

Course Description

With recent advances in artificial intelligence, materials science, quantum computing, biotechnology, and more, the future promises to look very different. Futurism or futures studies is the discipline of exploring what the future will look like and how people will live and work with these upcoming advancements. Many books and papers have been written on this subject from well-known thinkers like Max Tegmark, Michio Kaku, and Mauro F. Guillén. In this synchronous led by Eric Ianni, students will read through selected books and papers on the topic, then meet weekly to discuss what the future will look like based on those topics and how the work they are doing intersects with that future.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. **Explain** multiple visions of humanity's future.
2. **Critique** futurism predictions based on existing technologies and social trends.
3. **Synthesize** your own futurism prediction using the ideas from multiple sources.

Course Format

You could think of this course as a book club where we all work our way through books and/or articles and meet bi-weekly to discuss. We will assign a book the first. Between meetings, we will be hosting discussions using Ed. The goal for this course is to create a community of readers which explores the hopeful as well as the pessimistic possible futures for humanity.

Course Requirements & Grading:

This seminar is a Pass/Fail fully online modality that centers on engagement, collaboration, and peer discussion. Grading will be passed on overall class participation, with the expectation that everyone will pass unless some choose to stay unengaged altogether. Within this pedagogical framework, here's what participating in the class will entail:

- **Weekly Participation:** The mode of participation is entirely up to you. Every person is a different type of learner, and to ensure maximum accessibility, there are different modes of participation. You can participate in either our weekly synchronous meetings via Teams and/or in the Ed Discussion forum, where we will be hosting discussions.

- **Dialogue Facilitator:** The success of this seminar rests solely on the students' ability to engage with the readings with their peers. Therefore it is important that you as students come prepared to the bi-weekly meetings ready to discuss the readings. As you are working through the books/articles, please keep a list a running list of questions or comments you want to discuss with the group. If you cannot make the meetings or if you prefer asynchronous discussions, you are welcome to post your threads on Ed to engage with your peers.

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please

visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/Links to an external site.> or [http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/ \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)

[Links to an external site.](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at [\(404\)894-2563](tel:4048942563) or [http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/ \(Links to an external site.\)Links to an external site.](http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)

[Links to an external site.](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Participation

To gain the full course and learning experience, participation is vital. Whether that is through our weekly synchronous meetings or through Ed Discussions, participation and peer support is the key to success in this seminar.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body.

See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
[Links to an external site.](#)Links to an external site.

for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Accommodations for Religious Observances

I respect your right to observe your religion and will do what I can to accommodate your needs. With this in mind, you are permitted to be absent from class to take part in religious observances. For planning purposes, I ask that you provide me with written notice of your upcoming absence within the first two weeks of class. For more information on Georgia Tech's policy regarding student rights and responsibilities around planned absences from class, please see <http://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.
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Freedom of Expression and Guidelines for Discussion

I respect your right to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. I am also committed to maintaining an orderly learning environment for all students and ensuring that all facilities are used in a way that facilitates teaching, learning, and research. Therefore, I encourage you to voice your opinions respectfully, as long as they are related to the content of this class and as long as doing so does not infringe unduly on the rights of other. You are also encouraged to share personal experiences and opinions with respect to the topics covered in this class as this is a safe space of learning. In an environment of mutual respect we should be able to engage in well-rounded and constructive discussion that is beneficial to all of us.

Recording Classroom Activities

In order to preserve class integrity, student privacy, and a safe environment to express opinions, recording of our classes using digital, tape, or audio devices is not allowed. You are welcome (and even encouraged) to take notes and photos of the board. This policy can be waived for students with accommodations upon explicit recommendation from the Office of Disability Services.