

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Science, Technology and Society STAS 325 Lec. 01 (and B01)
Technology within Contemporary Society
Summer 2015

July 6 – August 12 (except August 3)
Monday and Wednesday 12:00 – 13:45
Lab: 14:00 – 14:50

Instructor: Dr. Mark Wolfe
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Web Page: http://people.ucalgary.ca/~mwolfe/Mark_Wolfe/index.html
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This course will examine a series of key questions about technology in our lives. Examples include:

- Does technology control us?
- Does technology lead to sustainable abundance or ecological crisis?
- Through technology do we work more or less, better or worse?
- Is technology leading to cultural uniformity or diversity?

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

Additional Information

It is **strongly recommended** that students read the Preface and Chapter One of the required textbook before attending the first class (July 2).

Either solo or in groups, students will complete a major research project for the final assignment that requires course themes and discussion be brought to bear on the chosen topics of focus. **Class attendance is therefore of critical importance.**

Make-up assignments possibly on account of **verifiable medical or other emergencies only**. Students should enrol in another section of this course if this section overlaps with weddings, vacations, hiking and other types of personal plans.

Primary Objective of the Course

The key objective of this course is to stimulate thinking about the roles of technology in contemporary society, and how society shapes the technology in those roles. This will provide an opportunity to enhance skills in analytical thinking, and written and oral communication.

Textbooks and Readings

Technology Matters: Questions to live with. David Nye. MIT Press, 2007.

Selected readings from the web or made available in class. Consult D2L for details and links to external documents.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptops and print-capable tablets strongly recommended.

Assignments and Evaluation

Short, In-class Group Assignments (35%): The course requires that students complete a series of short, in-class group assignments (7 in all, each worth 5% of your final grade). These comprise a collaboratively written response to an issue that relates to our readings. Groups will be assigned at random; on each assignment day, new groups will be generated. The Short Group Assignment will be handed in by the end of the class and lab time. Students may opt to complete these in-class assignments in a group they've also formed to complete the final course project. This is potentially advantageous, in that once the in-class assignment is completed, the remaining class time can be used for final project work (lectures will typically run between 60 and 90 minutes, followed by the in-class assignment). Students receive the group grade (no exceptions).

Mid-term exam (30%): Students on August 5 will write a 90-minute, in-class and essay-style examination aimed at assessing comprehension of key concepts from class readings, discussions and the in-class group assignments.

Final group project (35%): This major course assignment, completed individually as a research paper or as a research report/presentation in groups of 3 or 4 students, requires instructor approval. Students are encouraged to run topics past the instructor no later than July 22. Groups will be required to do a brief oral presentation near the end of term (10%), and a final hand-in report/video/website/etc. (25%) due the last day of classes. The option exists to do an individually-prepared research paper instead of a group project, graded at the full 35% of the final course grade.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

You do not need to complete all assignments and exams in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments and file naming convention: Please hand in your essays via email to: mwolfe@ucalgary.ca. Students MUST use the following file naming convention: SurnameAssignment.doc. Examples: SmithAssign#1.doc; WessonFinalPaper.doc

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 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.

*** Policy regarding engineering exams scheduled during STAS 325 class times**

There will be NO make-up assignments or final project allowances for engineering students whose professors schedule exams outside of their own class times and that consequently conflict with STAS 325 class times.

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>

Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using percentage grades. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in the Department of 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 <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support> . If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or book a consultation in the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing_support/consultations)

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. 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/safewalk
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

<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	<p>http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</p> <p>http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</p>
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	<p>https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</p> <p>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</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>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

To be handed out first day of classes