

LIBST 1203: Cultural Perspective in Science

3 credits, 3 hours lecture per week

Course description: This course introduces students to the study of science as a cultural activity with the goal of developing their critical thinking and writing skills. Students will learn to be conversant with some of the issues and debates concerning how science, technology, and medicine have shaped and continue to shape beliefs, values, and identities in our world.

Instructor

Dr. Ryan J. Cox

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Office Hours

Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Wednesdays 11:00 - 12:00 am

Thursdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Hours of Instruction

Mon/Tues 2:00 – 3:30 pm Rm S110

Required Resources

[Meditations on First Philosophy](#) Descartes ISBN 978-0192806963

[How we Became Posthuman](#) Hayles, N. Katherine ISBN 978-0226321462

[Vision vol1](#) King and Walta ISBN 978-0785196570

[Vision vol 2](#) King and Walta ISBN 978-0785196587

[The Age of Spiritual Machines](#) Kurzweil, Ray ISBN 978-0140282023

Further readings, notes and other resources will be supplied through the course Moodle site as required (<http://ilearn.keyano.ca>).

University Wide Learning Outcomes

Through all learning experiences, and continuing at successively higher levels across their university studies, Mount Royal University aims to provide students with the following:

- **Intellectual and practical skills** practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance
- **Integrative and applied learning** demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems
- **Knowledge of human cultures and the physical, natural and technological world** focused by engagement with relevant questions
- **Personal and social responsibility** anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Situate science within a number of cultural traditions.
- Describe how culture shapes both scientific thought and identity.
- Discuss the similarities or differences in representations of scientific issues across a number of different cultures and time periods.
- Demonstrate an ability to critically engage significant cultural objects and critique them.

Evaluation

Participation	10%	Ongoing
Response Essays	20%	Ongoing
Documentary Assignment	10%	February 7, 2018
Critical Review	20%	Mar 26, 2018
Research Presentation	10%	Final Week of Class
Term Paper	30%	April 13, 2018

A grade of C- is required for progression or transfer.

Response Essay

Students are required to complete a series of 4 short essays of 2-3 pages each in which they explore that week's reading in greater detail. Response papers are to be written about the readings in advance of classroom discussion. These essays should advance an argument about the reading. These four essays are to be written at your discretion throughout the semester, however, only one paper can be submitted at a time and at least one response essay must be submitted by the week of Feb. 12. Marked out of 5; handed in at the beginning of the first class of the week. Participation in the Keyano College University Studies Conference may be deemed equivalent to one Response Essay.

Research Essay

For this assignment, you will be expected to write a detailed, well researched, thesis driven essay on one of the topics that will be provided on Moodle. This essay should demonstrate your mastery of the text(s)/topic, your ability to effectively integrate your research into your writing, a familiarity with the

current critical discourses surrounding your topic, and your ability to write at the university level. This assignment will conform to MLA guidelines for research papers.. Length: 6-8 pgs.

Critical Review

Each student will be responsible for a video or digital presentation wherein you will address one of the texts from the list provided on moodle. The texts represent a mixture of critical and creative work, and some texts are bundled together due to length or complexity. The student will be expected to summarize the major points of the texts—argument, plot, etc—and subsequently offer a critical evaluation of the text. Please refer to the provided examples of critical reviews as a further guideline. Videos will be between 10 and 15 minutes in length and should be submitted as a playable movie file (MP4, AVI, MPEG or MOV) via a disk, jumpdrive, email or a link to YouTube. If you submit an uncompiled video file it will be considered late 1 day and you will be given a limited window to re-submit. Students are also expected to submit a hardcopy of their script with the video.

Documentary Assignment

Please refer to the assignment sheet on Moodle for a full description of this assignment.

Participation

This course seeks to foster a learning community in which students engage the material actively and gain insight from each other as well as the instructor. The goal is to develop the analytic and argumentative skills necessary for successful scholarly activity by testing those ideas in conversation, to actively position oneself in critical discourses by engaging in discourse, and to demonstrate the collaborative nature of scholarly activity. Students are expected to come to class prepared for classrooms discussions, actively and vigourously engage in those discussions, and generally contribute to the course's critical conversation. ATTENDANCE IS NOT EQUIVALENT TO PARTICIPATION.

Late Policy

Late work will only be accepted until 3pm on the second day following the due date and it will be penalized at a rate of 10%/Day. If work is not submitted by 3pm on the second day following the due date, it will not be accepted and the student will receive a 0(zero) on the assignment. It should also be noted that late material will receive no feedback from the instructor. It is your responsibility to meet the due dates for the assigned material.

Standards for Written Assignments

Learning how to follow house style sheets is one of the most important skills a writer can develop. To aid you in your quest to learn these skills I have provided a document entitled "Standards for Written Assignments" on Moodle. If your paper does not conform to these standards, expect to lose marks.

All work must be TYPED, double spaced, and have proper MLA documentation (unless instructed otherwise). Do NOT submit work to me by e-mail.. Hard copies are not only preferred, they are required. Be sure to keep a copy of any essay that you hand in.

Sensitivity, Respect, and Subject Matter

Some of the material we will be covering this semester is of a charged nature—whether in terms of form, content or politics. As critics, we cannot shy away from this material; however, we must understand that this material may generate a wide variety of reactions and opinions among our colleagues in the classroom. Thus, it is imperative that we remain aware of, and sympathetic to the reactions and opinions of our classmates. Respect and sensitivity will produce a stronger learning environment and generate better, more nuanced discussions.

Grading System

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	4.0 Scale	Percent	Rubric for Letter Grades
Excellent	A+	4.0	> 92.9	Work shows in-depth and critical analysis, well developed ideas, creativity, excellent writing, clarity and proper format.
	A	4.0	85 – 92.9	
	A-	3.7	80 – 84.9	
Good	B+	3.3	77 – 79.9	Work is generally of high quality, well developed, well written, has clarity, and uses proper format.
	B	3.0	74 – 76.9	
	B-	2.7	70 – 73.9	
Satisfactory Progression	C+	2.3	67 – 69.9	Work has some developed ideas but needs more attention to clarity, style and formatting.
	C	2.0	64 – 66.9	
	C-	1.7	60 – 63.9	
Poor Minimum Pass	D+	1.3	55 – 59.9	Work is completed in a general way with minimal support, or is poorly written or did not use proper format.
	D	1.0	50 – 54.9	
Failure	F	0.0	< 50	Responses fail to demonstrate appropriate understanding or are fundamentally incomplete.

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments	Notes
Jan 8-12	What is Culture?			
Jan 15-19	Historical Contexts 1: Thinking about Thinking Machines	Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence;” Freud, “The Uncanny;” John Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs”		
Jan 22-26	Historical Contexts 2: A History of AI, Robots, Cyborgs, & Human Anxiety	Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> (selections); William of Malmesbury, <i>De Rebus Gestis Regum Anglorum</i> (selection); <i>Lebor Gabála Érenn</i> (selection);		

		Hoffmann, "The Sandman"		
Jan 29-Feb 2	Historical Context 3: Informatics, Posthumanism, and Terminal Identities	Hayles, Chapters 1 & 2; Bukatman, <i>Terminal Identity</i> (selections)		
Feb 5-9	Millennial Singularities 1: Post/Transhumanism	Hayles, Chapters 3 & 11; The Mentor, <i>The Hacker Manifesto</i> ;	Documentary Assignment Due: Feb 7	
Feb 12-16	Millennial Singularities 2: Futurology as Historical Millenarian Movement	Kurzweil, <i>The Age of Spiritual Machines</i> (selections)		
Feb 19-23	Reading Week			Family Day/Reading Week: No Class
Feb 26-Mar 2	Millennial Singularities 3: Utopias and Dystopias	Dinello, "Technology is God: Machine Transcendence" The Wachowskis, <i>The Matrix</i>		
Mar 5-9	Robot Uprising! 1: The HAL Problem	Kubrick, <i>2001</i>		
Mar 12-16	Robot Uprising! 2: The Computer Dreams of Love	Tom King, <i>Vision</i>		
Mar 19-23	Robot Uprising! 3: The Horror of the Post-human Body	Otomo, <i>Akira</i> (film)		
Mar 26-30	Applied Thinking about Thinking Machines 1: Contingent Humanity and Dualisms	Descartes, Meditations II and VI Gibson, "Burning Chrome"	Critical Review Due: Mar 26	College Closed (Good Friday)/ Last Day to Withdraw: March 30
Apr 2-6	Applied Thinking about Thinking Machines 2: AI, Social Networks, and the Surveillance State	Foucault, "The Panopticon" <i>Spark</i> , "No precogs required: can algorithms predict crime?" Schaffer, "Detecting Terrorism with AI" BBC News, "Facebook algorithms 'will identify terrorists'"		College Closed (Easter): April 2

Apr 9-13	Applied Thinking about Thinking Machines 3: I Cyborg, or the Mediated Subject		Presentation of Research Projects	Last Day of Classes: April 13
Apr 16-20	Final Exams			

Performance Requirements

Student Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as a student to contact the Office of the Registrar to complete the forms for Withdrawal or Change of Registration, and any other forms. Please refer to the list of important dates as noted in the Academic Schedule in the Keyano College credit calendar.

More specific details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Student Attendance

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a student's learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating to the administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and / or notes that may be due.

Academic Misconduct

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating)
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work
- The deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications
- The willful distortion of results or data
- Substitution in an examination by another person
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

In order to ensure your understanding of the concept of plagiarism, you must successfully complete the online Plagiarism Certificate at ilearn.keyano.ca. Then print the certificate, sign it, and show it to each of your instructors. Your course work will not be graded until you show this signed certificate. If you completed this certification previously, show evidence to your instructor.

Specialized Supports

Counselling and Accessibility Services

Counselling Services provides a wide range of specialized counselling services to prospective and registered students, including personal, career and academic counselling.

SKILL Centre

The SKILL Centre is a learning space at Keyano College where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff.

The SKILL Centre, through a variety of delivery methods, provides assistance in skill development to Keyano students. Assistance is provided by instructors, staff and student tutors. Individuals wishing to improve their mathematics, writing, grammar, study, or other skills, can take advantage of this unique service.