

# CS 8001 OPC Syllabus

CS in Popular Culture

**Summer 2026**

## Instructor Information

**Instructor of Record:** Ana Rusch, [ARusch3@gatech.edu](mailto:ARusch3@gatech.edu)

**Primary Instructor:** Eric Ianni, [ianni@gatech.edu](mailto:ianni@gatech.edu)

## General Course Information

### Description

For those of us still waiting for our flying car, looking to Science Fiction as a way to predict future technologies may seem a bit silly, but we shouldn't be so dismissive. From the days of Jules Vern, sci-fi authors have been imagining fantastical futures for humanity. Many of these "predictions" have been based on little more than a blind faith in humanity's potential, yet many of these predictions have come to pass. Just think, a multi-billion dollar suit between Apple and Samsung cited Star Trek in the legal proceedings! Come join us as we explore past "predictions" as well as stories about the world yet to arrive and connect them to current trends and ongoing research in AI and computing as a whole. In this synchronous seminar (a time will be selected based on a poll of enrollees) co-led by Eric Ianni and Ana Rusch, students will watch and read through selected movies and short stories on the topic, as well as analyze music that deals with these concepts. We will meet bi-weekly via Teams.

### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. **Explain** how popular culture shapes and is shaped by new technologies.
2. **Critique** the predictions based on existing technologies and social trends as well as the possible ethics issues.
3. **Analyze** your own views and perspectives on the topics presented in popular culture and how they relate to current events concerning computer science.

## **Required Course Materials**

All readings will be published on Canvas.

## **Course Requirements & Grading:**

This seminar is a Pass/Fail fully online modality that centers on engagement, collaboration, and peer discussion. Grading will be passed on overall class participation, with the expectation that everyone will pass unless some choose to stay unengaged altogether. Within this pedagogical framework, here's what participating in the class will entail:

- **Weekly Participation:** The mode of participation is entirely up to you. Every person is a different type of learner, and to ensure maximum accessibility, there are different modes of participation. You can participate in either our weekly synchronous meetings via Teams and/or in the Ed Discussion forum, where we will be hosting discussions.
- **Dialogue Facilitator:** The success of this seminar rests solely on the students' ability to engage with the assigned materials with their peers. Therefore, it is important that you as students come prepared to the bi-weekly meetings ready to discuss the readings. As you are working through the books/articles, please keep a list a running list of questions or comments you want to discuss with the group. If you cannot make the meetings or if you prefer asynchronous discussions, you are welcome to post your threads on Ed to engage with your peers.

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance and/or Participation**

You could think of this course as a movie/book/music club where we all work our way through movies, short stories, music, and articles and meet bi-weekly to discuss. Between synchronous meetings, we will be hosting discussions using Ed Discussion. The goal for this course is to create a community of thinkers which explores the hopeful as well as the pessimistic topics of computer science as depicted in popular culture. Thus, your final grade depends on your participation, either via the synchronous meetings or asynchronous discussion.

### **Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

### **Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.