

# Uncommon Arts: Environmental Science in Recent Popular Film

IDH2952 Class# 25927 (1 credit hour – Honors course)

Spring Semester 2025

Face-to-face class meetings: Wednesdays 10:40 AM – 11:30 AM in Honors Village 1, Room 114

Optional Film Screenings: Tuesdays 5:10 PM – 8:10 PM (see schedule for room location)

**Instructor:** Dr. Ryan Good (he/him)

**Email:** [ryangood@ufl.edu](mailto:ryangood@ufl.edu)

**Office Phone:** 352-294-6348

**Office Location:** McCarty D, Room 2049

**Drop-In Office Hours:** M 10:00 – 11:00 am, W 2:30 – 3:30 pm, or by appointment

## Course Description, Overview and Purpose

How do we understand the physical world around us? How can our environment influence every other part of our lives? These are big questions without easy answers. In this course we'll approach these big questions by exploring how environmental science has been portrayed in recent popular film. We will watch, discuss, and dissect films from widely popular and award-winning filmmakers such as Christopher Nolan, Bong Joon-ho, Alexander Payne, and Alex Garland. During the course we will consider popcorn blockbusters, prestige dramas, low-brow comedies, and more to get the most robust and complete picture of how modern Hollywood portrays the environment.

The course won't have any substantial readings, but we will watch an assigned film every week. Class activities will include weekly Socratic discussions about the week's film, occasional reflection essays, and a final project compiling your thoughts and conclusions at the end of the semester. In addition to the weekly class meeting, films will be screened each week on Tuesdays at 5:10pm. Attendance at this screening is not required, but if you do not attend the screening, you will need to watch the week's film on your own.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Critique fictional representations of the physical environment and environmental processes
- Evaluate how personal and societal understanding of the environment is influenced by its representation in popular film

## Required Technology

Students need to have access to a personal computer or laptop with a working webcam and microphone in order to access all features of the course Canvas site, and to participate in online office hours. Broadband internet access is required.

## Required Textbook

No required textbook.

## Required Films

These films are required viewing for the course. To ensure accessibility, all films will be screened with subtitles when available. Some films include scenes that may cause discomfort, including depictions of menace, profanity, sexual activity, violence, and deaths.

In addition to the Tuesday screening, streaming and/or DVD copies of the films will be placed on reserve at the UF Libraries when a copy is available in their collection. Details will be posted on Canvas.

Aja, Alexandre, director. *Crawl*. 2019. 87 mins.

Chung, Lee Isaac, director. *Twisters*. 2024. 122 mins.

Emmerich, Roland, director. *The Day After Tomorrow*. 2004. 123 mins.

Garland, Alex, director. *Annihilation*. 2018. 115 mins.

Gilroy, Tony, director. *Michael Clayton*. 2007. 120 mins.

Joon-Ho, Bong, director. *Snowpiercer*. 2013. 126 mins.

Joy, Lisa, director. *Reminiscence*. 2021. 116 mins.

Judge, Mike, director. *Idiocracy*. 2006. 84 mins.

Kahiu, Wanuri, director. *Pumzi*. 2009. 21 mins.

Nolan, Christopher, director. *Interstellar*. 2014. 169 mins.

Payne, Alexander, director. *Downsizing*. 2017. 135 mins.

Reynolds, Kevin, director. *Waterworld*. 1995. 135 mins.

### Grading Policies

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards your Honors Completion Requirements. (Exception: Honors Quest I and II sections require a C). Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Completion module to earn Honors Milestone / Completion credit.

### Grading scale

The final grade for this course is based on a 1000-point scale and will be weighted as follows:

Grade	Points	Percent	Grade	Points	Percent
A:	930.0 to 1000.0	93.0% to 100.0%	C:	730.0 to < 770.0	73.0 to < 77.0%
A-	900.0 to < 930.0	90.0 to < 93.0%	C-	700.0 to < 730.0	70.0 to < 73.0%
B+:	870.0 to < 900.0	87.0 to < 90.0%	D+:	670.0 to < 700.0	67.0 to < 70.0%
B:	830.0 to < 870.0	83.0 to < 87.0%	D:	630.0 to < 670.0	63.0 to < 67.0%
B-	800.0 to < 830.0	80.0 to < 83.0%	D-	600.0 to < 630.0	60.0 to < 63.0%
C+:	770.0 to < 800.0	77.0 to < 80.0%	E:	< 600.0	< 60.0%

The final grade for this course is based on a 1000-point scale and will be weighted as follows:

Grade Component	Points	Percentage
Class Attendance and Engagement	300	30.0%
Weekly Film Screening Worksheets (12 x 20 points)	240	24.0%
Pre and Post Knowledge Surveys (2 x 50 points)	100	10.0%
Reflection Essays (3 x 50 points)	150	15.0%
Final Project	210	21.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Grade cutoffs are exact; you should not expect any rounding of scores at the end of the semester.

*Class Attendance and Engagement:* Students significantly contribute to creating a comfortable and productive learning environment by attending and participating productively in class. I encourage questions and sharing of relevant experiences! Grades are based on attendance and frequency and quality of student contributions to the class. You are allowed one unexcused absence that will not impact your grade.

*Weekly Film Screening Worksheets:* For each film screened, you will fill out a worksheet of the key points and themes of the film to verify your understanding of the film's content and to prepare for our in-class discussions on Wednesdays. Films will be screened each week on Tuesdays at 5:10pm. Attendance at this screening is not required, but if you do not attend the screening, you will need to watch the week's film on your own. These assignments are due each week at the start of class.

*Pre and Post Knowledge Surveys:* At the start and end of the course, you will complete a short activity testing your knowledge of and thoughts about environmental science to help us gauge how these films have shaped and changed our thoughts over the course of the semester. These activities will be graded on completion rather than accuracy.

*Reflection Essays:* Roughly every third of the course, you will compose a short essay (1-2 pages) responding to questions that engage with themes emerging from the films and our discussions about them. These free response assignments are intended to help you organize your thoughts and prepare for a fruitful discussion in class. These assignments are due on Fridays @ 11:59pm on weeks they are assigned.

*Final Project:* You will complete a final project reflecting on how your personal understanding of the environment has or has not been influenced by our case study films. Specific details about assignment requirements will be determined by our early in-class discussions and will be posted on Canvas.

Specific grading criteria for each assignment will be provided on Canvas. You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course until the end of the semester. In case of a grading dispute, you must notify the instructor via email within one week of the date the grade is posted. It is your responsibility to ensure that all assignments are successfully uploaded to Canvas. Missing, corrupt, or incompatible files may result in grade penalties up to a score of zero for the assignment.

## **Honors Program Information**

Honors Program, 201 Walker Hall, 352-392-1519

Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email [advisor@honors.ufl.edu](mailto:advisor@honors.ufl.edu)

Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/ufhonorsadvising>

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance Policy**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> .

Excusable reasons:

- In case of illness, upon receipt of a doctor's note or equivalent, or by following the procedure outlined here: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications>.
- In case of religious holidays, by informing your instructor via email at least one week ahead of time.
- In case of military duty, jury duty, participation in academic conferences, or participation in official university or UAA events, by providing appropriate evidence at least one week ahead of time.

- In case of family emergencies or other extenuating circumstances, by following the procedure outlined here: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications>.
- In all other cases, or if you are unsure, please email your instructor as soon as feasible. Absences are generally not excused for non-emergency travel and vehicle problems.

You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time unless an extension has been requested via email and approved by your instructor prior to the deadline. In case of true documented emergencies, the instructor may waive this requirement.

### **Late Work**

You are responsible for turning assignments in on time unless an extension has been requested via email prior to the deadline. In case of true documented emergencies, I may waive this requirement. Technical difficulties are not generally an excuse for missing an assessment or assignment; you should have contingency plans in case any such issues arise. Try not to wait until the last minute to submit assignments!

Late submissions will incur a penalty of 20% per day. A day is defined as 24 hours from the due date and time. Submissions more than three days late will receive a grade of zero.

I highly recommend starting work on assignments early to preclude unexpected emergencies or late-semester stress from compromising your grade. Deadline extensions may be available on certain assignments if requested ahead of time via email, but must be justified. If extended deadlines are not met, late penalties will be assessed based on the original, not the revised due date!

Finally, please do not wait until the end of the semester to discuss problems with the course material or performance in class. Your performance and success are important to the instructor, the Honors Program, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, and University of Florida, so please contact the instructor to discuss your concerns as soon as they arise.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement**

AI applications including natural language chatbots like ChatGPT are an amazing new technology that is revolutionizing the way we access information, just like computers, the internet, and mobile phones did in prior decades. AI can be a useful tool for tasks such as editing, spellchecking, organizing, and brainstorming. **Other uses, including copying & pasting ChatGPT output and representing as your own work, are not appropriate in college courses; doing so constitutes academic dishonesty. All work submitted for credit in this class must be your own.** If you use any AI application for any part of an assignment (including brainstorming ideas or editing), you must state so as part of your submission. AI-generated images may not be used unless expressly approved by your instructor for a specific assignment.

### **Course Communications and Technology**

The preferred way to get ahold of me of class and office hours is via Canvas message or UF email. Emails from outside providers, like Gmail, are not considered secure and will be ignored to protect student privacy. University policy dictates that grades cannot be discussed via email, so if you have a grade-specific question, you should ask it in person or via Canvas message. For all communications, you can expect a response within 24 hours on weekdays. All students are expected to check the course web site on Canvas (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>) on a daily basis. In addition, I may send specific communications directly to your UF, which you should check daily as well. You should enable Canvas notifications for this class, so that you are notified immediately about grading, assignment feedback, due date changes, announcements, etc.

### **Canvas Display Name Change**

Canvas uses the "Display Name" as set in myUFL. The Display Name is what you want people to see in the UF Directory, such as "Ally" instead of "Allison." To update your display name, go to [one.ufl.edu](http://one.ufl.edu), click on the dropdown at the top right, and select "Directory Profile." Click "Edit" on the right of the name panel,

uncheck "Use my legal name" under "Display Name," update how you wish your name to be displayed, and click "Submit" at the bottom. This change may take up to 24 hours to appear in Canvas. This does not change your legal name for official UF records.

## University of Florida Policies

### Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see <https://policy.ufl.edu/regulation/4-040/>.

### **PLAGIARISM, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL, IS A SERIOUS AND POTENTIALLY CAREER-ENDING FORM OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT. Copying and pasting is never okay in academia.**

Direct quotes are not commonly used in science writing; paraphrases accompanied by a proper citation should be used instead. Use of photographs or images without proper citation, both in-text and in a references list, is also considered plagiarism.

### Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

### Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

## Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking quizzes or exams.

Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. The DRC may be contacted by visiting 001 Reid Hall, calling 352-392-8565, or visiting their web site at [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/).

## Student Complaints

Residential Course: <https://www.ombuds.ufl.edu/complaint-portal/>

Online Course: <https://pfs.tnt.aa.ufl.edu/state-authorization-status/#student-complaint>

## Campus Helping Resources

**Your wellbeing is important to your instructor and the University of Florida community.** Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

## Whole Gator App

The Whole Gator and website and app connects UF students with resources dedicated to supporting overall health and well-being. In addition to many of the resources below it also has strategies to practice self-care. <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/topics>.

## Health and Wellness

- *U Matter We Care.* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit the [U Matter. We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling & Wellness Center.* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center. Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department.* [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

- *Gatorwell Health Promotion Services*. For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, [visit the GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.
- Student Success Initiative, <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/>
- *Field and Fork Pantry*. Food and toiletries for students experiencing food insecurity.

#### Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*. Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via email at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- *Career Connections Center*. Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392- 1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- *Library Support*. Various ways to receive assistance with using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.
- *Teaching Center*. 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- *Writing Studio*. Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Dean of Students Office*. 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261. Among other services, the DSO assists students who are experiencing situations that compromises their ability to attend classes. This includes family emergencies and medical issues (including mental health crises).

## Course Outline

Date	Film	Screening Location**	Assignments Due
1/15	None	None	Pre-Knowledge Survey – due 1/17
1/22	<i>Waterworld</i>	McCarty B 3108	Film Worksheet due before class
1/29	<i>The Day After Tomorrow</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class Reflection #1 – due 1/31
2/5	<i>Idiocracy</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
2/12	<i>Michael Clayton</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
2/19	<i>Snowpiercer</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
2/26	<i>Interstellar</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
3/5	<i>Downsizing</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class Reflection #2 – due 3/7
3/12	<i>Annihilation</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
3/19	Spring Break		
3/26	No class meeting <i>Pumzi</i>	No screening – watch online: <a href="https://vimeo.com/46891859">https://vimeo.com/46891859</a>	Film Worksheet – due 3/26
4/2	<i>Crawl</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class
4/9	<i>Reminiscence</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class Reflection #3 – due 4/11
4/16	<i>Twisters</i>	McCarty B 3096	Film Worksheet due before class Project – due 4/18
4/23	None	None	Post-Knowledge Survey – due 4/23

**\*\*all films will be screened on Tuesdays @ 5:10pm in the listed locations**

### Course Alterations

Unforeseen circumstances may make it necessary to alter the information given in this syllabus during the semester. Such changes are not unusual and should be expected. All changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted to Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with any syllabus changes.