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All thinking has purpose and generates questions. Teaching and learning help us to become better thinkers by intentionally engaging in the questioning/answering/thinking process daily. It also affords us boundless opportunities to practice the vital process of critical thinking. In the end, the goal to foster adaptive, flexible minds which appreciate the complexity of life and "connect the dots" of being human. It should be said that this course is a reading- and writing-intensive course. Failure to engage in these activities will be detrimental to course performance and final grade.

Course Description:
This course allows for the direct application of an interdisciplinary approach to learning to a specific cultural topic or theme. Major theories and models of IDST, such as those set forth by academic specialists Julie Thompson-Klein, William Newell, and Allen Repko, will provide a foundation for exploring an overarching concept in an interdisciplinary manner. Students in the BIS degree have diverse scholarly backgrounds and emphasis areas of study, so you will learn how to integrate and collaborate in your individual research surrounding one concept. By confronting the same theme via your unique concentrations, you will foster a better understanding of what it means to work, study, and interact in an interdisciplinary manner.

This particular course will focus on the various ways humans have thought about the "end of the world" (hereafter referenced as "The End") as a means for understanding IDST. This topic is interdisciplinary in nature, as many popular views on The End stem from religion, science, technology, geology, war, astronomy, biology, and the list goes on. In many cases, The End comes from an overlap of these areas. A few examples of these overlaps include God sending an asteroid to destroy the earth; nuclear fallout from a global religious war; technology paving the way for an Antichrist figure; or human choices leading to a global climate meltdown or massive pandemic. These scenarios and many others surface in popular culture of all sorts in the USA and elsewhere. In short, how people think about The End affects how they live in the present, and examining those realities provide rich ground for interdisciplinary thought.

Students in this course will investigate, discuss, and critique the issues, ideas, and theories relevant to interdisciplinary study. This is a research-intensive class that requires students to read, write, and participate in various ways. Especially important will be demonstrating the questioning, answering, and thinking process through the integration of multiple disciplines.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- **Analyze the development of self in relation to others and society.** Each student will learn how interdisciplinary methods synthesize multiple perspectives and different backgrounds. This raises awareness of each person's limited, but valuable perspective in larger conversations surrounding our complex world.
- **Examine diverse values that form civically engaged and informed members of society.** The student will demonstrate their interdisciplinary awareness of the main issue in a research portfolio or critical project. Intentionally selecting the most appropriate disciplines for a given phenomenon allows students to better grasp the underlying assumptions of various disciplines and cultures.
- **Evaluate solutions to real-world social and cultural problems.** The student will gain new insight through methods of integration toward the question at issue or research topic in ways that cannot be solved by one area of study. Achieving a deeper understanding of the complexity of one

phenomenon allows students a way to practice seeing other complex, real-world problems from various perspectives and effectively communicate the limits of disciplines and interdisciplinarity.

Regular and Substantive Interaction
The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about Regular and Substantive Interaction at WKU, please visit the Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning webpage.

In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Faculty participation in weekly discussion boards
- Daily announcements Monday through Friday
- Timely and detailed feedback on assignments provided within one week of submission.

Readings

All required readings are posted as PDF files, handouts, or links on the Blackboard website for the course in accordance with Educational Fair Use standards. Note that some readings may have more than one file to keep the size of the file small and thus, easier to access. These will be clearly labeled on our Blackboard site. Completing all readings provides context for discussion boards and other assignments and is vital to success in this course. These **may include but may not be limited to** the following:

Repko, Allen F. *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014.

Boyer, Paul S. *When Time Shall Be No More.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1992. (Selected pages)

----------------. *Fallout.* Columbus, OH: The University of Ohio State Press, 1998. (Selected pages)

Cohen, Paul A. "The Apocalyptic Strain in Popular Culture: The American Nightmare Becomes the American Dream." *Hedgehog Review* (Summer 2013).
http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/THR_article_2013_Summer_Cantor.php

Kyle, Richard. The Last Days Are Here Again. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998. (Selected pages)

Newell, William H. "The Role of Interdisciplinary Studies in the Liberal Arts." *Liberal Arts Online* Volume 7 Number 1 (January 2007).
http://webshare.northseattle.edu/IS/readings/The%20Role%20of%20Interdisciplinary%20Studies%20in%20Liberal%20Arts.htm

Ruggiero, Vincent R. *Beyond Feelings: A Guide to Critical Thinking.* Ninth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012. **http://dl.keywin.org/e/2/e2af12a66b80fb72fe75bd1f42cc8431.pdf**

Trafton, Joseph L. *Reading Revelation.* Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys, 2005. (Selected pages)

In addition to required readings, each student will be responsible for reading and interpreting the articles, essays, and textual information gathered as part of their own research projects. Some of the course readings may serve as sources for the paper in certain situations.

Grading Policy:

All graded components are listed below. A detailed assignment description will be provided for each component at the appropriate time.

Five reading reflections **(200 points total [40 points each])**

Five Blackboard Discussion Boards **(200 points total [40 points each]).** These DBs will be set up for "class discussion" to happen over the course (generally, one per week). **A student much post at least two substantive posts in each DB to get any credit**. Full credit is earned by being a driver of questions, conversation, expounding on class readings, and other activity that contributes to the course.

Three Short Writings **(300 points total [100 points for each of the three {2-3 page} essays])**

- Short Writing #1: How Will It End? A Reflection on Personal Beliefs and Assumptions **DUE: Wednesday 8/23**

- Short Writing #2: Reading Revelation: Imagery of The End in the New Testament Book of Revelation **DUE: Sunday 8/27**

- Short Writing #3: Film Analysis (the chosen film must be approved by the instructor) **DUE: Wednesday 10/4**

Colonnade Connections Assessment and Evidence and Argument Artifact
Final paper (6-8 pages, minimum of six scholarly sources) related to an instructor-approved complex phenomenon connected to The End **(200 points total).**
1. Research proposal (25 points). **DUE: Wednesday 9/13**
2. Initial Source List (25 points). **DUE: Wednesday 9/27**
3. Final paper (150 points). **DUE: Thursday 10/12**

Final Semester Reflection Paper **(100 points) DUE: Friday 10/13**
1000 POINTS TOTAL

*LATE SUBMISSIONS WITHING 24 HOURS OF THE DUE DATE CARRY A 10% PENALTY. LATE SUBMISSIONS WITHIN 24-48 HOURS CARRY A 20% PENALTY. NO WORK MORE THAN 48 HOURS LATE WILL BE ACCEPTED BARRING SERIOUSLY EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

*The final paper will consist of a longer, more detailed essay (6-8 pages) with visuals or data presented in an attempt to wrestle with an interdisciplinary question regarding The End. The student must formally submit a proposal for research by the set deadline for instructor approval. After approval, the student must then compile an initial source list by the set deadline. Ultimately, these papers are meant to feature the student's interdisciplinary methods of approach to their question and demonstrate work consistent with the course's listed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). There will be specific due dates and requirements for each stage of the project.

Each student will be responsible for completing all of the assigned materials to be able to actively participate (in a well-informed manner) in Blackboard discussions. Specific instructions and due dates will be given for each graded assignment.

Your participation is directly related to the success in this course (both individually and collectively). Success in this course consists of class contribution, written work, and various other assessments. Since the class is a building process, there are various costs related to missing any one reading or assignment. Circumstances will only be considered at the discretion of the professor with as much fairness as possible. Moreover, "patterns" of behavior often prove most telling regarding a student's level of engagement in any given course. Therefore, strive to establish a pattern of consistency regarding all course components.

Grading will be based on the assessment of the student's performance in completing each of the course requirements. Furthermore, **all activity and submissions done via electronic technology are the sole responsibility of the student**. That is, if you post something without the submission/text being recorded (like posting a document that cannot be opened or is empty), it is **not** a credit toward handing it in on time. Always re-check and make sure it posted correctly. Of course, your accessibility to Blackboard for course requirements and your navigation of the Internet for research, images, web links, articles and media files are all mandatory. Do not wait to check on accessibility to important course files or downloadable files from Library Internet sites until the last minute.

Blackboard, Net-tiquette (Etiquette for Online Activities), **and Online Policies**

For all written work, your responses should be done in a **college level writing** style (proper spelling and grammar) and clearly address the issues being discussed.

Class emails will be sent via Blackboard to students – you must check and use your university registered email account for this class. Please use proper headings (I.E., be specific in the subject line) and your name at the end for all emails. If you utilize an email address other than your WKU account, be aware that the professor's university required filter for spam might not allow the receipt of your email. Additionally, unless requested by the professor, do not send email submissions in place of Blackboard assignments.

All information and readings shared via Blackboard by the professor and for student coursework will be "done for educational purposes only" to maintain copyright laws. However, the professor retains the rights to all personally created pedagogical materials for this course.

For ALL difficulties or problems with Blackboard, library access, software issues or hardware problems, you must pursue every avenue at hand before contacting the professor. Blackboard has a terrific "Help" section to assist you with this course and concerning the different technical issues or procedures. WKU's Informational Technology website, http://www.wku.edu/it/ offers online help and video tutorials (there are videos just for helping you with Blackboard). Even their Helpdesk has a live chat or phone option (270)745-7000. Additionally, the WKU Library site, http://www.wku.edu/library/ has different help sections, including an online ask-a-librarian, to assist you with the location of materials.

Writing Requirements:

When working on the essays or the final project, think about how your writing exhibits your understanding of the material covered in the readings or other course activities. Use your critical thinking and various skill sets to draw your own conclusions. Do not use non-adjudicated sources for any information in this course – this includes websites like Wikipedia or Ask.com and the like.

Additionally, you will be expected to maintain professional attitudes regarding all aspects of your readings, written assignments, and outside research throughout the semester. In addition, I must remind you that **academic dishonesty of any sort will not be tolerated.** Please consult the WKU student code for references to academic dishonesty and disciplinary measures. If you take another person's work or ideas and represent them as your own, it is considered plagiarism. If you have questions or concerns on writing or citing sources, ASK me. As we are working with the Internet for research on a regular basis – always keep track of your

sources – by including the website addresses with saved downloaded files or referenced material. You must practice becoming meticulous in documentation of your sources.

If you have questions concerning writing at the college level, I suggest contacting the WKU Writing Center or consult the website for all students at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/ for more information. In this class, and most all courses, student work will be checked by plagiarism detection software. Please think about how you utilize information in every course and never misrepresent or fail to give credit to outside sources in all of your writing. In other words, it must be your work.

Other Concerns:
The professor reserves the right to make any changes to the course or syllabus when necessary for attaining the course objectives within the semester timeline. All students will be notified in writing of all changes within a reasonable timeframe.

Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities. For calendar and scheduling purposes, any necessary adaptation should be identified within the first week of the course. In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the WKU Office of Student Disability Services at the Student Success Center (DUC A200). The phone number is 745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. Per university policy, please do not request accommodations directly from the professor without a letter from the OFSDS. You may also contact them for questions and concerns.

Potential Film List for Essay 3: Film Analysis
12 Monkeys
28 Days Later
Apocalypto
Avengers Endgame   *Mad Max (original or new remake)*
Avengers Infinity War   *Matrix,The*
Contagion   *Melancholia*
Dawn of the Dead   *Miracle Mile*
Day After Tomorrow, The   *Mission, The*
Deep Impact   *Moon*
Donnie Darko   *Night of the Living Dead*
Don't Look Up   *Outbreak*
Dr. Strangelove   *Planet of the Apes*
End of Days   *Red Dawn*
End of the World, The   *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*
Gattaca   *Rosemary's Baby*
Ghostbusters   *Shawn of the Dead*
Hunger Games   *Signs*
I am Legend   *Soylent Green*
Independence Day   *Terminator*
Left Behind   *The Mission*
Logan's Run   *The Road*
Love   *WALL-E*
                                                          War of the Worlds
                                                          World War Z