

## Science, Technology, and Society STAS 591 L01

### Integrative Seminar

Winter 2012

### COURSE OUTLINE

**Instructor:** Dr Richard Hawkins

**Office:** SS 306

**Office hours:** Tuesdays 10:00 - 12:00 or by appointment

**Email:** rhawkins@ucalgary.ca

**Prerequisites:** Two of STAS 325; HIST 477.01, 477.02; PHIL 367; SOC 435; or consent of the Faculty.

### Course Description

STAS 591 is an integrative “capstone” seminar that brings together all of the central themes of science and technology studies as encountered by students in the core STAS curriculum. Through a combination of seminars and a final term project, the aim of the course is for students to review and re-evaluate the core concepts of science and technology studies and to gain experience deploying these concepts in the exploration of real-life issues and problems.

### Course Objectives

Review, discuss and contextualize key concepts and themes from the core STAS curriculum.

Prepare term projects that apply the STAS curriculum to real life problems and issues.

Develop advanced presentation and argumentation skills relevant to analysis and critique of science, technology and society issues.

### Course organization

The seminar is organized into three modules, each involving student presentations:

**MODULE ONE** will be structured around a single core text (available in the Bookstore). Individually or in small groups, students will prepare seminars that work through this text progressively, identifying and discussing critically the key issues and questions raised and implied in the core text concerning relationships between science, technology and society.

**MODULE TWO** will consist of a further set of seminars prepared by students, each structured around a specific science, technology and society issue of the student's own choosing as oriented to a text of the student's own choosing.

**MODULE THREE** will be devoted to term project presentations that relate concepts drawn from the general STAS curriculum to topical issues as chosen by students.

## Course Requirements:

### 1. Seminars:

Students will prepare two seminars, each consisting of a **20 minute presentation** followed by a **40 minute discussion** moderated by the student. Depending upon enrollment, the seminars may be individual or group efforts.

The **first group of seminars** will discuss issues arising from the core text. Each seminar will cover a selection of Chapters. In these presentations, students should identify and discuss critically the key concepts in the core text, making reference where appropriate to the broader context of science and technology studies as contained in previous coursework in the STAS program. These presentations should contain:

- a brief overview of the subject and content of the reading;
- important ideas and issues arising from the reading that resonate with, confirm or question specific concepts and themes in the study of science, technology and society;
- critical comments regarding problems and issues with the author's point of view, approach or conclusions;
- implications for how we understand the relationships between science, technology and society.

Note that although each student will present a seminar based on only part of the text, **all students are expected to read the entire text** and to prepare comments and arguments to contribute to the discussion. Seminar participation will be graded.

The **second group of seminars** are to be based in relevant "texts" as identified and chosen by the student. These "texts" can be conventional academic readings (including readings from STAS and other courses previously completed by students), but students may also use references to literature (e.g. novels), films, television programs, online resources etc. The content of these presentations should follow the same model used for the core text presentations (above).

### 2. Term projects:

Each student will prepare a term project on any subject that explores a concept and/or issue that is relevant within the broad context of science, technology and society. Students are encouraged to consult the instructor and/or other STAS faculty as early as possible in order to define term projects.

***A written project proposal (1-2 pages) is due in Session Seven (following reading week). Part of Session Six will be devoted to discussing and shaping final projects.***

Otherwise, students are encouraged to give full rein to their passions and creative impulses. Students are encouraged to pursue subjects and issues in which they have a personal interest and commitment – e.g. subject areas in which they may have career aspirations or which they may wish to pursue as honors degree projects.

Projects may take any form that is appropriate to the topic and that allows the student to display knowledge and critical abilities. In previous iterations of STAS 591, projects have been submitted in the form of:

- a conventional academic paper
- a briefing or position paper for a government agency or a non-governmental organization
- a speech for a public official on a topical issue
- draft legislation or regulation pertaining to a science and/or technology issue
- a strategy or scenario analysis for a company or government department
- a multimedia presentation or dramatic film (e.g. involving a written script or scenario and an audio-visual component)
- a video game.

Regardless of form, every project will be assessed solely on its merits in demonstrating critical awareness and analysis of the subject matter, issues, arguments and points of view. All projects should demonstrate an awareness of the intellectual and analytical traditions pertaining to each subject and issue.

Projects in forms that are not conducive to formal referencing in the literature (e.g. creative writing or a public speech) must be accompanied by an annotated bibliography (2-3 pages) that orients the content to relevant bodies of literature.

Term project *deliverables* will comprise:

- a paper of approximately 20 double spaced pages, *or* an equivalent demonstration of effort in an alternative medium as agreed in advance with the instructor (due the last day of class)
- a final presentation of approximately 20 minutes duration (made during the final two weeks of term).

**Course Schedule:**

Session	Date		
1	Jan 10	Introduction and organization	
2	Jan 17	Introductory lecture/discussion: Science in an unscientific world	
<b>Seminar Block I</b>		<b>Reading:</b> Seife, C. <i>Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea</i>	
3	Jan 24	I. Chapter 1	II. Chapter 2
4	Jan 31	I. Chapter 3	II. Chapter 4
5	Feb 7	I. Chapter 5	II. Chapter 6
6	Feb 14	I. Chapter 7	II. Chapters 8-9
Reading week Feb 20-24			

<b>Seminar Block II</b>		<b>Themes and texts:</b> Chosen by students	
7	Feb 28	Seminar I	Seminar II
8	Mar 6	Seminar I	Seminar II
9	Mar 13	Seminar I	Seminar II
10	Mar 20	Seminar I	Seminar II
<b>Final Project Presentations</b>			
11	Mar 27	Presentation I	Presentation II
12	Apr 3	Presentation I	Presentation II
13	Apr 10	Presentation I	Presentation II

**Course Readings:**

Seife, Charles (2000) *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea*, New York: Penguin.

**Grading:**

Seminar participation 10%

Seminar presentations (2) 40% (20% each)

Term Project abstract (5%)

Term project (including abstract and presentation) 40%

All term project documentation is due on the final day of class.

**Grading System:**

The following grading system is used in the Faculty of Communication and Culture:

A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

### **Policy for late submission:**

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

### **Writing Skills Statement:**

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. 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: [www.efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca)

### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.** For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

### **Intellectual honesty:**

Referring to the ideas of others is common practice in all academic writing. However, every such reference must be documented clearly. Failure to do so is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. In some cases, misuse of copyrighted materials (e.g. use of media content whose reproduction is specifically forbidden by the copyright holder) can result in criminal prosecution over and above any action taken by the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and expositions of ideas from other sources wherever they appear in your text. Readers must be able to distinguish precisely between your words and ideas and those of others. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources. A reference list at the end of a paper is entirely insufficient and may result in a failing grade.

Referenced direct quotations must be clearly identified (it is good practice always to set quotations off in italics) and used only where absolutely required for clarity. A good rule of thumb is that direct quotations should constitute no more than 10% of the text in any paper.

All original text contained in a paper must be entirely the work of the student submitting the paper. It is an even more serious academic offence knowingly to present a paper prepared by another person (even in part) as your own work. Such conduct will result in immediate course failure and referral to the appropriate University disciplinary body.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4<sup>th</sup> floor, [efwr.ucalgary.ca](http://efwr.ucalgary.ca)) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

### **Seminar electronic etiquette:**

It is disruptive to the learning goals of the seminar to engage in electronically enabled activities unrelated to the seminar discussions. Students are reminded to turn mobile telephones and other electronic devices off during the sessions and to use laptops for course-related purposes only. Students not wishing to comply with these terms may be asked to withdraw from the session.

Students expecting emergency communications during a session are exempted from these provisions upon prior notification of the instructor.

Electronic recording of lectures will be permitted only for students who have a formally diagnosed physical or learning disability that requires this action. Written proof of disclosure of such disabilities to the relevant university administrative bodies will be required before such permission is granted (refer to the Students with Disabilities section below).

Otherwise, students are encouraged to make creative use of media in the seminar whenever they wish, and especially in presentations. Students who may have special media requirements for seminar presentations other than an Ethernet connection and classroom projector should notify the instructor at least 4 weeks beforehand so that arrangements can be made with Media Services.

### **Ethics:**

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. Formal ethics approval must be gained for all such projects, so plan well ahead. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see the Faculty of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:

<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/compliance/ethics/info/undergrad/>

### **Students with disabilities:**

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

### **Academic Misconduct**

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

**Student Union:**

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Communication and Culture see [www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su](http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su)

**Student Ombudsman**

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

**"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

**Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points**

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>