

COURSE TITLE: Introduction to Futures Studies

This course is an introduction to the emerging field of Futures Studies from the perspective of the World Futures Studies Federation, WFSF and TeachTheFutures, TTF. Futures Studies emerged in the 1960s as an alternative to the traditional approaches for forecasting and planning. The futures approach of the WFSF-TTF differs from those approaches by recognizing that social change has increased with significant consequences for greater complexity and more frequent disruptions in the conditions and issues of today's world. The methods and approaches taught in the course are reflecting this development.

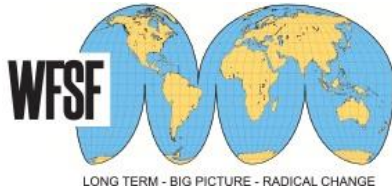
Semester Credit Hours: 3 (3,0)

I. Course Overview

This course is an introduction to the emerging field of Futures Studies. Futures Studies emerged in the 1960s as an alternative to the traditional approaches for forecasting and planning. The futures approach differs from those approaches by recognizing that social change has increased with significant consequences for greater complexity and more frequent disruptions in the conditions and issues of today's world. As a result, futurists recommend a scenario approach to the future rather than straight line predictions and an approach to planning that includes the likelihood of disruptions compared to step-by-step, error-free plans.

II. PMU Competencies and Learning Outcomes

The practice of Futures Studies requires a suite of traditional cross-disciplinary skills, such as research, collaboration and communication, and less frequently practiced skills, such as inferential reasoning and critical, contingent and creative thinking. At the end of this course, students will be able to think critically about claims made about the future by examining the evidence and asking what else could reasonably be true. They will also be able to construct their own claims about the future involving multiple scenarios and their consequences for themselves, their communities and the world as a whole. Finally, they will learn that they must be leaders or support leaders if they are to have influence in the world of the future.



III. Detailed Course Description

The course proceeds in three distinct phases:

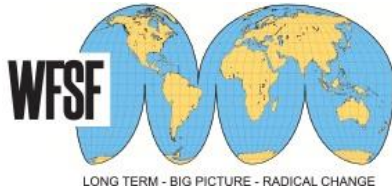
- a. The background of Futures Studies including its purpose, history and some of its epistemological approaches
- b. Various approaches to understanding stability and change in society
- c. The methods that futurists use to anticipate and influence the future

IV. Requirements Fulfilled

This course satisfies three hours of the Social Science Elective of College Core Curriculum requirement

V. Required Prerequisites

This course does not have a prerequisite.



VI. Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to...

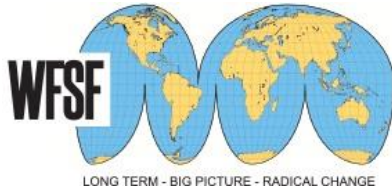
1. Distinguish the approach used Futures Studies compared to traditional forecasting and planning and explain why Futures Studies is a better approach for our time
2. Briefly recount the history of Futures Studies and where it stands today
3. Explain different approaches to thinking about change and the future along with their uses
4. Identify the signals that support our claims about the future
5. Describe an alternative future in the form of brief, imaginative scenario
6. Identify the elements of a successful campaign to create change

VII. Assessment Strategies

| | Assessment Task | Weight |
|---|---|-------------|
| 1 | An essay arguing that Futures Studies is a better approach for forecasting and planning in today's environment than more traditional approaches | |
| 2 | A timeline of developments in Futures Studies | |
| 3 | Three examples of the use of alternative perspectives on stability and change and describe what they say | |
| 4 | Three strong signals that lead to the Baseline Future including the assumptions required for that future to actually come true | |
| 5 | Three weak signals that could lead to an Alternative Future, describing that future in the form of a story about someone who lives in that future | |
| 6 | The vision of a significant change in the future and some steps that one could take to start making that future come true | |
| | Midterm exam | 15% |
| | Final term exam | 15% |
| | Total | 100% |

VIII. Course format

Students will attend three one-hour lecture/discussion sessions per week.



The course homepage on the University's BLACKBOARD system should contain the following:

- Course syllabus
- Course assignments
- Course calendar
- Course e-mail utility
- Course discussion list
- Peer review utility

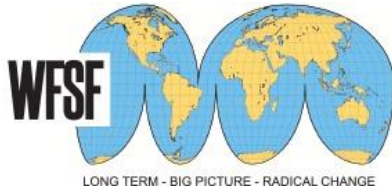
Classroom Hours (3 hours per week)

Class: 3

Lab: 0

IX. Topics to be Covered

1. Introduction to the course
2. Introduction to Futures Studies
3. The History of Futures Studies
4. The Epistemology of Futures Studies
 - a. Perspectives
 - b. Inferential reasoning
 - c. Futures Literacy
5. Alternative Perspectives on Stability and Change
 - a. The Attributes of Change
 - b. Systems Thinking, Complexity
 - c. Social Change
 - d. Causal Layered Analysis
 - e. The Integral Framework
6. Methods of Futures Studies
 - a. Research, Scanning
 - b. Strong Signals, Expected Future
 - c. Critical Thinking, Weak Signals, Scenario methodology
 - d. Leadership, Innovation, Visioning, Goal setting
 - e. Planning, Change management
7. Conclusion, Reflection



X. Laboratory Exercises

This course does not require a separate lab.

XI. Technology Component

Students are expected to have a computer account on the University's BLACKBOARD system to communicate. Students should immediately sign up for the online discussion group for the class. Students are also expected to become familiar with the use of the Internet & library resources. All assignments and projects are submitted online. Assignments focus on guided collaborative learning, media-assisted instruction, research projects, and laboratory and computer exercises. Students should check with their instructor in order to obtain the specific methods to be used in the course.

XII. Special Projects

The following two group assignments are required to complete the course.

A. Assignment 1 – Assessment #3

B. Assignment 2 – Assessment #4

XIII. Textbooks and Teaching aids

A. Required Texts

Wendell Bell (B), *Foundations of Futures Studies, Vol I*, Routledge, 2010,

ISBN-10: 0765805391

ISBN-13: 978-0765805393

Peter Bishop & Andy Hines (BH), *Teaching about the Future*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012,

ISBN-10: 0230363490

ISBN-13: 978-0230363496

Jennifer Gidley, *The Future: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2017,

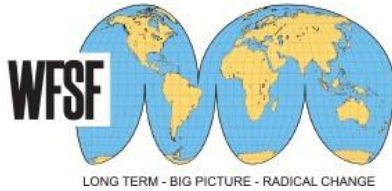
ISBN-10: 9780198735281

ISBN-13: 978-0198735281

Edward Cornish (C), *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future*, World Future Society, 2005,

ISBN-10: 0930242610

ISBN-13: 978-0930242619



B. Recommended Texts

John Urry (U), *What is the Future?*, Polity, 2016,

ISBN-10: 0745696546

ISBN-13: 978-0745696546

Kees van der Heijden, *Scenarios: The Art of Strategic Conversation*, Wiley 2nd edition, 2005,

ISBN-10: 0470023686

ISBN-13: 978-0470023686

C. Supplemental Print Materials

None

D. Supplemental online Materials

Victor Motti, "Sources of Futures Studies from Foresight to Anticipation," 2017, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318174901_Sources_of_Futures_Studies_from_Foresight_to_Anticipation

John Smart, *Foresight Guide*, <http://www.foresightguide.com/primary-foresight-associations/>

Riel Miller, "Learning, the Future, and Complexity. An Essay on the Emergence of Futures Literacy," *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 50, No. 4, 2015, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Riel_Miller2/publication/285051882_Learning_the_Future_and_Complexity_An_Essay_on_the_Emergence_of_Futures_Literacy/links/5ad86dcd458515c60f589f9d/Learning-the-Future-and-Complexity-An-Essay-on-the-Emergence-of-Futures-Literacy.pdf

Causal Layered Analysis, *Shaping Tomorrow*, <https://www.shapingtomorrow.com/webtext/55>

Sohail Inayatullah, "Causal Layered Analysis: A Four-Level Approach to Alternative Futures," *Futuribles International*, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332706079_Causal_Layered_Analysis_A_Four-Level_Approach_to_Alternative_Futures_RELEVANCE_AND_USE_IN_FORESIGHT

Sohail Inayatullah, "Causal Layered Analysis," TEDx Noosa, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImWDMFPfifI>

Richard Slaughter, "Integral Futures," <https://integralfutures.com/integral-futures-by-richard-a-slaughter/>