

HISTORY OF THE FUTURE



HISTORY 514

◆◆◆ HISTORY OF THE FUTURE ◆◆◆

University of North Carolina at Greensboro ◆ Fall 2016
TR: 5:00-6:15 ◆ MHRA 2207

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COURSE DESCRIPTION ◆ What can we know about the world of tomorrow? Scholars rarely discuss the future as “historical” time. Historians cannot make predictions about events to come, but we can propose a range of possible futures. This course seeks to open our global future to serious investigation using methods of historical thinking. Students will assess the period 2025-2100 in terms of the continuation of past and present global trends, versus plausible changes in the future. The course considers the concept of “modernity” through topics such as urbanization, cosmopolitanism, wellness, space exploration, indigenous societies, global governance, energy, catastrophe, religion, and nature. Students will use methods in strategic forecasting to make nuanced projections about the near future. Meanwhile, classroom simulations will model international crises such as resource war, climate refugees, pandemic disease, failed states, and reform of the United Nations. *Undergraduates only. Field: Wider World.*

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS ◆ In addition to the thematic concerns above, this course trains students in historical interpretation, forecasting, and simulation. Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- ◆ LG1—INTERPRETATION: *Assess past and present trends (political, economic, intellectual, social, and cultural) of significance on the global stage.*
- ◆ LG2—FUTURING: *Forecast how past and present trends (local, transnational, and global) bear upon the goals and challenges facing a major nation-state in the near future.*
- ◆ LG3—SIMULATION: *Interpret the international world of tomorrow in an immersive learning environment that models the problems and complexities of the real world.*

COURSE ASSETS ◆ The following assets are required for learning, participation, and assignments during this course.

- ◆ Materials: articles and book chapters available on Canvas
- ◆ Presence: user accounts for Canvas, Wikispaces, and Facebook

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION ♦ This course evaluates students on the successful integration of lecture content, primary sources, and secondary sources. Broad categories of assessment are weighted in the following manner:

- ♦ **FUTURING PROJECT:** Students will complete a “futuring” project to assess past and present trends, and the future implications of those trends, in a major nation-state. The project requires each student to assess historical trends (political, economic, intellectual, social, and cultural) of present significance to that country. Students will also interpret national trends in context of global developments. Finally, the project requires each student to articulate national goals and challenges in the twenty-first century. In completing the project, students must implement multiple methods of strategic forecasting. The project includes five written components: national statistics (5%), national trends (5%), secondary source assessment (10%), strategic forecasting (15%), and futures white paper (15%). Assessment areas: ideas, sources, writing, and historical thinking. Revisions permitted in components 1-4.

- ♦ **PARTICIPATION AND SIMULATIONS:** Classroom participation, especially when discussing primary and secondary sources, is crucial to a meaningful student experience. Students are warmly encouraged to express intellectual curiosity and to propose creative interpretations. Each student is expected to contribute in a substantive manner during each class meeting. Students will participate in two concurrent forms of simulation—an ongoing hybrid simulation (classroom and online, two phases per week) and crisis simulations (classroom, week-long). Assessment areas: ideas, content application, goal achievement, collaboration, oral argumentation.

- ♦ **PUBLIC SIMULATION:** Students will participate in a public simulation (final examination) featuring a number of visitors. The professor and visitors will assess their application of content knowledge, theoretical grasp, and strategic skill in the simulation setting. Assessment: ideas, content application, goal achievement, collaboration, oral argumentation.

50%
**FUTURING
PROJECT**
(FIVE COMPONENTS)

40%
**PARTICIPATION
AND SIMULATIONS**

10%
**PUBLIC
SIMULATION**

◆◆◆ GRADING SCALE ◆◆◆

A+: 99-100
B+: 87-89
C+: 77-79
D+: 67-69

A: 93-98
B: 83-86
C: 73-76
D: 63-66

A-: 90-92
B-: 80-82
C-: 70-72
D-: 60-62

F: 59 and lower

◆◆◆ COURSE POLICIES ◆◆◆

ATTENDANCE POLICY ◆ Students each receive three “free” absences (no documentation or other excuses are required *or* desired). For each additional absence, your final grade in this course will be reduced by 5 points, on 100-point scale. The professor may grant a “free” absence for legitimate academic or athletic activities, but scheduled work must *still* be completed on time.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS ◆ Late assignments will not be accepted—no exceptions. If for any reason you cannot submit an assignment on the scheduled date, you must contact the professor *more than* 48 hours *prior to* the due date in order to request an alternate date.

INCOMPLETE GRADES ◆ Incompletes will not be granted as final grades for this course, except in the most dire, unavoidable, and tragic circumstances. Consideration will furthermore be based upon the future schedule or availability of the professor, and student documentation of the situation is required.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ◆ UNCG complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing a process for disclosing disabilities and arranging for reasonable accommodations (examples: tutors, service animals, testing accommodations, interpreters, testing, devices, etc.). In order to register for accommodations, please visit the Office of Disability Services (<http://ods.uncg.edu/>).

COURTESY ◆ Students are expected to maintain a high level of courtesy toward the instructor and other students. Cell phones or other devices that make noise *must be silenced* before entering the classroom. During discussion, positive and respectful discourse with all individuals is expected. Students are allowed to use computers during class for purposes of taking notes, accessing Canvas, and other appropriate academic purposes. Persons using computers are asked to sit in the rear third of the classroom in order to avoid distracting other students. The professor will occasionally request that the entire class activate or deactivate electronic devices, according to course activities.

WRITING AND CITATIONS ◆ Your assignments should be always based on your own ideas and written in your own words. When referencing or quoting from a source, you must *properly* cite that source using Chicago Style (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). Failure to properly attribute your work is ALWAYS considered plagiarism.

CLASS NOTES AND MATERIALS ◆ Selling class notes for commercial gain, or purchasing such class notes in this or any other course at UNCG, is a violation of the university’s copyright policy and of the Student Code of Conduct. Sharing notes for studying purposes, or borrowing notes to make up for absences, without commercial gain, are not violations

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ◆ Students are expected to read, understand and adhere to the UNCG Student Code of Conduct (<http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>). The standards address cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and other forms of academic dishonesty. **IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE!** The professor will report all violations of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Students. Furthermore, violations will result in penalties *up to*, and *including*, an automatic grade of “F” for the course.

◆◆◆ COURSE SCHEDULE ◆◆◆

WEEK 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION THE FUTURE AS HISTORICAL TIME

- T 23 AUG JANUS AND THE ARROW OF TIME
Historical Thinking and Plausible Futures
- R 25 AUG MODELING THE FUTURE
Forecasting, Simulations, and Situation Report
📖 David Staley, "A History of the Future"



WEEK 2: PROTECTORS + AUTHORITY POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

- T 30 AUG MODERNIZATION (WINTER 2048)
Moving from Traditional to Modern Societies
📖 Max Singer, "Shaping History by Defining 'Modernity'"
- R 1 SEP INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT (SUMMER 2048)
Security Institutions and Zones of Peace
📖 Bruce Russett, "The Fact of Democratic Peace"
◆ FUTURING 1: National Statistics Report



WEEK 3: COLLAPSE PROTECTORS + AUTHORITY SIMULATION

- T 6 SEP COLLAPSE: PART ONE (WINTER 2049)
Crisis Simulation Planning
📖 Simulation Source Packet
- R 8 SEP COLLAPSE: PART TWO (SUMMER 2049)
Crisis Simulation Performance



WEEK 4: METHODS ONE

THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

- T 13 SEP TREND ANALYSIS (WINTER 2050)
Scenario: Population and Gross Domestic Product
📖 Jeffrey Sachs, "Global Population Dynamics"
- R 15 SEP FUTURES WHEEL (SUMMER 2050)
Scenario: Urbanization
📖 Stewart Brand, "City Planet"
♦ FUTURING 2: National Trends Report



WEEK 5: BUILDERS + GOODS

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

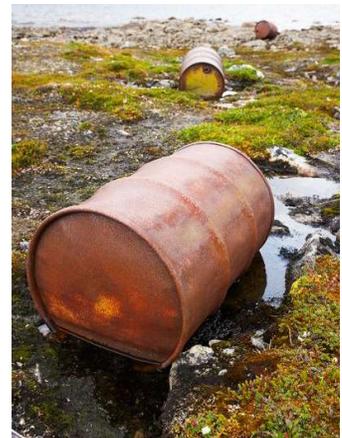
- T 20 SEP FOOD AND WATER SECURITY (WINTER 2051)
Sustenance for a Crowded Planet
📖 Jeffrey Sachs, "Securing Our Water Needs"
- R 22 SEP ROBOTICS (SUMMER 2052)
Machine Intelligence and Mechanized Assistants
📖 Neil Gerschenfeld, "How to Make Almost Anything: The Digital Fabrication Revolution"



WEEK 6: STAIN

BUILDERS + GOODS SIMULATION

- T 27 SEP STAIN: PART ONE (WINTER 2052)
Crisis Simulation Planning
📖 Simulation Source Packet
- R 29 SEP STAIN: PART TWO (SUMMER 2052)
Crisis Simulation Performance



WEEK 7: THINKERS + IDEAS

INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

- T 4 OCT ENVIRONMENT (WINTER 2053)
Atmosphere and Biosphere Science
📖 Vaclav Smil, “Environmental Change”
- R 6 OCT RELIGION (SUMMER 2053)
Old and New Religious Movements
📖 Barney Warf and Peter Vincent, “Religious Diversity Across the Globe: A Geographic Exploration”
♦ FUTURING 3: Secondary Source Integration



WEEK 8: PRIYA

THINKERS + IDEAS SIMULATION

- T 11 OCT PRIYA: PART ONE (WINTER 2054)
Crisis Simulation Planning
📖 Simulation Source Packet
- R 13 OCT PRIYA: PART TWO (SUMMER 2054)
Crisis Simulation Performance



FALL BREAK 14-19 OCT

WEEK 9: METHODS ONE

THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

- R 20 OCT DELPHI METHOD (WINTER 2055)
Scenario: Asteroid Mining
📖 John Hickman, “The Political Economy of Very Large Space Projects”
- T 25 OCT ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING (SUMMER 2055)
Scenario: Signs of the Times
📖 Barbara Adam, “History of the Future: Paradoxes and Challenges”



WEEK 10: SERVANTS + SERVICES

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

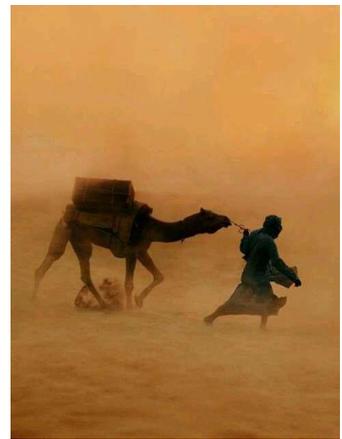
- R 27 OCT SUSTAINABLE ENERGY (WINTER 2056)
Green and Renewable Energy Platforms
📖 Stewart Brand, "New Nukes"
- T 1 NOV WELLNESS (SUMMER 2056)
Preventative and Personalized Medicine
📖 Sarwant Singh, "Health, Wellness, and Well-Being"



WEEK 11: WRATH OF GOD

SERVANTS + SERVICES SIMULATION

- R 3 NOV WRATH OF GOD: PART ONE (WINTER 2057)
Crisis Simulation Planning
📖 Simulation Source Packet
- T 8 NOV WRATH OF GOD: PART TWO (SUMMER 2057)
Crisis Simulation Performance
♦ FUTURING 4: Strategic Forecasting



WEEK 12: ENTERTAINERS + LEISURE

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

- R 10 NOV SMART TECHNOLOGIES (WINTER 2058)
Algorithms to Enhance Everyday Life
📖 Sarwant Singh, "Smart is the New Green"
- T 15 NOV GLOBAL MEDIA (SUMMER 2058)
Personal and Transnational Communications
📖 Mark Poster, "Global Media and Culture"



WEEK 13: WORLDSTREAM ENTERTAINERS + LEISURE SIMULATION

- R 17 NOV WORLDSTREAM: PART ONE (WINTER 2059)
Crisis Simulation Planning
📖 *Simulation Source Packet*
- T 22 NOV WORLDSTREAM: PART TWO (SUMMER 2059)
Crisis Simulation Performance



WEEK 14: GLOBAL GOVERNANCE COMBINING ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE

- T 29 NOV INDIGENISM (WINTER 2060)
Alternatives to Western Paradigms
📖 Ben Powless, “An Indigenous Movement to Confront Climate Change”
- R 1 DEC COSMOPOLITANISM (SUMMER 2060)
Alternatives to Nationalist Paradigms
📖 Luke Martell, “Cosmopolitanism and Global Politics”
♦ FUTURING 5: Futures White Paper



COURSE CONCLUSION CONSEQUENCES FOR THE FUTURE

- T 6 DEC READING DAY + ONLINE SIMULATION (WINTER 2061)
- T 11 DEC ONLINE SIMULATION (SUMMER 2061)
- R 13 DEC PUBLIC SIMULATION (2062)
Theme to be announced prior to simulation.

