

IN FALL 2021, THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT WILL PROUDLY OFFER:

33-120: SCIENCE AND SCIENCE FICTION



WITH PROF. BARRY LUOKKALA

View and critique the science content in a selection of science fiction films, spanning more than 100 years of cinematic history, and from sci-fi TV shows from the past 50+ years. Guided by selected readings from current scientific literature, and aided by order-of-magnitude estimates and careful calculations, ponder whether the films are showing things which may fall into one of the following categories:

1. Science fiction at the time of production, but currently possible, due to recent breakthroughs.
2. Possible, in principle, but beyond our current technology.
3. Impossible by any science we know.

Discuss the future of the technological society, the physics of Star Trek, the nature of space and time, extraterrestrial intelligence, robotics and artificial intelligence, biotechnology and more!

STUDENTS WHO TOOK THIS COURSE PREVIOUSLY SAID:

"This was the best class I think I took in my whole undergraduate career at CMU."

"The science was easy speaking as an engineer, but it didn't take away from the fun or the thought process behind critically analyzing media."

"Prof. Barry is an amazing teacher! He is very passionate about the topic and makes the class super fun and engaging. ...10/10 would recommend!"

"I gained a new appreciation for when movies get it right now that I've seen so many ways in which movies have gotten it so wrong."

"Incredible professor, amazing class."