The future is not what it used to be and neither is science fiction. Speculative fiction engages critically with our present while forming vector lines that may shape the time to come. “Edgeland Futurism” asks its participants to re-imagine the near future of the southern California borderland region and encourages inter-disciplinary, cross-generational and trans-border collaboration. With strategies and devices from speculative fiction, Surrealist ethnography, and Situationism, students will work across different mediums to create videos, writing, sound recordings, photographs and to design speculative products, technologies, and performative interventions in the everyday.

Students will ground their projects in research, films, readings, site visits, and collaborations with students in High Tech High School and students in the Autonomous University of Baja California (UABC) Tijuana, Mexico. Together we will partake in a collective exercise in re-imaging the future of our region. We will simultaneously create an archive of the consensual speculations of a time and a place as well as engage directly with the public through performance, interventions, screenings, workshops and a gallery show.

“Edgeland” is a term that may be used to describe a geographical location where a confluence of tensions between urban, rural, corporate, domestic and militarized zones occur. In this course, we will also think about the term “edgeland” as a container to describe alterity, difference and otherness. Because the edge is proximal to the liminal, the edgeland is a place that is highly inclined to transgressions and re-formulations of ways of knowing. The assigned films and readings will engage critically with the duality of the edgeland as a geo-political place and as a metaphor of difference. We will focus special attention to the strategies used in the works of feminist futurism, afrofuturism, and chicano futurism.

Equal agency may be given to "truth" and "fiction", (the latter often manifests hopes, desires, dreams and sometimes something closer to another kind of "truth"), as potential narrative devices. This trans-imaginary realm allows for an immersive investigation of self and place and how it may be performed, embodied, mythologized
and re-imagined. At the core of the course is the element of play. Projects will play with time and space, media, reality, rationality, subjectivity, speculation and empathy. This creative exercise/investigation will not only produce and analyze narratives and images in our near future, but will also attempt to create experiences, using cognitive estrangement to create experiential future projects. The course will culminate in a *Future is Happening* event of talks, screenings, and interventions set to take place in the San Diego/Tijuana region in Spring 2014.

The future can, and needs, to be re-imagined.

**Questions for consideration:** How do we see ourselves in 20 years? How do we see our neighbors? Is it possible to think about the future as not something that is outside of us, but rather, inside of us? What is an alien? Is the border a mirror or screen in which we project our own fantasies, hopes, desires and fears? How are futures imagined similarly and/or differently between university students in Tijuana and university students in La Jolla. How do high schoolers envision the future?

**Assignments:**

The assignments are designed to build on themselves from week to week, yet they may also be abandoned at anytime. Collaborations are encouraged and for some assignments, working groups may be assigned. Because there is much freedom in what form or medium a project may take, there will be a large emphasis on the conceptual component and the critical ideas which helped shape the ideas and choices you made in the creation of your projects. Please come to seminar prepared for screening, viewing, displaying and talking about your projects and outside collaborations on the dates they are due. Journaling will be a large part of the working process during the quarter and will be a space where you will be constantly writing creatively and reflecting on your collaborative experiences with your partners.

**Ethnofictions—**Conduct research specifically about the San Diego/Tijuana region and its relationship to technology, science, culture, the environment, industry, biology, and/or human bodies. Pick a news article as a starting place and generate ten speculative and fictive questions that you are interested in discussing with an interviewee of your choice. (*please see attached example). These interviews can happen anywhere or with anyone in the San Diego/Tijuana region. Interviews via skype with students in Tijuana or at High Tech High are encouraged. Ideally, these interviews will not be one sided but also get you to reflect and talk about your own ideas as you talk back and forth with your subject. All interviews/photos etc. will be archived as a part of the larger project. Edit a 2-3 minute excerpt from the conversation. You may also choose to abandon your original interview and record a reenactment or focus on a certain part of it. This audio can stand-alone or you may choose to put a photograph, video, performance or sculpture with it.
The ‘topias-Turn an aspect of your own or your classmates ethnofiction into a utopic or dystopic narrative. This might range from a projected utopia to a personal dystopia. Students in La Jolla must base their speculations on/in Tijuana and vice versa. Your narrative may be presented in the medium of your choice (video, photo series, writing, audio project, design fiction etc.). Characterize what living in this utopia/dystopia might feel like. Play with the paradoxical nature of the ‘topias.

Dérive Dreaming and Psychogeographies-You are asked to take up the Situationist exercise in drifting and go on an unplanned walk through edgelands. On your walk you will look for mundane and everyday connections into what might be glimpses into the future: Industry, authority, objects, commerce, individuals etc. You are encouraged to take photos, record audio and video, and write notes. Think about cognitive estrangement as a research tool. This assignment will expound on the Situationist version by asking you to try on various characters from your ethnofictions and ‘topias projects. You may play with time and characterization in this exercise. Does your future you/character take selfies the whole time or do we never find out their identity because it is shot in first person shooter style? How will you give us clues on how the edgeland environment is affecting the character? You will create a project from this material, which may be a combination or a variation of an imaginary cartography, design fiction, sound, and or video piece.

Artifalse-Create a fictive artifact, technology, news item, product or service that will be used in San Diego/Tijuana in the near future. You may consider the personal ads and sign spinners of the future, what will be advertised? Think about the archeology/anthropology of the future. You may incorporate this arti-fact/false into your already created worlds and it may manifest inside a video world seen (or not seen), photo series, performance etc. Final event collaborations: Engage in the general discussion about the final events and decide how your final project could interact and spin-off other projects to help the other members of the group. Think about world building.

Performative Interventions-For the final project you must think about the idea of the public and interventions. You should think about what kinds of conversations you would like to have from your own future speculations. From film screening, to gallery show to interactive street art. Your final project must interface with the larger San Diego/Tijuana community in some kind of way. THIS FINAL PROJECT WILL BE ENACTED AS A PART OF A 3 DAY EVENT: FUTURE IS HAPPENING

Critical Reflections/Journaling-You must articulate your collaborative experiences with the communities of HTH and/or UABC in conjunction with the conceptual themes of this course in the form of a paper or project. This is due during Finals week.
**Course and Practicum Attendance and Participation**- A large portion of your grade is participation and a large component of this course is participatory. Outside collaboration with High Tech High and/or UABC in Tijuana is MANDATORY every week. You will be expected to keep a journal of your collaborations and may use this material in your critical reflection projects. You will be expected to participate and attend the Edgeland Futurism Event where you will present your Final projects and other work that you have done over the quarter.

**RULES OF PLAY** (consider each week does your project contain any of these components:)

1) **Place.** Local issues. How does their project relate specifically to an issue that already affects the San Diego/Tijuana border region? Or are there any major speculative events that could happen for this region that would affect the future?

2) **Technology.** Does your project contain a technology or innovation that has already been invented or that might be invented. Other ways to think about this might be to consider the environment, industry, biology, and/or human bodies. Remember that bread, money and language are technologies.

3) **Deals with empathy and/or critiques ONE of the following in some kind of way:** racism, heterosexism, patriarchy, colonialism, classism, gender, labor, and/or the human body (health and wellness.)
Course Schedule:

Readings and Films will be posted on TED and/or available for streaming.
Reading, viewing and listening assignments should be completed prior to the class for which they are listed.

| WEEK 1: Edgeland Futurity, Bodies and Labor | **READ**: Excerpts from: *The Left Hand of Darkness*: Introduction by Ursula K. LeGuin
Introduction to *CRASH* by JG Ballard.
**LISTEN**: NPR interview, Janelle Monae
Dreaming in Science Fiction
**WATCH**: *Sleep Dealer* by Alex Rodriguez
**DUE**: Review: High Tech High “Future Speculations” projects and UABC “Urban Narratives” projects thus far |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WEEK 2: Mimesis, Alterity and Desire       | **READ**: *Afrofuturism/Chicanofuturism: Fictive Kin* by Catherine Ramirez,
*Science Fiction in the Edgelands* by Chris Brown,
*Extending Afro-Futurism: How are “Other”-ized artists claiming the future?* by Sarah Fisch
**WATCH**: Guillermo Gomez Pena/La Pocha Nostra, Selected Works, and
*La fórmula secreta/Coca Cola en la Sangre (The Secret Formula/Coca Cola in the Blood, 1965)*
by Rubén Gómez
**DUE**: Ethnofictions: Research and Interviews
Site Visit: Friendship Park/HTH social |
| WEEK 3: Preferred Futures and ARTivism     | **WATCH**: *Yes Men Save the World*
**READ**: *Futuring Practices: Tools, Terms, and Perspectives* and
*The futures of everyday life* by Stuart Candy and Design Critique:
http://cargocollective.com/DWFE/Manifesto
**DUE**: Topias |
| WEEK 4: Memory, History and Trauma         | **READ**: *August 25 1983* by Borges
**WATCH**: *La Jetee* by Chris Marker and
Brother from Another Planet by John Sayles |
| WEEK 5: Aliens and Gender                  | **WATCH**: Invisible Adversaries by Valie Export
**READ**: *Introduction: Science Fiction and the Feminist Present* by Alexis Lothian
**DUE**: Dérive
Dreaming
Site Visit: Tijuana Walking |
| WEEK 6: Atemporality                       | **READ**: *Atemporality for the Creative Artist* by Bruce Sterling
*Temporary Autonomous Zones* by Hakim Bey
*The Goat variations* by Jeff VanderMeer.
*After the future* by Bifo Berardi.
**DUE**: Final Project Proposals |
| WEEK 7: Connectivities | WATCH: *Existenz* by David Cronenberg or *Strange Days* by Kathryn Bigelow  
  **READ:** *The Veldt* by Ray Bradbury  
  *The Gambler* by Paolo Bacigalupi | DUE: Artifice  
  Site Visit: Hidden in Plain Sight UTC/La Jolla Walking |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| WEEK 8: Hybrids, mutants and cyborgs. Interstitial subjectivity | **READ:** Cyborg manifesto by Donna Haraway  
  *Blood Music* by Greg Bear.  
  BLDGBLG.com  
  warren ellis.com | |
| WEEK 9: Architecture and the Built Environment | **READ:** *Aesthetics of Being Lost* by Ray Bradbury  
  **LOOK:** at Horton Plaza Designs | |
| WEEK 10: Really, NOW. | **Future is Happening** (No class)  
  Final projects will be screened, performed and dialogued with a public audience during the 3 day Happening. | DUE: Performative Interventions (Final) |
| FINALS WEEK: | Reflect on the collaborative, practicum experience | DUE: Critical Reflections and Journals |

**COURSE CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND REVISION AS NEEDED**

Site Visits (PART OF PRACTICUM HOURS):  
+Weekly site visits to spaces of collaboration (High Tech High/UABC)  
+Walking with Charles G. Miller (Hidden In Plain Sight: La Jolla / UTC Annex, An-Edge City) a psychogeographical exploration of the corporate landscape of La Jolla/UTC  
+Walking with Christian Zúñiga (Urban Narratives/UABC) in Tijuana, MX  
+Friendship Park dual-sided class on both sides of the border wall
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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnofictions</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Topias</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Dérive Dreaming</td>
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<td>Artifalse</td>
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<td>Performative Interventions (Final Project)</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Reflections and Journals</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Attendance, Course Participation &amp; Practicum Hours</td>
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The Fine Print
1. ATTENDANCE: More than one unexcused absence will begin to affect your participation points by a quarter of a letter grade
2. CLASS PARTICIPATION
Contributions to class discussions and active participation in small group work are essential to both the momentum of the course and the development of your ideas. This requires that you come to class prepared (having completed assigned reading and writing) and ready to participate in class activities.
3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY!
UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the General Catalog, and online at http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html. All students must read and be familiar with this Policy. All suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to UCSD's Academic Integrity Coordinator. Students found to have violated UCSD's standards for academic integrity may receive both administrative and academic sanctions. Administrative sanctions may extend up to and include suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the assignment or failure of the course. Specific examples of prohibited violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following: Academic stealing refers to the theft of exams or exam answers, of papers or take-home exams composed by others, and of research notes, computer files, or data collected by others. Academic cheating, collusion, and fraud refer to having others do your schoolwork or allowing them to present your work as their own; using unauthorized materials during exams; inventing data or bibliography to support a paper, project, or exam; purchasing tests, answers, or papers from any source whatsoever; submitting (nearly) identical papers to two classes. Misrepresenting personal or family emergencies or health problems in order to extend deadlines and alter due dates or requirements is another form of academic fraud. Claiming you have been ill when you were not, claiming that a family member has been ill or has died when that is untrue are some examples of unacceptable ways of trying to gain more time than your fellow students have been allowed in which to complete assigned work. Plagiarism refers to the use of another’s work without full acknowledgment, whether by suppressing the reference, neglecting to identify direct quotations, paraphrasing closely or at length without citing sources, spuriously identifying quotations or data, or cutting and pasting the work of several (usually unidentified) authors into a single undifferentiated whole.
Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity.

4. UCSD’s PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY The CAT program affirms UCSD’s Principles of Community, and expects all students to understand and uphold these principles, both in their daily interactions and in their spoken, written and creative work produced for CAT classes:

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UCSD community. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UCSD strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the University and the well being of its constituents. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.

• We value each member of the UCSD community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.

• We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.

• We value the cultural diversity of UCSD because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures, by both individuals and the University as a whole.

• We are a university that adapts responsibly to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.

• We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.

• We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and, we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.

• We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UCSD. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect. We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.

• We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles. We represent diverse races, creeds, cultures, and social affiliations coming together for the good of the University and those communities we serve. By working together as members of the UCSD community, we can enhance the excellence of our institution.

Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity.