**New York City College of Technology**

**Interdisciplinary Committee**

**Course Review Form**

**DATE:** 8/31/2015

**REVIEWER:** Sean MacDonald

**COURSE TITLE & NUMBER:** Science Fiction ENG 2420

**PROPOSED BY:** Alan Lovegreen & Oleg Berman

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**PREREQUISITES:** ENG 1101

**COURSE IS:** 🗵 Existing New In development

**PROPOSED COURSE DESIGNATION**: 🗵 College Option 🗵 elective Capstone other:

**DEPARTMENT HOUSED IN:** English

**PROPOSED STRUCTURE (Co-taught)**

**CREDIT DISTRIBUTION** 1.5 and 1.5

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** Study of science fiction literature and film, with attention to cultural implications of the genre. Explores the questions science and technology raise about past, present and future societies. Projects, presentations and exams based on readings.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE HOW COURSE MEETS INTERDISCIPLINARY CRITERIA?**

As described in the interdisciplinary course description, this course seeks to introduce students to a physics perspective on science fiction literature, and to explore how physics historically influenced the development of science fiction. The course is designed to engage students in critical thinking, by looking at works of science fiction and the futuristic worlds they have conceived from the perspectives of the theoretical physics that lie behind these visions. The concept of futuristic worlds and futurism as applied in other disciplines further encourages students to think abstractly and apply concepts across disciplines. The proposers are examining works of fiction drawing upon the physics behind the imagination, while incorporating the perspectives of other disciplines, including mechanical engineering, biological sciences, and the social sciences. The theme of the course: the ‘reciprocal relationship between two speculative discourses: science fiction and theoretical physics,’ and the approach to the material clearly show that the course meets interdisciplinary criteria.

The learning outcomes for the course:

The learning outcomes for the course clearly connect and integrate cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills; Students will be asked to look at a variety of concerns that neither physics nor English can effectively address without an integrated approach; Students will be asked to synthesize knowledge across disciplines by examining science fiction narratives from a range of perspectives; they will be asked to explore questions such as whether the technologies depicted in the literature envision a future where ethical and social problems can be addressed. Students given the tools to question the complexity of modeling and predicting the future; they will be asked to think critically, employing techniques of peer-to-peer learning, as well as oral and visual communication.

This course is clearly distinct from other sections of ENG2420 in that it goes well beyond reading and analyzing works of science fiction from a strictly literary perspective.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE?**

<**Consider:** the interdisciplinary structure of the course, will be team taught by faculty in the English and Physics departments; Its theme is escribed as ‘**the vibrant reciprocal relationship between two speculative discourses: science fiction and theoretical physics’.** The rationale for the co-teaching format is to expose students to science fiction narratives while making possible the exploration of the visions presented from the perspective of physics and other related disciplines.

**DOES COURSE MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION?** < see links for criteria CityTech: <http://www.300jaystreet.com/college-council/curriculum_proposals/past_proposals> NYS: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/liberalarts.htm> Yes.

**STRENGTHS:** The course is well conceived; it appears designed to engage students in the kinds of inquiry they would not explore in a science fiction course alone; the proposed course introduces a multi-disciplinary approach to some interesting questions that lie behind the futuristic visions of science fiction; it challenges students to engage in looking at these worlds through the lens of theoretical physics as well as other disciplines; it employs practices such as student/peer interaction and problem solving.

**WEAKNESSES: None**