Neumann - Global Perspectives
  Singer - Double Consc in BP
  Catsam - Response to BP
  Agostino - representation identification definition in BP

April 19 – Black Panther and Utopia Guest Lecture TBA - Online Attendance Required (link sent via Canvas)

   CLOSE READING PAPER 2 DUE!

****FINAL ESSAY DUE: MAY 2 2020 BY MIDNIGHT****