

Science, Technology and Society STAS 327 L01
Science in Society
Winter 2011
T, Th 9:30 – 10:45

Instructor: Dr. Cooper H Langford
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Office Hours: T, Th 11:00 – 12:30

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.

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 challenged, and changed, 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 many sciences exist that advance, at times radically, ideas and practices. Moreover, science, as a knowledge, institution and practice, is a social process and changes as our social contexts change. 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.

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

Internet and electronic communication device information

A central tool of the course is Blackboard. You will require software for reading Word© and PDF document formats. It is expected that cell phones will be turned off during class periods.

Textbooks and Readings:

Sismondo, S. 2010. An introduction to science and technology studies, 2nd Ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Supplemental readings will be posted on blackboard.. Library resources will be required for projects.

Assignments and Evaluation

In class exercises and participation 10%

Group research project prospectus 5%. (due Feb. 10th)

Mid-term test, 15%, (tentative date: Feb17th)

Research project (written report (25%) and oral or poster presentation (10%)), total 35%. Preferred presentation date request due: Mar. 3rd . Final written report due Apr. 14th . Groups of 3 or 4, 20-24 pages. Groupe of 2,14-16 pages. (An individual project should be 10-12 pages.) Group reports should append a paragraph from each member outlining their individual contributions to the project.

Registrar scheduled final exam 35%

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: 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 outside of SS320. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

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.

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>.

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

Grading System

The grading in this course will use the standard university grade point scale for letters A –F as follows.

| | Grading Scale |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| A+ | 4.3 intra-term, 4.0 final grade |
| A | 4.0 |
| A - | 3.7 |
| B+ | 3.3 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.7 |
| C+ | 2.3 |
| C | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.7 |
| D+ | 1.3 |
| D | 1.0 |
| F | 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. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

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>

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.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

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

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

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

"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.

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

The Department 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/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The tentative detailed schedule of lectures, class activities and readings will be posted on Blackboard before the first meeting of the course.