WAL: Classics and Sci Fi (CLHU N294; Spring ’24)

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WAL Classics and Sci Fi (Spring ’24) asks students to consider the many links between science fiction--a genre that envisions humanity’s future--and the classical past, specifically how modern authors/directors draw upon and re-present Greek and Roman literature, philosophy, myth, and history. While some background for the long history of sci fi adopting and adapting the classics will be given, the course focuses on a wide range of 20th/21st century sources that students will be most familiar with including novels, television series, films, and video games. Students will be asked to think about and write about these texts from perspectives in sci fi (i.e. post humanism, the dark forest theory, etc.) as well as in classical studies (i.e. stoicism, feminism, etc.) Readings/viewings in sci fi include Collins (*Hunger Games*), Roddenberry (*Star Trek TNG*), Lucas (*Star Wars*), Herbert (*Dune*), Scott (*Alien*) and Ubisoft’s *Assassin’s Creed Odyssey*. Readings in classics include Homer, Hesiod, Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Cicero, Livy, Marcus Aurelius, Plautus, and Terence.

WAL Classics and Sci Fi meets the Writing about Literature requirements through the following approaches. The WAL criteria of critical thinking will be met by in-class discussions that focus on strategies for reading and explicating themes and patterns in the ancient and modern works we are reading. Class discussions will also help students refine their analysis of the texts and prepare for both in class and take-home writing projects. The WAL criteria of effective communication will be met by a variety of writing assignments that range from short responses (i.e. blog post format) that will be revised based on peer workshopping, to longer “think pieces” that are written over multiple weeks. All writing formats will incorporate some form of revision/response that encourages students to polish their ability to express their ideas in writing.

WAL Classics and Sci Fi will be a semester-long course and not J Term or M Term.