

University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film

Science, Technology and Society STAS 325, L01/B01
Technology Within Contemporary Society

Spring 2016

Tues., May 10 – Thurs., June 30 (Excluding May 26, 31 and June 2)
Lectures, TuTh., 2:00–3:45; Tutorial, TuTh., 4:00–4:50

Instructor: Dr. Meaghan Brierley
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Web Page: D2L available through MyUofC portal
Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

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 explore include the following issues:

- 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?
- Is technology leading toward cultural uniformity or diversity?
- Is technology predictable?

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.

Objectives of the Course

At the completion of this course, students will be able to

- Evaluate the roles of technology in contemporary society and how society shapes the technology and those roles.
- Describe and apply theoretical perspectives to technology within contemporary society.
- Debate the challenges and perceived benefits of technology.
- Apply enhanced skills in analytic thinking through written and oral communication.

Textbooks and Readings

David E. Nye, *Technology Matters: Questions to Live With*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2006. (paperback) This text is available on-line at the library, but having a hard copy

(inexpensive, approx. \$20.00) is highly desirable. You will probably want access to it during class sessions.

The textbook 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 research paper.

Internet and electronic communication device information

The rules and guidelines about the use of Internet and electronic devices (laptops, cell phones etc.) will be set in class.

Assignments and Evaluation

Weight	Course components
20%	In-class Tutorial Papers (May 10, 12; June 7, 14, 16)
10%	Participation
15%	Mid-term (May 24)
30%	Group Presentations (June 21, 23, 28) and Group Research Report (June 30)
25%	Final Exam

In-class Tutorial Papers: In addition to lectures, the course will have a series of short group assignments based on an issue related to one of the topic questions raised by Nye. Of these short papers, your best 4/5 will count for 20% of the course mark.

Participation: Seven pre-assignments, consisting of 1-5 brief one-sentence answer questions, will be based on the chapters assigned for that day, a hard copy due at 2pm. Six participation marks will be given for peer assessment (during end-of-term presentations), and eight participation marks will be given for work completed in class and for participation in group work. Twenty out of these twenty-one participation marks will be counted towards the final participation mark (10%).

Mid-term: The mid-term of both short answer and essay questions is scheduled for May 24th (15%).

Group Presentation and Research Report: There will be a term project assignment based on an 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 (June 21, 23, 28) and a research report (written) will be due the last class (June 30). The presentation will count for 10% of the term mark and the research report for 20%.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

There will be a registrar-scheduled final examination for this course. It will be a cumulative exam of short answer and essay questions.

All assignments and exams weighted more than 15% must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Submission of Assignments:

Please hand in your pre-assignments directly to your instructor.

Please hand in your five in-class tutorial paper assignments and group research report through the dropbox folder in D2L.

Please include your name(s) 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 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. Assignments, exams, and other course work will be graded using raw point scores.

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%

* 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 <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 Lecture Topics and Readings

<i>Class</i>	<i>Required readings</i>	<i>Participation and Tutorials</i>	<i>Mid-term, Presentations, Research Reports and Exam</i>
Class 1: Tuesday, May 10	Nye Chapters 1–2	Pre-assignment (Participation) In-class Tutorial Paper 1	
Class 2: Thursday, May 12	Nye Chapter 3	Pre-assignment (Participation) In-class Tutorial Paper 2	
Class 3: Tuesday, May 17	Nye Chapter 4	Pre-assignment (Participation)	
Class 4: Thursday, May 19	Assigned Reading	Minute Paper (Participation)	
Class 5: Tuesday, May 24			Mid-term (15%)
Class 6: Tuesday, June 7	Nye Chapter 5	Pre-assignment (Participation) Group Work (Participation) In-class Tutorial Paper 3	
Class 7: Thursday, June 9	Nye Chapter 6	Pre-assignment (Participation)	
Class 8: Tuesday, June 14	Nye Chapters 7&8	Pre-assignment (Participation) In-class Tutorial Paper 4	

Class 9: Thursday, June 16	Nye Chapter 9	Pre-assignment (Participation) In-class Tutorial Paper 5	
Class 10: Tuesday, June 21		Peer Assessment (Participation)	Presentations (10%)
Class 11: Thursday, June 23		Peer Assessment (Participation)	
Class 12: Tuesday, June 28		Peer Assessment (Participation)	
Class 13: Tuesday, June 30		In-Class Assignment (Participation)	Research Report (20%)
Final Exam			Exam (25%)