**The Future: An Introduction to Futures Studies**  
ARTSSCI 1138.xx

Day: TBA  
Time:  
Place: TBA  
Instructor: David J. Staley, PhD  
Associate Professor: History | Design | Educational Studies  
Office Hours:  
210 Dulles Hall

**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to the study of the future. The futurist Amy Webb defines futures studies as “an interdisciplinary field combining mathematics, engineering, art, technology, economics, design, history, geography, biology, theology, physics, and philosophy.” Students will be introduced to a set of intellectual tools to engage in a serious study of the future, and will be thereby equipped to face uncertainties and challenges, helping them to discover their role in shaping the future. If education is meant to prepare students for the future, then learning about the future forms a critical part of that education.

**Course Requirements:** Each week, we will read a common set of articles in order to engage in “horizon scanning” around a particular subject, the first step in futures studies. In preparation for each week’s discussion, students will write brief summaries of the main points of the articles. In class each week, we will engage in an implications assessment of the information presented in the articles. Students will be expected to play an active role in class discussion each week: indeed, students will be assessed here by their leadership of class discussion, evidence of having read the assigned readings, and the quality of their contributions to the discussion. To organize our thinking, each week we will work collaboratively to compose a “futures wheel,” which is a graphical representation of the potential future effects of some change or development. Students’ evaluations will include the quality and quantity of their contributions to these futures wheels exercises.

**Course Objectives:**

* To learn techniques of futures studies and foresight
* To develop critical reading skills
* To develop an interdisciplinary mindset

**Assessment:**

This course is graded S/U. Students will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1) Attendance: This is a simple percentage of classes attended. So, if you attend 85% of the classes, your score is an 85%

2) Active class participation: This refers to leadership of class discussion, including evidence of having read the week's readings.

3) The quality of their participation in the week's futuring exercise, specifically diagramming a "futures wheel" for the week’s topic. A futures wheel is a technique used by futurists to think through various scenarios.

**Schedule: (All readings available through Carmen)**

Week 1: Introductions

readings: Arup Foresight, “An Introduction to Corporate Foresight”

James Dator, “Attributes of a Good Futurist”

Week 2: Autonomous vehicles

readings: “Full Tilt: When 100% of Cars Are Autonomous,” <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/11/08/magazine/tech-design-autonomous-future-cars-100-percent-augmented-reality-policing.html>

“The Future Of The Transport Industry - IoT, Big Data, AI And Autonomous Vehicles,” <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2017/11/06/the-future-of-the-transport-industry-iot-big-data-ai-and-autonomous-vehicles/#2e3aa5cd1137>

Week 3: Artificial intelligence

readings: “A ‘Neurographer’ Puts the Art in Artificial Intelligence,” <https://www.wired.com/story/neurographer-puts-the-art-in-artificial-intelligence/>

“What an artificial intelligence researcher fears about AI,” <http://theconversation.com/what-an-artificial-intelligence-researcher-fears-about-ai-78655>

“Google DeepMind: AI becomes more alien,” <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-41668701>

“New Theory Cracks Open the Black Box of Deep Learning,” <https://www.quantamagazine.org/new-theory-cracks-open-the-black-box-of-deep-learning-20170921/>

“Saudi Arabia becomes first country to grant citizenship to a robot,” <https://www.dezeen.com/2017/10/26/saudi-arabia-first-country-grant-citizenship-robot-sophia-technology-artificial-intelligence-ai/>

Week 4: Privacy

readings: “Secrecy Is Dead. Here's What Happens Next,” <https://www.wired.com/story/secrecy-is-dead-heres-what-happens-next/>

“Inside China's Vast New Experiment in Social Ranking,” <https://www.wired.com/story/age-of-social-credit/>

Week 5: Employment

readings: “What Does Work Look Like in 2026? New Statistics Shine Light on Automation’s Impacts,” <https://www.technologyreview.com/the-download/609218/what-does-work-look-like-in-2026-new-statistics-shine-light-on-automations/>

“The not-so-dire future of work,” <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/the-not-so-dire-future-of-work/>

“Transparency 4.0- Why AI in the Workplace Will Force Us to Tell the Truth,” <https://talentculture.com/transparency-4-0-ai-workplace-will-force-us-tell-truth/>

“The next generation of jobs won’t be made up of professions,” <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170424-the-next-generation-of-jobs-wont-be-made-up-of-professions>

“Harnessing automation for a future that works,” <https://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/digital-disruption/harnessing-automation-for-a-future-that-works>

Week 6: Blockchain

readings: “Governments Are Testing Their Own Cryptocurrencies,” <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/608910/governments-are-testing-their-own-cryptocurrencies/>

“Companies are testing blockchain technology to keep food fresh,” <https://qz.com/index/1063626/companies-are-testing-blockchain-technology-to-keep-food-fresh/>

“China to Start Using Blockchain to Collect Taxes and Send Invoices,” <https://futurism.com/china-to-start-using-blockchain-to-collect-taxes-and-send-invoices/>

“How can creative industries benefit from blockchain?” <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/media-and-entertainment/our-insights/how-can-creative-industries-benefit-from-blockchain>

Week 7: Universal Basic Income (UBI)

readings: “The tech moguls driving mass layoffs in the economy want universal basic income as a cure,” <https://www.salon.com/2018/03/03/the-tech-moguls-driving-mass-layoffs-in-the-economy-want-universal-basic-income-as-a-cure_partner/>

“The False Promise of Universal Basic Income,” <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/false-promise-universal-basic-income-andy-stern-ruger-bregman>

“More Americans now support a universal basic income,” <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/02/26/roughly-half-of-americans-now-support-universal-basic-income.html>

Week 8: Democracy

readings: “Democracy needs a redesign, says Rudy van Belkom,” <https://www.dezeen.com/2017/10/26/democracy-election-voting-booking-com-rudy-van-belkom-interview-dutch-design-week-2017/>

“The uncertain future of democracy,” <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170330-the-uncertain-future-of-democracy>

“Are Millennials Giving Up On Democracy?” <https://www.forbes.com/sites/neilhowe/2017/10/31/are-millennials-giving-up-on-democracy/#3ab6c6b02be1>

Week 9: The circular economy

readings: “What is a circular economy?” <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy>

Week 10: Global pandemic

readings: “Triple Threat: New Pneumonia Is Drug-Resistant, Deadly And Contagious,” <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/09/02/547892623/triple-threat-new-pneumonia-is-drug-resistant-deadly-and-contagious>

“Seven reasons we're at more risk than ever of a global pandemic,” <https://www.cnn.com/2017/04/03/health/pandemic-risk-virus-bacteria/index.html>

“The World Is Completely Unprepared for a Global Pandemic,” <https://hbr.org/2017/03/the-world-is-completely-unprepared-for-a-global-pandemic>

Week 11: The global middle class

readings: “Africa’s expanding middle class,” <https://www.brookings.edu/podcast-episode/africas-expanding-middle-class/>

“Savvy and sophisticated: Meet China’s evolving car buyers,” <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/automotive-and-assembly/our-insights/savvy-and-sophisticated-meet-chinas-evolving-car-buyers>

“China’s middle class is going to have a big impact on luxury fashion,” <https://qz.com/577661/chinas-middle-class-is-going-to-have-a-big-impact-on-luxury-fashion/>

“Mapping China's middle class,” <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/mapping-chinas-middle-class>

Week 12: Bioengineering

readings: “CRISPR 2.0 Is Here, and It’s Way More Precise,” <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/609203/crispr-20-is-here-and-its-way-more-precise/>

“Liver Failing? Grow Some New Ones,” <https://medium.com/neodotlife/liver-failing-grow-some-new-ones-fe350ea37d30>

“How to create a new life form: Historian Sophia Roosth on the future of synthetic biology,” <https://www.theverge.com/2017/4/4/15166840/synthetic-biology-sophia-roosth-history-science-engineering>

“DARPA and the future of synthetic biology,” <https://www.oreilly.com/ideas/darpa-and-the-future-of-synthetic-biology>

Week 13: Biotracking

readings: “Fatigue Science Lets Pro Sports Teams Track Their Athletes’ Sleep,” <https://techcrunch.com/2015/07/02/fatigue-science-lets-pro-sports-teams-track-their-athletes-sleep/>

“Books Would Be So Much Better if They Could Read Your Mind,” <https://www.wired.com/2016/09/geeks-guide-hannu-rajaniemi/>

“Surveillance used to be a bad thing. Now, we happily let our employers spy on us,” <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/04/surveillance-employers-spy-implanted-chipped>

“Biometrics Are Coming, Along With Serious Security Concerns,” <https://www.wired.com/2016/03/biometrics-coming-along-serious-security-concerns/>

Week 14: Generation Z

readings: “Get ready for Generation Z,” <http://www.macleans.ca/society/life/get-ready-for-generation-z/>

“Your Guide To Generation Z: The Frugal, Brand-Wary, Determined Anti-Millennials,” <https://www.fastcompany.com/3062475/your-guide-to-generation-z-the-frugal-brand-wary-determined-anti-millen>

“How the youngest generation is redefining work,” <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20180227-how-the-youngest-generation-is-redefining-work>

**Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu.