Course Summary:
This course is a philosophical exploration of one area of popular culture: science fiction.

The goal of the course is to explore…
1) philosophical methods: including phenomenology, ethics, epistemology, and politics.
2) contemporary philosophical themes: including the nature of gender and sex, the relation between existence and experience, the role of power in our daily lives, the legacy of colonialism, the possibility of political dissent, and the definition of the human.
3) these themes and methods as they are expressed in contemporary science fiction: especially in the work of women, queer, black, and Native American authors. Like the philosophy we will read, these science fiction stories will each hold a mirror to our present lives and societies, often in critical ways, but not without planting seeds of hope and change.

The course will jump back and forth between philosophical readings that explore various areas of philosophy as well as philosophical methods, concepts, and criticisms, and science fiction readings and film. We will use the philosophical frameworks that we build to reflect on, engage with, critique, and learn from the literature. This means we will not only be reading philosophy, but will also spend much of our time doing what philosophers do: thinking carefully about our lives and the world in which they unfold. Since this type of thinking involves dialogue with others, much of our time in class, especially on Wed and Thurs, will consist in small and large group discussion.

Course Goals:
- Develop intellectual generosity and critical skills
- Develop clarity in expression (both written and verbal expression) and rigor in argument
• Gain exposure to feminist, queer, indigenous, and black appropriations and criticisms of the Western philosophical tradition as well as debates within feminist thinking.
• Become fluent in various approaches to feminist philosophy and getting into the habit of reflecting critically on gender and sexuality
• Become a better writer and a thoughtful thinker

Assignments:
Précis: 30%
Reading Quizzes: 20%
Midterm: 20%
Proposal: 5%
Final: 25%

Attendance: You do not receive participation points for coming to class. But you are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. More than 5 absences for any reason will result in a failing final grade.

Three Précis: 10% each, 30% total.
A précis is simply a summary of an author’s argument. In each précis, students will consider one of the philosophical readings and, in as much detail as possible, reconstruct the author’s argument. These will have no student analysis. Only summary. No more than 600 words. Reconstructing an author’s argument is the best way to understand it. So writing these will ultimately help students learn how to read and reconstruct philosophical arguments, in addition to helping me see what you understand and what you do not.

Reading Quizzes: 5, 4% each, 20% total.
This class requires a lot of reading! Bring readings to class, read them the night or day before. To make sure folks are doing the reading, I will have 5 pop reading quizzes in class. They will ask basic questions about the reading that will be answerable if you have read the texts. You will not be able to make them up if you are absent that day. Hint: if I warn you that a certain text is particularly difficult or confusing and suggest you spend more time with it, the chances are high a reading quiz will follow.

Midterm exam: (20%): The midterm will be a take home test that combines short answer responses and some essay length questions (due Friday of week 5)

Final paper outline: (5 %)
You will write your own prompts for your final paper, and each submit a one-page prospectus stating the topic of your paper and the argument that you intend to pursue. Feedback on your prospectus is required before you begin your final paper.

Final Paper (25%): The final exam will be 5-6 pages in length. Due Thursday of finals week, no later than 4:00 pm. Papers should be submitted on Canvas via VeriCite, and a paper copy will be due in the philosophy office.

Accommodations for a disability:
If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon.

**Sexual Violence and Survivor Support:**
The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more: safe.uoregon.edu or 541-346-SAFE.

**Required Texts:**
Dillon, Grace, *Walking the Clouds*
Liu, Marjorie, *Monstress*, Vol 1
Okorafor, Nnedi, *Binti*

* All readings will be available on Canvas. I suggest you print them all out at the beginning and bring them in one big reader, as you will need hard copies in class *No computers please.*
* Please note that I reserve the right to change the schedule as necessary. Changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. You are responsible for being aware of these changes.

**Reading Schedule:**

**Week 1: Logic and The Other Worlds Within Our Own**
(M) Introduction—what is philosophy, what is science fiction?
(T) Priest, “Sylvan’s Box” Plumwood Plumwood
(W) Le Guin, “A Wife’s Story”
(R) NO CLASS

**Week 2: Dualisms, Hierarchies, and Binaries**
(M) “The Politics of Reason” dualism selections
(T) “The Politics of Reason” selections
(W) Beauvoir: Intro to the Second Sex (first 8 pages)
(T) Intro to Second Sex (second 8 pages)

**Week 3: Gender and Sex, Self and Other, Real and Constructed**
(M) Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Construction” (12)
(T) Butler, “Performative Acts” continued
(W) Tiptree, “Houston, Houston, Do you Read” (15 pages)
(R) Tiptree, “Houston” (15 pages) continued

**Week 4: Difference, Identity, Monstrousity, Multiplicity**
Week 5: Indigenous Fiction and Decolonizing Futures
(M) Yellow Horse Brave Heart, “The American Indian Holocaust (15 pages)
(T) Waters, “Language Matters: non-discreet, non-binary dualism” (selections)
(W) Introduction to Walking the clouds (14)
(R) Dillon, Walking the Clouds, Selections

Week 6: Animals and Plants
(M) Band and Marin, “Nature/Culture Constructs in Science Education” (Selection)
(T) Adams, Sexual Politics of Meat (selections); Sista Vegan (selections)
(W) Selection Walking the Clouds, Selections
(R) TBD

Week 7: Indigenous queer theory
(M) Simpson, “Indigenous Queer Normativity” (first half)
(T) Simpson, “Indigenous Queer Normativity” (second half)
(W) Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time, selections
(T) Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time, selections

Week 8: Queer lives and resisting oppression
(M) Adrienne Rich, Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Lesbian Experience
(T) Cherrie Moraga, “La Guera” (12 pages)
(W) Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time, selections
(R) Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time, selections

Week 9: Black Feminism and Difference
(M) Combahee River Collective (5); Truth, “Ain’t I A woman” (1); Lorde, “Erotic as power” (7).
(T) Lorde, “Age, Race, Class, Sex” (10)
(W) Binti (1-45)
(R) Binti (45-90)

Week 10: Philosophy of Race and Afrofuturism
(M) Hooks, “Black masculinity” (12).
(T) Black Panther (watch on your own)
(W) Philips, “what’s a young woman (not) to think”
(R) Bitch Planet