Course Description
Introducing the history, forms, and discourses of Japanese “cyberpunk” in contemporary anime and film, this course explores the urban dreams (and nightmares) that constitute cyberpunk’s post-apocalyptic vision of Neo-Tokyo. Viewed not as a reflection of contemporary Japanese society but rather as its defamiliarization, Japanese forms of cyberpunk are investigated as sites of contestation for competing ideologies and the delineation of new possibilities of existence, new forms of being, at the intersection between carbon- and silicon-based forms of intelligence and data-processing.

Treating Japanese cyberpunk not merely as a literary movement or aesthetic style but more importantly as a philosophical discourse with distinctive questions and premises--i.e., as a philosophical “problematic” with its own sociohistorical specificities and transnational trajectories--we will consider the following topics:

• The status of subjectivity in cyberpunk: fabricated, virtual memories and fractured identities.
• The human body and its interfaces with technology: cyborg implants, prostheses, replacement parts, and bio-tech hybridities.
• Post-apocalyptic visions of class, race, gender, and sexuality.
The individual and her relation to the city: new modes of spatiality and habitation, new forms of community, new ways in which individuals circulate and are contained, as well as new forms of surveillance and policing.


Warning: The subject matter of this course is for mature audiences only. Some films contain scenes of intense psychological stress, graphic violence, and body mutation. Viewer discretion is advised.

Readings in English. 4 credits. 09:00-16:50 MTWRF in 166 LA. CRN 42402. No auditors permitted.

Website
http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~stb/tokyocyberpunk.html.

Instructor Contact Info
E-mail: stb@uoregon.edu. Tel.: 346-4016.

Further Study
Recommended Books and Websites
2. Philip Brophy, 100 Anime (BFI Screen Guides) (London: British Film Institute, 2005).

Method of Instruction
Socratic-style discussions designed to establish a community of open dialogue. As in all of my classes, I invite students to interject, take risks with their thinking, respond to one another, and play devil’s advocate. Civil discourse does not mean passive discourse. The most important thing is that everyone has an opportunity to establish a voice in an ongoing and constructive dialogue.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria
1. Each student is required to take the in-class essay exam administered on the last day, which will consist of a series of short essay questions about the topics discussed during the course of the seminar. Students are permitted to consult their notes during the exam. Each student must bring an exam booklet to class, which may be purchased at the UO Bookstore.
2. Active and audible participation on the part of every student is expected. Unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. If you are unable to attend class, please notify the professor in advance. Discussion questions for each anime and film, as well as copies of the readings in pdf format, are posted in the Course Documents section of Blackboard.
3. Grading is calculated as follows: class participation = 50%; attendance = 30%; final exam = 20%.
4. These requirements apply both to those taking the course for a grade and to those taking it on a P/N basis.
5. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the professor as soon as possible. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.
Course Schedule (Japanese names appear in traditional word order with surname first)

Day 1
INTRODUCING CYBERPUNK: CYBORGS, CLASS STRUGGLES, & DYSTOPIC CITIES

Further Study:
1. Scott Bukatman, Blade Runner (London: British Film Institute, 1997).

Day 2
THE RHIZOMATIC PROCESSES OF CYBERCULTURE & THE UNCANNINESS OF DOLLS

Required Reading:

Further Study:

Day 3
MACHINIC JUNKIES & THE ETHICS OF POSTHUMANISM
Afternoon Session: “Scrolls to Screen: The History and Culture of Anime,” The Animatrix (various directors, 2003), Maeda Mahiro’s commentary on “Second Renaissance, Pt. 1,” “Politics in The Animatrix.”

Required Reading:

Further Study:

Day 4
VIRTUAL IDENTITIES & THE MICROPOLITICS OF CONTROL

Required Reading:

Further Study:

Day 5
AT THE LIMITS OF ANIME: STEAMPUNK & THE RETURN OF PYGMALION
Afternoon Session: In-Class Essay Exam. Each student must bring an exam booklet to class, which may be purchased at the UO Bookstore.

Required Reading: