

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
Science, Technology, and Society STAS 327 L01
Science in Society
Winter 2015
Tues., Jan. 13 – Tues., April 14 (excluding Feb. 15 – 22)
TR 09:30-10:45

Instructor: Cooper H Langford
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: 11:00 – noon TR

Course Description

Science matters! From genetically modified crops, to nuclear power, to cloning, to nanotechnology, the products of science and technology have dramatically transformed how we eat, care for one another, communicate and fight. Moreover, science has altered the ways in which we understand the world around us from our kinship with animals to the origins of the universe; science has profoundly affected deeply rooted cultural convictions and assumptions.

Yet, in spite of its centrality to our lives, science is ill understood. It is often mythologized, romanticized or demonized in the public imaginary, granting it a status that exceeds its capabilities. Popular images of science, and of scientists, do not necessarily fit with the ways in which science operates. In fact, science is not a monolith and static, it is more accurate to say that there are many sciences that advance (at times radically) new ideas and practices. Moreover, science, as a knowledge, institution and practice, is a social process and changes as our society evolves. The aim of this course is to encourage critical thinking about science by introducing key themes, theories and scholars within the broad field of science, technology and society studies. By the end of the course, students will have familiarity with the ways in which science is analyzed and conceptualized from positivist to constructivist perspectives. We will study from a range of disciplines with the aim to foster critical thinking and communication skills.

Additional Information

I am glad to meet students outside posted office hours. Send an email suggesting to times that are convenient and I will confirm an appointment.

Objectives of the Course

The overarching goal of this course is to promote nuanced, contextualized understandings of the relationship among science, technology and society. Throughout the course, students will be asked to:

Define, compare and explain theoretical perspectives.

Apply perspectives covered in class to contemporary issues.

Construct cogent arguments about the relationship between science and society.

Communicate effectively in both written and oral formats

Textbooks and Readings

Sismondo, S. 2010. *An introduction to science and technology studies*, 2nd Ed. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.

Supplemental readings will be posted (with links provided as necessary) on D2L. Library resources will be required for term projects.

Internet and electronic communication device information

Laptop use should be for course related work. Cell phones should be off except during occasional use of the Top Hat response system. There will be occasional use of the Top hat system and you should subscribe if you do not already do so (www.tophat.com). The university has a sit license and there will be no charge to you.

Assignments and Evaluation

In class exercises (4 to 6 short group assignments that are to be completed during a class) and participation judged by contributions in class, and on D2L - 10%

Group research project 1-2 page prospectus 5%. (Due approx...Feb. 10th)

Two Mid-term tests, 20%, and 25% (tentative dates: Feb 12th and Mar 26th)

A Group Research Project concerning a contemporary area of controversy involving scientific judgments leads to a written report of approx. 4 pages per team member (30%), and an oral or poster presentation (10%) scheduled in the last 2.5 weeks. Total project marks, 40%. Preferred presentation date request is due: Mar. 5th. Final written report is due on the last day of the class for the term.

Groups should be 3 to 6 members. Each report should append a paragraph from each member outlining their individual contributions to the project.

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.

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 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 & Department 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 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 <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. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

If your term project will require group members to conduct (or act as participants in) primary research involving surveys, interviews, or observations, you must have received ethics approval from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. If you contemplate any activity where humans become research subjects, speak to me as soon as you know. Ethics approval takes time.

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 • 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 	http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
SU WELLNESS CENTRE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services 	403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE	403-266-HELP (4357)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online resources and tips	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 Lectures and Readings

Posted on D2L prior to start of classes.