LSHV-540-40: **Utopia-Dystopia: Surveillance, Control, Tyranny, and Hope**

**Summer 2022**

Tuesdays: 5:15pm – 8:15pm

Class Location: Synchronous Online (via Zoom)

Professor:

Scott Krawczyk, PhD.

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917-275-5471 (cell)

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO REVISION/MODIFICATION**

**Course Description**

Variously imagined in works as disparate as *Gilgamesh*, Plato’s *Republic*, and Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, utopias are ultimately political visions, and those political visions sometimes turn dystopic. Though formally introduced as a term in Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1551), the vision of a society where “all is well” and yet is “no place” has been revisited, reimagined, and inverted in hundreds of works of literature and film. Through primary and secondary texts, this course examines the philosophical, religious, political, cultural/historical underpinnings of the utopian vision and, conversely, the dystopian revision. Dystopias feature surveillance and control of individuals through political, corporate, bureaucratic, technological, and sometimes philosophical or religious systems.  Propelling the course are fundamental questions: What is the good society (and how to achieve it)? What accounts for the widespread popularity of dystopic literature, film, and television? How does a book like Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* become embraced and weaponized today by conservatives and liberals alike? Where does social media fit on the utopian-dystopian scale? Whose facts? What facts? How does democracy survive in a world of “alternative facts”? In this class we will research such questions using interdisciplinary approaches that borrow from critical theory, philosophy, literature, and film, along with historical records and Internet data, among other sources.

**Learning Objectives:**

The **overarching aim** of this courseis to facilitate students’ growth as graduate-level researchers and thinkers. Whether the course has an impact on any given student’s master’s or doctoral thesis is not at issue; what is at issue is refinement of the research mindset: the establishing context, asking critical questions, and efficiently and thoroughly researching sources for the key information bearing on those questions. Assessing carefully and critically the published scholarship of others is paramount to becoming a strong graduate student and eventual scholar (or researcher of any kind). To that end, this course will require students to **engage every week with both primary and secondary texts**—and to respond specifically to the secondary texts through weekly discussion posts in Canvas. When published scholarship, regardless of its era, is examined carefully through the lenses of historical contexts, philosophical frameworks, and contemporary resonances, the various strengths, weaknesses, and blind spots of that scholarship emerge—prompting critical reflection, analysis, synthesis—and response. The goal is synthesis and response: connecting dots, recognizing gaps, tracing patterns (if any), and, finally, articulating thoughtful—if incomplete—observations and/or insights.

After completing this course, a student should be able to:

* Understand the broad, cultural, literary, political, and artistic history of utopia/ dystopia in a range of global traditions
* Interpret and explain a range of utopian/dystopian modes of expression, including print, film, art, community, architecture, virtual (online), political organization, revolution, etc., and contextualize them within a larger historical framework/continuum
* Assess the strengths, weaknesses, and potential blind spots of published scholarship from any time period
* Formulate excellent research questions and perform graduate-level research of secondary and primary texts
* Advance claims worthy of scholarly development for publication (either through an academic conference setting or publication outlet)
* Produce a high-quality seminar paper worthy of presentation and/or publication.
* Understand the relevance of utopia/dystopia to contemporary political/cultural debates and to global political and military machinations, including those unfolding in Ukraine

The course comprises thirteen (13) three-hour (synchronous online) discussion-based seminars that will call upon students each week to be highly engaged and active participants in the exchange of ideas and facilitation of learning. The first part of class will typically involve the instructor providing some context and overarching points, highlighting important aspects of the texts for that week and highlighting notable commentary in the Canvas discussion posts—all with an aim toward priming the classroom for lively discussion and intellectual debate. The bulk of each class session will see students on a rotating basis take charge of the discussion by raising points observed about the secondary source(s) assigned for that week: strengths, weaknesses, blind-spots, resonances—and connections to the primary texts (as appropriate).

**Guest speakers**: The course will have at least one national security expert on the current global military and refugee crisis unfolding in Ukraine and its relevance/connection to dystopian historical precedents in that country, promulgated by Russia. **Mr. Kenneth Robinson** will engage with the class to share his knowledge and expertise concerning Russia, state-controlled media, and the political implications for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

**Society for Utopian Studies Academic Conference**: students may have an opportunity to present edited versions of their seminar papers in Charlotte, NC, in November 2022. This is TBD currently.

**Publication opportunity**: All students will be encouraged to submit prospectuses based on their seminar papers to *Utopian Studies* for potential publication. Coordination by Dr. Krawczyk with the editors of *Utopian Studies* will occur as part of the course and preparation for anyone interested.

**Required Texts**

*(TEXTS THAT ARE* ***NOT*** *LISTED HERE WILL BE AVAILABLE ON CANVAS. STUDENTS WILL NEED TO HAVE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO THE READINGS SUPPLIED ONLINE IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN THE ZOOM CLASS DISCUSSIONS.)*

**George Orwell**: *1984* (Poessneck, Germany: Berkley/Penguin, 2017) ISBN 978-0452262935

**Timothy Snyder**: *On Tyranny* (New York: Crown/Random House, 2017) ISBN 978-0804190114

**Michel Foucault**: *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage, 1978) ISBN-10: 0-679-75255-2

**Edward Bellamy**: *Looking Backward* (New York: Warbler, 2021) ISBN 978-1957240046

**Sargent, L. T.**: *Utopianism: A Very Short Introduction*. (New York: Oxford, 2010) ISBN: 978-0199573400

**Plato**: *The* *Republic* (London: Penguin, 2007) ISBN 978-0140455113

**Requirements and Grading:**

**Canvas Postings**: Each student will post on Canvas **eight times (for classes on 5/31, 6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28, 7/5, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26, and 8/2)**. Posts should appear **NLT 24** hours before the class to which they relate and should respond to (one of) the secondary text(s) for that class. Posts should be between 500 and 600 words long and are not required to adhere to typical standards for written English; they can be much more informal. Failure to incorporate and comment on direct quotations of the secondary authors will result in a 20-point deduction. An interdisciplinary approach is strongly encouraged (connecting philosophical topics/ideas with artistic or literary works, for instance). Each student will also have responsibility for serving one time as the designated respondent, responsible for kick-starting and sustaining class discussion for approximately 30 minutes. This designated student respondent should plan to submit a discussion post for that week, to ensure familiarity with the material and ability to generate discussion, in the event that there are few other posts that week. **Each post is worth 50 points= 400 points**. Serving as in-class respondent for discussion posts: **100 points**.

**(500 points total)**

**Class Participation**: Graduate students are expected to carry classroom discussions, to introduce topics of interest to them, to raise pertinent questions, and to guide others with responses that sustain intellectual inquiry, seek clarity, and propel thoughtful engagement. **250 points.**

**Research Presentation**: Students will give presentations to the class on the research they are doing for their seminar papers. The presentation should provide the full historical context for the research project/question being pursued, research plan, and projected outline of the paper. Students will also be required to present a one-minute “elevator speech” explaining the project and the “so what”—what makes it interesting, relevant, timely, etc. **20-30 minute presentation** with distributed bibliography **250 points**.

**Seminar Paper**: A substantial research paper of 5,000 – 6,000 words. Students must initially develop a prospectus for the paper (1-2 pp), outlining the organizational plan and overarching goal(s) of the paper. The prospectus will be due NLT July 19 and must be approved by the instructor. **500 points**.

**Total: 2,000 points**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

93% – 100% = A 90% – 92% = A-

87% – 89% = B+ 83% – 86% = B 80% – 82% = B-

77% – 79% = C+ 73% – 76% = C ~~70% – 72% = C-~~

~~67% – 69% = D+ 60% – 66% = D~~

~~Below 60% = F~~ (crossed out = n/a for grad course)

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

Incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, such as a family or medical emergency. Students must contact me in advance regarding incompletes.

ESSAY PREPARATION

Documentation for your essays should follow an established academic style guide. MLA, Chicago, and APA are all acceptable. The Purdue OWL website offers helpful synopses of each: <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html>.

OFFICE HOURS

By appointment. I will make myself available to students in the evenings and on weekends, as needed, for virtual appointments. In addition, with coordination prior to the day of class, I will make myself available for up to 30 minutes following class.

Canvas is Georgetown University's learning management system. Access this course and related material in the Canvas learning management system at [canvas@georgetown.edu](mailto:canvas@georgetown.edu) and logging in with your Georgetown netID credentials.

**Participation and Engagement:**

Participation is a key component of your success as a student engaged in a remote learning environment as it encourages rich discussion and interaction with your classmates and demonstrates your command of course concepts to the instructor. What does good participation look like?

* 1. Actively contribute to class conversations by answering instructor questions and responding to peers' comments and ideas;
  2. Demonstrate your comprehension of course content by sharing stories the real-world application in class discussions;
  3. Ask relevant clarifying and contextual questions;
  4. Appropriately use Zoom tools to meaningfully contribute to class conversations: the hand raise tool, reaction emojis, the chat function, and participating in breakout rooms.

Student Expectations in a Remote Learning Environment

1. Given Zoom will serve as the primary tool for our synchronous sessions, please adhere to the following practices:
   1. Attend class on-time and remain on Zoom throughout the session
   2. Arrive to the Zoom class prepared to discuss readings, current events, and other materials assigned in the syllabus
   3. Unless you have received prior approval, keep webcams and speakers on throughout the entire class session
   4. Keep your microphone muted unless speaking
   5. Dress appropriately for class (business casual or casual is best)
   6. Limiting eating to before or after class (or during breaks)
2. Submit completed assignments by the date specified in the syllabus.
3. Complete all assigned reading and watch all pre-recorded videos or posted videos/movies by the assigned due date
4. Complete Canvas Discussion posts NLT 24 hours prior to the lessons for which you are submitting them.
5. Meet with team members or partners virtually to complete assignments equitably (if applicable). Meeting informally to discuss assignments can also facilitate learning.

**Remote Learning Tips:**

As a student engaging in this class remotely, you must take a far more active role in learning and accessing information than traditional students in face-to-face classrooms. Click [here](https://elearnmag.acm.org/archive.cfm?aid=1670618) to learn about 10 ways to ensure distance learning success.

**Announcements:**

Announcements related to this course will be posted in Canvas regularly. They will appear on your Canvas dashboard when you log in and/or they will be sent to you directly through your preferred method of notification. Please make certain to check them regularly, as they will contain important information about upcoming projects or class concerns.

**Academic Support:**

Services and resources may include an online orientation; access to library resources; a readiness assessment or survey; testing services; tutoring; non-native language services; writing and/or math centers; tutorials or other forms of guidance on conducting research, writing papers, citing sources, using an online writing lab, and using institution-specific technology; supplemental instruction programs; and teaching assistants.

**Writing Center:**

The Georgetown University [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/) is a free resource open to all enrolled Georgetown students and offers online appointments.

**Technical Support for Students**:

* Canvas - Students have 24/7 access to [http://canvas.georgetown.edu/getting-help.](http://canvas.georgetown.edu/getting-help) including live chat and a support hotline at (855) 338-2770
* Zoom - For support with Zoom, email: [zoom@georgetown.edu](mailto:zoom@georgetown.edu)
* Use of Georgetown University-issued accounts for Google Mail, Calendar, Groups, Talk, Docs, Sites, Video, and Contacts is governed by the contract between Georgetown University and Google. For help managing your Google Documents, visit [Google Drive Help Center](https://support.google.com/drive/?hl=en#topic=14940).
* Contact the UIS Service Center at [help@georgetown.edu](mailto:help@georgetown.edu) if you have a question regarding your GU netID and/or password; your GU email account; any connectivity issues.

**Support Services:**

SCS offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed online, at the School of Continuing Sn1dies downtown location, and on the main Georgetown campus:

* [Academic Resource Center](https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/)
  + 202-687-8354 | [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)
* [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](http://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/mental-health/#domain-redirected)
  + 202-687-6985
* [Insitutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA)](https://ideaa.georgetown.edu/)
  + (202) 687-4798

**Students' Religious Observances:** The following is university policy: Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

**Disabilities:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of I973, individuals with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equity and access to programs and facilities. Students are responsible for communicating their needs to the Academic Resource Center, the office that oversees [disability support services](https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/), (202-687-8354; [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. The University is not responsible for making special accommodations for sn1dents who have not declared their disabilities and have not requested an accommodation in a timely manner. Also, the University need not modify course or degree requirements considered to be an essential requirement of the program of instruction. For the most current and up-to-date policy information, please refer to the [Georgetown University Academic Resource Center website](https://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/). Students are highly encouraged to discuss the documentation and accommodation process with an Academic Resource Center administrator.

**Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity:** Because the course meets virtually on Zoom, there are no anticipated interruptions to continuity.

**Georgetown Honor System:** All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at [http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code,](http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code) and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to tumitin.com for checking. Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge: *In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

**Plagiarism:** In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail. If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student may receive a grade of F for the course.

**Turnitin.com:** Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Tumitin.com site.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator, will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. [Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator]. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the [Sexual Misconduct Website](https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help/resourcecenter/).

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

1. Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: confidential email [sarp@georgetown.edu](mailto:sarp@georgetown.edu)
2. Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): 202. 687.6985 or after hours, call 202. 444.7243 and ask for the on-call CAPS clinician.

If interested, other helpful more general resources are included below:

* [Georgetown Self-Care Resource Guide](https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/health-promotion/self-care/)
* [Georgetown Wellness Wheel](https://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/Hoya-Wellness-wheel/)
* [Georgetown Guide to Recognizing Snidents in Distress](https://studentaffairs.georgetown.edu/studentoutreach/facultystaffresources/)

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, University policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University’s response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown also has professional staff members who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. Contact information:

**Jen Schweer, MA, LPC**

Associate Director of Health Education

Services for Sexual Assault Response and

Prevention

(202) 687-0323

[jls242@georgetown.edu](mailto:jls242@georgetown.edu)

**Erica Shirley**

Trauma Specialist

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(202) 687-6985

[els54@georgetown.edu](mailto:els54@georgetown.edu)

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at: <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help>.

**Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations:** Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting sn.idems. Sn.idents may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at the [Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations for Students webpage](https://titleix.georgetown.edu/title-ix-pregnancy/student-pregnancy/).

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Tue. May 24: Class One: Course Introduction.** ***Utopian Traditions***. Read: (1) Sargent, *Utopianism*: *A Very Short Introduction;* (2) Shklar, “The Political Theory of Utopia: From Melancholy to Nostalgia”; (3) Bellamy, *Looking Backward*

**Tue. May 31: Class Two:** ***Sources of Utopia***. Read: (1) Plato, *The Republic* (selections); (2) More, *Utopia* (selections); (3) Mumford, “Utopia, the City and the Machine”; (4) R. Williams, *The Country and the City* (chapter selection); Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (selections).

**Tue. June 7: Class Three: *Utopia and Revolutions*.** Read: (1) Shelley, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (selections); (2) French Declaration of the Rights of Man; (3) Brinton, “Utopia and Democracy”; (4) Scurr, *Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution* (selected chapters); (5) Paine, *Common Sense* (selections); (6) American Declaration of Independence

**Tue. June 14: Class Four:** ***Socialism and Utopia*.** Read (1) Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (selections); (2); Geoghegen, *Utopianism and Marxism* (selections); (3) Ulam, “Socialism and Utopia.”

**Tue. June 21: Class Five: *Utopia and Dystopia in the 20th Century*.** Readings TBA.

**Tue. June 28: Class Six:** ***Russian Voices***. Read (1) Anna Akhmatova, “Requiem”; (2) Bailey, “An Elegy for Russia: Anna Akhmatova’s ‘Requiem’”; (3) Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (selections); Zemaitin, *We* (selected passages).

**Tue. July 5: Class Seven: *Surveillance and Control*.** Read (1) *1984*; (2) Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (select passages); (3) article TBD on Stasi surveillance in East Germany. In class: watch film, *The Lives of Others* (2006 German language with English subtitles)

**Tue. July 12: Class Eight: *Utopia and Communal Movements*.** Read (1) Lockwood, “The Experimental Utopia in America”; (2) Kateb, “Utopia and the Good Life”; (3) Aristotle, from *Nichomachean Ethics* and/or *Politics* (selections).

**Tue. July 19: Class Nine. *Communal Dystopias*.** Read (1) Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas”; (2) Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale* (selections); (3) article TBD on *The Handmaid’s Tale*. In class: watch episode of Hulu series: *The Handmaid’s Tale*; (4) article on social media, communities, and dystopic visions (TBD). **Seminar Paper Prospectus Due.**

**Tue. July 26: Class Ten: *Ukraine and Russia, or History Rhymes Again***. Guest Speaker: Kenneth Robinson, U.S. Army Retired. Read (1) Snyder, *On Tyranny*; Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom* (selections); selected articles from *The Economist* (spring/summer 2022).

**Tue. Aug 2: Class Eleven:** ***Utopia and Totalitarianism***. Read (1) H. G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows* (selections); (2) selected articles from *The Economist* (including interview with Volodymyr Zelensky); Smith, “Eugenics and Utopia.”

**Tue. Aug 9: Class Twelve:** ***Hope***. Read (1) Bloch, *The Principle of Hope* (Vol. 1) (selections); (2) Research Presentations and/or additional Readings, TBA.

**Tue. Aug 16: Class Thirteen:** Research Presentations

**Seminar Paper Due: NLT Friday, 19 Aug, 5pm.**