Blogging Grading Rubric
*Please refer to the full guidelines below for more detailed guidelines about blogging expectations and guidelines.

Blog Post Grade	Grade Criteria
5 Excellent (100/100) *A grade of 4 (90/100) represents work whose quality is between 3 & 5	The post meets or exceeds the required minimum length (500 words), is submitted on time, categorized correctly, and follows all guidelines/expectations (for blogging in general, and for that particular post, if there were additional instructions/prompts provided). The post displays a clear/competent understanding of the text(s), but moves beyond mere summary to critical engagement/dialogue with the text(s) in the context of the overall themes of the course. It extends class/online discussions with its excellent analysis, and offers compelling, insightful, and developed claims and evidence. The post is structured logically/coherently, with multiple paragraphs, each with one main idea (fully developed) and topic sentences that reflect that focus. While multiple ideas/points may be discussed, there is a unifying theme/argument to the post: a sense of how all the various points fit together. The post is virtually error free, at the sentence-level, having been carefully proofread/edited. Texts/ideas are cited completely/correctly in MLA style.
3 Satisfactory (80/100) *A grade of 2 (70/100) represents work whose quality is between 1 & 3	The blog post is the required length and on-topic, but offers too much summary and too little analysis. It has some good points and potential, but it does not push these ideas further to show why/how they are significant in the context of their overall response, and the overall themes of the course. The blog post is structured relatively well, but has some ideas jumbled together, sentence-level errors, and/or incorrect (or missing) citations that interfere with its clarity/persuasiveness.
1 Unsatisfactory (60/100)	The blog post is submitted on time but is underdeveloped, either because it does not meet the minimum length requirement and/or does not critically/completely engage with the text(s)/assignment. It presents a great deal of summary of the texts ideas and/or the professor/classmates' ideas (either in class or on the blog), and/or only responds tangentially/superficially/generally. It is not structured effectively, with many ideas jumbled together, no clear argument/topic sentences, incorrect/ineffective use of evidence/summary/paraphrase/citation. There are many sentence-level errors.
0 No credit (0/100)	The blog post was either not submitted, submitted after the deadline, very short (just a few sentences), irrelevant/off-topic, and/or doesn't follow the assignment instructions.

Blogging Expectations & Guidelines

We are using [City Tech's OpenLab](#) (built on the blogging software WordPress) for our course site. On the [course site](#) you can find everything you need this semester. However, this is not just a place where you will come to find information and read what I or others have already written. Instead, you are expected to consistently and actively participate in creating content on the site by blogging: posting reflections and analyses of texts, discussing ideas with me and your classmates, reading and commenting on what others have posted, and linking to/reflecting on interesting and relevant material you have found through everyday experience as well as outside research. Below are detailed guidelines for OpenLab Composing (Blogging) for the course, which is a significant portion (30%) of your overall course grade.

Blog Quantity & Deadlines

There may be multiple blog posts/comments due every week and these assignments ensure that (and evaluate how) you are actively engaging with the materials and the ideas presented in the course on a regular basis. Unless otherwise noted, **all blogs are due by the start of class (2:30pm) on the due date listed.** I strongly encourage you to blog as early a possible, in order to give both your classmates and me adequate time to read/comment on your writing (we will use this writing as part of our in-class discussions and workshops). **Late blogs will receive no credit.**

Unless otherwise noted, all blog posts should be **a minimum of 500 words** (though I encourage you to write longer ones), though comments can (and should!) be shorter because often you are just dropping a quick response to someone else.

You are expected to **read all blog posts/comments** on our site (including those made by me and by your classmates), ideally **before each class begins**. This is a part of the **required reading** for the course, and is a necessary/mandatory component of your coming prepared to class ready to discuss the day's texts. Anything written in a blog or comment is fair game for class discussion, quizzes (which could be unannounced), essays, projects, and exams.

Blog Formality & Mechanics

Blogging has a particular form and genre, conventions/characteristics unique to it (just like any other mode of writing), and we will discuss this style more as the semester progresses. For now, keep in mind that your entries are informal writing assignments (you can–and should!–use "I") and you do not need to be revise them as meticulously as your formal essays or projects. However, **you must still edit/proofread** them for coherence/meaning as well as obvious spelling/grammar mistakes. And, **always categorize your posts** (we will experiment with "tagging" them throughout the semester, but more on that later ... for now, just remember to categorize).

Blog Purpose

Blogging prepares you for our in-class discussions and your larger assignments, but it also is an opportunity to reflect on your everyday experiences, current news/events, and personal thoughts/emotions that are related to our course content and to your progress as science fiction readers and as critical thinkers and writers this semester. You are not restricted to just blogging when you are assigned to do so … you should blog about things you are interested in and you feel would be of interest to others in the class. Additionally, if you want to strengthen your writing skills or increase your English language proficiency, you're in luck: simply writing on a regular basis will aid you tremendously in reaching these goals. I encourage you to blog often!

Sometimes you will be blogging an individual reflection or reading response (similar to a journal entry), sometimes you will be posting a writing assignment (such as a proposal or draft of essay), and other times you will participate in an on-going conversation with others in the class (a prompt will either be provided by me or another student). You may be expected to kick off a discussion on our blog, and then others will be expected to respond to you by commenting on your post. The material you post on our course blog will become part of our class meetings: I will discuss excerpts from student blogs (both to facilitate writing workshops and to use as a jumping-off point for the day's reading/discussion). In addition, everyone in the course will be reading your writing, so you should spend as much effort as possible composing your writing there. Please note that **our OpenLab course site is public, so anything you post (whether a post or comment) is visible to anyone on the Web.** Think about the type of content you would feel comfortable with your parents, employers, other professors, and friends seeing as representative of your work, and then post accordingly. Don't be intimidated to put your writing out there, but be intentional.

Blog Grading

I will be reading/assessing your blogs regularly, and you will receive a grade for each blog, after it is due. Grades will appear as a "private comment" on your post, which will be visible only to you and me (the other students in the course cannot see them, and neither can the broader public). You can view the grade for all of your posts in your course Dashboard, under "Posts." Please see the Blogging Grading Rubric above for more detail about how your OpenLab compositions will be assessed.

Please note, however, that simply skimming a reading and jotting down a few words about it does not mean that you have satisfactorily fulfilled a blog post. Similarly, only using spelling/grammar check on your computer does not count as revision/proofreading. You will be graded on the quality of your engagement with the material and the effectiveness of your presentation of your ideas. Missing blogs and incredibly short, general, and/or sloppy blogs will be given no credit and will negatively affect your overall course grade. Also, note that all blogs are time-stamped automatically and **late blogs will receive no credit.** Blogs that are **not properly categorized with the appropriate content category will receive no credit.**

Periodically, I will designate certain blogs that are particularly strong/successful as "Featured Posts." Throughout the semester, students will also be asked (required) to nominate a blog each week for a "People's Choice Post." It is an honor to have your writing chosen for a Featured Post or People's Choice Post (though you shouldn't feel badly if yours isn't chosen ... everyone can't always be featured!), and you can use these excellent blogs as models for your own work.

Our in-class blogging workshops along with your blog grades provide an ongoing assessment of your writing (and its improvement) but I am always more than happy to discuss your writing in more detail with you. You are welcome to **visit my office hours** at any point during the semester to get more detailed individualized feedback on your blogging and to discuss strategies for improvement.

Blog Titles

Make sure to title each blog with a concise, relevant title that clearly reflects the content of your contribution. Blog posted will automatically provide your name and the date/time you post, so there is no need to put this information in the subject line. A reader should be able to quickly glance at your blog title and have a good sense about what it contains (much like the tile of an essay or a book chapter).

Blog Content

Unless otherwise noted or provided with a specific prompt or discussion question/s, your assigned blogs are a response to the course texts (remember, a "text" can be a short story, film, newspaper article, novel, website, advertisement, TV show, video game, song, draft of your own/a classmate's writing, etc.).

*Don't become dependent on secondary sources to understand the texts we are reading, however. Unless specifically stated otherwise, **I am primarily interested in your close reading of the texts**. I want to see you work through the assigned texts, not simply report back what someone else has already written about them. When we get to the research component of our course, this will of course change, but we'll discuss that change when it comes.

If you feel stuck and don't know what to write, consider one of the following approaches:

- Find a quote, passage, or idea from one of the texts (or multiple texts) that particularly grabs your attention, is provocative, raises questions, or confuses you (however, make sure to try to grapple with the issues, not just state, "I don't know what this means!"). Provide the excerpt (properly cited, with quotation marks and page number in parentheses) and then build your blog around engaging this excerpt.

- If we have a number of readings for the day, you don't need to blog on each one individually (no need to create four separate blogs!) or to simply list a few lines about each one in isolation. Instead you might try to synthesize the readings, or to focus on only one or two of them, making thematic connections among various texts.

- Additionally, you can relate the texts to an outside source (another text). In this case, you should link to the material, if possible using the "link" button in the post editor (if you are unsure what an editing button does, just hover your cursor over it and then it will provide text that explains the function). Make sure to provide citation for the text (including images or videos!) and to clearly explain how/why it is related to/significant for an understanding of the assigned material. This outside information is acceptable (and often even encouraged), but you should always make sure to ground your responses in the texts that we are reading for the class, providing quotations and analysis of them as the foundation for this additional discussion.

- Finally, even though we meet for class frequently, you may not always get to discuss everything you want, or perhaps you have a new thought on something when we are not together. Therefore, you can continue this line of inquiry in your blog. Don't merely repeat what has already been discussed … make sure to flesh the ideas out in some way and build on them. Feel free to ask questions that you think should be taken up during the next class meeting.

- And of course, you should post whenever you want: if you see a relevant on the subway – snap a photo of it, post, and blog! If you saw a TV show that made you think about some of the concepts/themes related that we've been discussing in the course, blog away! If you believe something in another one of your classes at City Tech, or your major, or your job, or your dreams or hopes or fears, or relates in some way (even tangentially) to what we have been discussing and you want to share with us, blog blog blog 😀