Students - You will write three essays this quarter based on the twelve movies we will study.   Quarter 3 – Sci Fi Lit - 2019
Your essays this quarter should be formal analyses of the films we study in class. Find a theme, message or character in common in the films to analyze in a professional essay. Avoid casual language and the use of "I."

Artificial Intelligence
DUE by Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.
In films where A.I. exists, what purpose does it serve, when & why was it created, and by whom? What effect does A.I. have on the characters in the films? What knowledge, insight, revelation, or understanding results from encountering artificial intelligence? Is the A.I. a metaphor for something? Use the films *The Matrix, Robot & Frank,* and *Wall-E* as you analyze the role of A.I. in science fiction film. Type your essay, using a font no larger than size 12. Please give your essay an original title. Submit to turnitin.com as **Film Essay Number 1.**

Question Reality Essay
DUE by Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.
"Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away." Philip K. Dick
What is real? How do we know? Science fiction often places its characters in situations where reality becomes ambiguous. The science fiction films *The Matrix, The Truman Show, Oblivion,* and *Inception* plant questions in our minds about reality. What is the relationship between reality and the mind? Through the use of new technology, strange worlds, memory manipulation, dream exploring and computer atmospheres, is it possible for us to see what is truly real? Or are we already living it? Does reality only exist in the eye of the beholder? In your organized essay, analyze, explore and interpret the concept of reality. Use specific examples and evidence from the films. Type your essay, using a font no larger than size 12. Please give your essay an original title. Submit to turnitin.com as **Film Essay Number 2.**

Time Travel Essay
DUE by Friday, March 1, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.
Analyze Science Fiction theories of time travel. Considering *Back to the Future, Planet of the Apes* and *Edge of Tomorrow,* how does time travel work, why is it used, and what problems or issues arise for the time travelers? Science Fiction most often is a reflection of modern society. What messages do these visions of time travel have for their modern audiences? Organize your essay with an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion. Please give your essay a title. Type your essay, no larger than size 12 font. Submit to turnitin.com as **Film Essay Number 3.**

Aliens Essay
DUE by Friday, March 15, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.
Avatar, *Oblivion, Edge of Tomorrow, Europa Report* and *Contact* present different possibilities of human interaction with extra terrestrials. Using the films as a basis, organize a formal essay analyzing what these predictions reflect and reveal about humans and modern society. What do these views and predictions of alien contact reveal about human habits, history, and psychology? What about human nature and thinking is revealed through these interpretations of alien contact? What effect do alien encounters have on the characters in the films? What knowledge, insight, revelation, or understanding results from encountering aliens? Give your essay a title, and please type it; no larger than 12 font. Submit to turnitin.com as **Extra Credit Film Essay 1.**

Space Exploration Essay
DUE by Friday, March 15, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.
Using the films *Contact, Wall-E, Planet of the Apes, Europa Report* and *Avatar,* analyze the reasons for space exploration. What do the space explorers discover, how do they react, and what is the purpose of their expeditions? How and why do humans in these films travel into space? What is the message about humanity in these predictions of space exploration? What effect does space exploration have on the characters in the film? What knowledge, insight, revelation, or understanding results from exploring space? Type the essay, use no larger than 12 font, give it an original title, and make it an organized & formal essay. Submit to turnitin.com as **Extra Credit Film Essay 2.**

Artificial Intelligence Ideas
- Artificial intelligence represents a human drive for perfection. People are never satisfied, always striving for more. AI is a metaphor for this desire.
- When it comes to the development of artificial intelligence, science fiction films seem to reinforce the old cliché, "Curiosity killed the cat." It would be best not to pursue AI technology.
- Artificial intelligence is a bad idea because it has origins in selfishness. No one develops AI for noble reasons. Its development is to do dirty work, to kill, to complete complicated tasks or to act as an emotionless observer.
- The A.I. in *The Matrix.*, Robot in *Robot & Frank*, and the title character *Wall-E* all show how artificial intelligence in science fiction surpasses humankind. These A.I. are superior to humans; they exhibit strength and intelligence beyond that of people. These films suggest that A.I. could be humankind's legacy long after humanity is extinct.
- Science fiction interpretations of artificial intelligence reflect the ugliest and darkest aspects of humanity. These cyborgs, robots and androids exhibit all the worst qualities of humans: antipathy, greed, ambition, laziness, ruthlessness, irresponsibility.
- Artificial Intelligence is bound to be imperfect because it is created by imperfect beings: humans.

Time Travel Ideas
- Time travel is more trouble than it's worth; what is gained is not worth what is lost. It does more harm than good.
- Time travelers find success in unusual ways. Their journeys are often unexpected, but they emerge as prophet-like figures.
- Humans have long dreamed of traveling through time, but science fiction reveals the prospect to be much too fraught with danger and problems.
- Time travelers are lost souls; their trips through time are searches for their selves. Time travel is the search for meaning in life.
- Time travel presents larger lessons about humanity. In their attempts to correct the past, time travelers gain wisdom.
- Time travel is a practical and plausible theory. Science Fiction has revealed some of its practical applications for modern society.
- Time travel reveals time to be a loop; it continues to repeat itself despite the time travelers' attempts to break the cycle.
- Science Fiction reveals time to be linear. Time travel will have to be undertaken in only a forward or backward direction. Alternate times are purely fiction.
- Time travel is too complex and complicated for humans to handle. The human frame is too frail for this strenuous travel, the human mind is incapable of fully understanding anything but real time, and the results of the time travel are more than a human can cope with or accept.
- Humans simply cannot live with the responsibility and weight of time travel.
- Manipulating time is very enticing and attractive, but highly impractical and improbable.
- Time travel in science fiction film reflects the desires of the time the film was made. Science fiction often seeks to correct mistakes and improve society. Fiction is often an entertaining escape, but in these time travel films, the science fiction is a warning and a provocation for reflection.
- Time travel in Science Fiction film serves as a caution against technological advancement. The futures revealed are often bleak and frightening and involve devastation of humans on Earth. Space travel, artificial intelligence, medical research and advanced weaponry all prove to be the downfall of human kind.
- The time traveler is dramatically changed.   They can never go back to their life before time travel.

Space & Aliens Ideas
- Characters in science fiction films develop deep and keen understandings of themselves through space exploration and contact with alien life. These science fiction experiences make the characters better people.
- Science Fiction films predict that extensive exploration of space and contact with alien life will only lead to human misery.
- Humans in science fiction who explore space and interact with alien life have extreme reactions: it's either a wonderful and exhilarating encounter or it is unbelievably terrifying and horrible.
- Whenever humans and aliens encounter one another in science fiction, a fierce competition for survival and supremacy follows.
- The portrayal of aliens in science fiction film reveals much about human nature – that we are petty, greedy creatures, weak, insecure and arrogant. These ugly traits come out clearly when humans encounter aliens in science fiction.
- Science Fiction never portrays alien beings as moderate or normal. They are always at the very end of an extreme – either destructive killers or superior, wise entities.
- If we believe what science fiction tells us about extra-terrestrials, we are in trouble. They are always superior to humans and easily overpower us. They are smarter and stronger than humans.
- The human instinct is to assume that alien life will be dangerous and threatening to us; that we should fear encounters with alien life.
- Human exploration of space in science fiction reveals us to be territorial and unhappy beings, always wanting what we can't have, searching for more.
- What humans discover in science fiction space exploration reveals that we are not ready for knowledge of the universe; it is too much for the human mind to handle.
- Science fiction films depict space exploration and encounters with aliens to be very dangerous and deadly.
- Science Fiction reveals a very human-centered view of the universe and galaxy. Humans cannot imagine or accept anything beyond our own earthly realities and thoughts. What we do not understand, we destroy.
- Encounters with aliens and exploration of space in science fiction make audiences conscious of our own mortality and frailty.

Reality Ideas
- Science Fiction characters are tricked into believing a false reality. This is easily done to manipulate and use the characters, but when the lie is revealed, many lessons are learned.
- We can never really *know* reality; science fiction presents many enticing but unattainable possibilities.
- The secrets of the universe and reality are always tempting humans to seek and search. We will never find all the answers. It would be too dangerous for us to know the truth.
- What we believe to be our reality now is not. The real world is elusive.
- Ambiguous realities in Science Fiction reflect the natural fears and insecurities in all of us.
- The imagination is the only thing that is truly <u>real</u>.
- The search for reality is a search for the self. Characters in Science Fiction who play with reality learn valuable and amazing truths about themselves, regardless of what reality truly is. The journey and search for reality are more important than the answers.
- Anything that exists is real. The question is how do we define existence?
- Reality is complicated and layered. There are levels to reality.
- Reality changes according to the character; each person customizes their own reality.
- "There is no spoon." There is no "reality." It is just a human-created concept.
- Science Fiction films intentionally distress audiences by posing the possibility that the world does not exist as we believe.
- Science Fiction creators have a lot in common with classical philosophers. Both question, "What is real?"
- Nothing is real, and everything is real. Reality exists only in the mind of the perceiver.
- Science Fiction truly takes our deepest thoughts and imaginings and makes them plausible.