

Midterm Paper Guidelines

Here are some guidelines for your in-class **Midterm Paper** (which, as discussed at the beginning of the course, is worth 30% of your overall grade):

1. The paper should be approximately 750–1000 words long. It should be double-spaced so that I can write comments on it.
2. You should present your personal “reading” of a science fiction “text.”
3. By “reading” I mean present an interpretation—an argument about how we *ought* to read or understand a text. Examples of readings have been provided on the class website prior to the exam week period.
4. By “text” I mean any piece of SF media: a short story or novel, a film or television series, a comic book or graphic novel, a podcast, video game, or any other work is acceptable. The one rule is that the work should originally be in English, and you should engage with the English language content. (Reading a translation is okay to help yourself, but you should also engage with the original English content.)
5. Your midterm paper will NOT be graded on the following criteria:
 - correct use of citations/footnotes
 - grammar and punctuation
 - whether your view and the professor’s align
6. Your midterm paper WILL be graded on the following criteria:
 - quality of engagement with the text: how deeply or attentively are you trying to “read” the work? What parts of the text get your “alarm bells” ringing, and what understanding do you gain from reading those moments closely?
 - quality of engagement with core questions of our course: how is this work SF, and how does that shape our reading of it? How does this work relate to other SF texts we’ve studied?
 - quality of ideas

Of course, my ability to assess your ideas, reading, and engagement depends on my ability to understand what you are expressing in your work. For that reason, your English writing ability may impact your grade if I cannot understand what you have written. However, I will make an effort to consult with students first before assigning a grade in such instances.

7. You are permitted one A4-sized sheet of paper of notes and/or an outline for the reading you plan to write. You must submit these notes along with your reading when you hand in your work.
8. No use of digital technology of any kind is permitted during the writing of this reading. Printed dictionaries (English, Korean–English, and Chinese–English) will be provided for you to use, if needed. All digital devices (computers, tablets, smartphones, and smart watches, etc.) must be stowed in a bag away from your test-taking space while you work.