Philosophy 375.510  
Professor D. W. Conway  
Fall Semester, 2012  
414 YMCA Building  
113 YMCA Building  
Hours: R 11 - 12, and by appointment  
TR 9:35-10:50  
Email: conway@philosophy.tamu.edu

Philosophy of Visual Media

The aim of this course is to provide students with the opportunity and expertise needed to apply philosophical methods and analyses to the medium of film. This course will be devoted to a survey of various depictions and treatments of evil within the genre of science fiction. We will be especially concerned to investigate depictions and treatments of evil that arise from considerations of human encounters with alien others.

Learning Outcomes
Engaged students may expect to acquire and perfect the following skills:

- Sustainable study habits and practices;
- Critical analysis and evaluation of complex arguments;
- Individual and collective problem-solving skills;
- Sympathetic appreciation of alternative traditions, cultures, and beliefs;
- Capacity for respectful disagreement and spirited debate;
- University-grade critical thinking and speaking skills.

Course Requirements
Criteria for successful completion of this course include: regular attendance; informed seminar participation; three in-class examinations (25% each); and a class presentation (25%).

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-90</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-80</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>79-70</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>59-0</td>
<td>F</td>
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Films
It is each student’s responsibility to view each assigned film in its entirety prior to the class meetings devoted to the discussion of that film. Selections from each film will be viewed and discussed in class, but no film will be screened in its entirety in class. Arrangements will be made for students to reserve viewing rooms in Evans Library and in the technology classrooms located in the YMCA Building. Most of the assigned films are also available on loan from the instructor.
In-Class Examinations
The three in-class examinations have been scheduled for the following dates: September 19; October 17; and November 7.

An optional fourth examination has been scheduled for December 3, which is the final class meeting of the semester. The grade for this exam may be exchanged for the student’s lowest grade on the three previous exams.

Class Presentation
Each student enrolled for credit in the course is required to make a class presentation. As many as four students may collaborate on a single presentation. The topic for the presentation may pertain to any aspect of philosophy or film, and it must reflect the passion of the student(s) involved in the presentation. Students are strongly encouraged to choose topics that incorporate an aesthetic and/or artistic component.

Class Presentation Topics
Class presentation topics must be submitted for the instructor's approval no later than Thursday, October 31. Rosters of presentation teams must also be submitted for approval by this date.

Final Examination
No final examination has been scheduled for this course.

Office Consultation Hours
Thursday: 11:00 - 12:00 in 414 YMCA Building.

And liberally, by appointment.

Office Consultation Policy
Students who wish to visit the instructor during regular office hours need not make an appointment. If these office hours are either inconvenient or insufficient, the instructor will make every effort to meet with interested students.

Library Visit
On Tuesday, September 3, all seminar students are required to attend the library presentation by Stephen Bales, Humanities and Social Sciences Librarian, in Evans Library Room 204B.

Q-Drop Deadline
Friday, November 15.

Rosh Hashanah
Students who wish to observe Rosh Hashanah are excused from class on Tuesday, September 5. The instructor will meet with all excused students at their convenience.
Required Reading

*On Film, 2nd Edition*  Stephen Mulhall  Routledge

Schedule of Reading Assignments

All reading and viewing assignments should be completed *prior* to the dates listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week I</td>
<td>August 27, 29</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week II</td>
<td>September 3, 5</td>
<td>Mulhall, pp. 28-45, chapter 5 Film: <em>Blade Runner</em></td>
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<td>Week III</td>
<td>September 10, 12</td>
<td>Mulhall, “Picturing the Human” Film: <em>Blade Runner</em></td>
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<td>Week IV</td>
<td>September 17, 19</td>
<td>“Philosophy Screened,” Wartenburg; Test #1 Film: <em>The Matrix</em></td>
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<td>Week V</td>
<td>September 24, 26</td>
<td>Film: <em>Terminator</em></td>
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<td>Week VI</td>
<td>October 1, 3</td>
<td>Film: <em>Terminator II</em></td>
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<td>Week VII</td>
<td>October 8, 10</td>
<td>Mulhall, Chapter 1 Film: <em>Alien</em></td>
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<td>Week VIII</td>
<td>October 15, 17</td>
<td>Mulhall, Chapter 2; Test #2 Film: <em>Aliens</em></td>
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<td>Week IX</td>
<td>October 22, 24</td>
<td>Mulhall, Chapter 3 Film: <em>Alien 3</em></td>
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<td>Week X</td>
<td>October 29, 31</td>
<td>Film: <em>Prometheus</em></td>
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<td>Week XI</td>
<td>November 5, 7</td>
<td>Test #3 Film: <em>Prometheus</em></td>
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<td>Week XII</td>
<td>November 12, 14</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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Week XIII  November 19, 21  Student Presentations
Week XIV  November 26  Student Presentations
Week XV  December 3  Test #4

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit [http://disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu).

**Academic Integrity Statement and Policy**

> "An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do."

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. The TAMU Honor Council Rules and Procedures may be found at: [http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor](http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor)

Syllabus version # (08/18/13)