

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Science, Technology and Society STAS 325 L01

Technology Within Contemporary Society

Fall 2015

Mon., Sept. 9, 2015 to Mon., Dec. 7, 2015 (excluding Oct. 12th)

Lecture WF 16:00 – 16:50, Labs M 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00

Instructor: Dr. Cooper H Langford
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal.
Office Hours: WF 14:00 – 15:00

Course Description

This course will examine a series of key questions about technology in our lives centred around the issue ‘does technology control us or does our society control technology?’. Examples of questions the course will include are the following:

- Does technology determine how it is used?
- Does it lead to sustainable abundance or ecological crisis?
- Through technology do we work more or less, in ways that are better or worse?
- Are the benefits of technology equitably distributed?
- How does technology influence our experience of community?
- How do we understand risks associated with technology?

These questions do not have unambiguous answers and the course will invite you to begin from your own experience with technology, analyze aspects of them and develop your own perspectives, aided by insights from lectures and reading drawn from several disciplines.

Additional Information

I welcome meeting with students at other times. Send an email with two convenient times for you and I can probably match one of them. Office hours will sometimes be interrupted by other commitments, but I am on campus from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM most days.

Objectives of the Course

The key objective of the course is to stimulate thinking about how technologies shape contemporary society and how and to what extent society shapes technologies and chooses their roles.

The course provides an opportunity to enhance skills in analytic thinking as well as written and oral communication.

Textbooks and Readings

A. Quaaan-Haase *Technology and Society*, Oxford University Press (Canada) , Don Mills ON.

The textbooks chapters are not long. Additional reading found through the course D2L will accompany topics to give a different perspective and you will need to use library and internet resources for the term project.

Internet and electronic communication device information

This course will use interactive classroom technology called *TopHat* Items presented in class on screen can be answered by text message or on the website. Your cell phone with the TopHat number stored will be the best tool. The university has acquired a site license for this service. You will be able to register with www.tophat.com at no charge.

Assignments and Evaluation

In addition to lectures, the course will have a series (normally 7) of short group assignments based on a discussion of an issue related to the current topic. The assignment papers will be developed from group discussions in class and written in the Monday “lab” class. These short in class group papers (along with one mark available for participation in Top Hat) will count for 15% of the course mark. The grade will be based on the *best seven* of these 8 items. In the Top Hat grade, participation counts.

There will be a term project assignment based on analysis of a current or recent *controversy involving the uses of a technology*, identifying the perspectives of the major stakeholder groups and their relationships to each other. These will be completed as group work with a group of four to six participants. The results will be presented briefly in class near the end of term (11/16 – 12/07) and a project report (written or multi-media) will be due on the last day of classes*. A brief required term project proposal indicating the project group membership, title, aims, and initial bibliography will be due Oct. 7th.

The presentation will count for 10% of the term mark and the report for 25%. See D2L for further guidelines on evaluation. Please read the note below on research ethics before planning you term project.

There will be two in class ‘hour exams’ (50 mins). The first is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 9th (20% of the course mark) and the second tentatively scheduled for Nov. 18th (25% of the course mark).

5% of course mark will be based on participation in class, on D2L discussion groups, on Top hat (if not counted in the 7 for the exercise grade) and as audience for others presentations.

**If project report is an essay a guide line (not a rule) will be about 4 pages per team member. See D2L.*

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

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Submission of Assignments: Please hand in your essays directly to your teaching assistant or the 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.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.)

Policy for Late Assignments

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

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

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. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. 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 System & Dept of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded in the letter grade or 4-point scale (2.7, 3.0, 3.3) *rather than* percentages. Sometimes you may receive grade points between letter grades. 3.5 is the mathematical mid-point between a B+ (3.3) and an A- (3.7) and 3.15 is the mid-point between a B (3.0) and a B+ (3.3), etc.. Only in the case of short answer questions on exam papers will the percentages given below guide assignment of the grade point value. Otherwise, all assignments and exam essays are graded on the letter grade scale.

The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in Communication, Media and Film:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department 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	00 - 49.99%	0%

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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/node/208> . 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 (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. Be sure to consult immediately if you plan any surveys, interviews, or observation activity as part of your term project. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (PIC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 picarts@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calgary Police Service• Emergency Text Messaging• Emergency Evacuation & Assembly	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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safewalk Program 	<p>Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</p>
<p>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	<p>http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students 403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca</p>
<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</p>
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>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</p> <p>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.</p>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

A schedule of class activities is found on the course D2L page.