

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Science Technology & Society (STAS) 325 L01
Technology Within Contemporary Society
SUMMER 2016
July 5 - August 17

Tuesday & Thursday (TR) 12:00-13:45; Tutorial: TR 14:00-14:50

Instructor: Ray op'tLand
Office: SS240
E-Mail: rmoptlan@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:30 am, or by appointment.

Course Description

Examines the definition of technology and major questions concerning the relations between technology and society, and provides some guidelines for dealing with technology the 21st century.

Examples questions can include:

- Does technology determine how it is used?
- Is technology changing the way we work for better or worse?
- Does technology solve problems, or cause them?
- Can we accurately predict or forecast where technology is headed?

In addition, a number of ways of dealing with the biases of modern technology will be explored, including:

- how the bias of computer code encourages certain human behaviours.
- how the bias of binary language encourages reducing things to discrete choices.
- how the internet's ability to provide anonymity depersonalizes our interactions.

Objectives of the Course

Through the lectures, readings, assignments and group work, students will be able to:

- Describe and explain the fundamental concepts and theoretical perspectives of the field of Science and Technology Studies.
- Evaluate the roles and uses of technology in contemporary society, and the role that society plays in shaping those roles and uses.
- Critically analyze modern technologies and the controversies surrounding their development and use.
- Discuss and examine the social, political, and economic factors regarding technology in modern, late-capitalist society.

Textbooks and Readings

Nye, D. E. (2006). Technology matters: questions to live with. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Rushkoff, D. (2011). Program or Be Programmed: Ten Commands for a Digital Age. Berkeley, CA: Soft Skull Press.

Additional readings will be made available through D2L.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Students are welcome to use laptops and other electronic note-taking devices in this course. Please be considerate of others during lectures, screenings, and discussions and switch off all iPods, cellphones, etc. whenever you enter the classroom.

Phone use, including sending/receiving text messages, taking calls in class or leaving the class to take calls is disruptive to the entire class and will not be tolerated unless absolutely necessary.

Failure to respect these rules may result in the revocation of your privileges to use devices in the classroom.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components	Due
20%	Tutorial Assignments	ongoing
20%	Quiz #1	Jul. 21
20%	Quiz #2	Aug. 9
10%	Participation	ongoing
30%	Group Project & Presentation	Aug. 11 & 16

Detailed assignment guides and marking rubrics will be made available on D2L during the course of the term.

Tutorial Assignments (20% total)

During the course of the semester, students will be expected to provide a short answer (150-250 words) to a question posed to the class during the tutorial section. Students will be expected to answer 10 of the 11 tutorial questions asked. Each one will be worth 2% of the final grade.

Participation (10%)

Students are expected to make relevant contributions to class discussion on an ongoing basis. This will include individual comments, round-table discussions, and group-work activities. The grade is dependent on quality of the discussion, not simply quantity or volume. 5% of this grade is due to ongoing class participation, and 5% will be based on the completion of the presentation reviews of other groups work during the final two classes.

In-Class Quizzes (2 x 20%)

Two (2) quizzes will be administered during the course (on July 21st and August 9th). Quizzes will test knowledge on content presented in lectures and course readings. Readings can include those assigned up to and including the day of the quiz. Quizzes must

be taken in class; should a student be unable to take the test due to illness or extenuating circumstances, accommodation will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis provided that official documentation is provided.

Final Project & Group Presentation (30%)

Students will complete a group project that examines a controversy surrounding a current or emerging technology, and present their findings to the class. A written summary of their work will accompany the presentation (~15 pages, 3500-4000 words). The final grade will be based on completion of both components. Groups will consist of 4-6 members, and a list of suggested topic will be provided on the first day of class.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. For assignments where a hardcopy is not appropriate, the file or link must be posted to D2L directly.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see [\[link\]](#).

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.

- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading & Grade Scale of the Department of Communication, Media and Film

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, assignments, quizzes and exams will be graded using raw point scores, and these will be added to arrive at the final letter grade.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good--clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%

0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	0- 49.99%	0%
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* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

** These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health 403-266-HELP (4357) http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Week	Class	Date	Readings	Assignment
1	1	Jul 05	Nye Chapter 1	
	2	Jul 07	Nye Chapter 2, Rushkoff Chapter 1	
2	3	Jul 12	Nye Chapter 3, Rushkoff Chapter 2	
	4	Jul 14	Nye Chapter 4, Rushkoff Chapter 3	
3	5	Jul 19	Nye Chapter 5, Rushkoff Chapter 4	
	6	Jul 21	Nye Chapter 6, Rushkoff Chapter 5	Quiz 1
4	7	Jul 26	Nye Chapter 7, Rushkoff Chapter 6	
	8	Jul 28	Nye Chapter 8, Rushkoff Chapter 7	
5	9	Aug 02	Nye Chapter 9, Rushkoff Chapter 6	
	10	Aug 04	Nye Chapter 10, Rushkoff Chapter 9	
6	11	Aug 09	Nye Chapter 11, Rushkoff Chapter 10	Quiz 2
	12	Aug 11	Group Presentations	
7	13	Aug 16	Group Presentations	