ARTSSCI 3B03 – Technology & Society I (2018-19, Term 1)

Course Description

In this course, we will explore the complex relationships between technology and society, considering the extent to which these terms mutually constitute each other. Taking an integrative, inquiry-based approach, we will investigate various perspectives on the technology-society nexus, and consider the impacts of such intersections on a range of social issues (e.g., privacy, trust, identity, relationships) and within diverse social contexts (e.g., work, war, health care). Throughout, these topics will be taken up and assessed with the assistance of both historical and contemporary examples.

The course will be structured as a seminar. During the Monday meetings, I will introduce the topics and readings, but students will also be expected to contribute questions and objects of analysis, to participate in discussions, to work in small groups, and to help shape the flow and direction of our work. In most cases, Wednesday classes will be led by small groups of students, who will be responsible for selecting an issue or example connected to that week's topic and collaboratively facilitating discussion of it.

Class Times

M 2:30-4:20, BSB B154
W 3:30-4:20, BSB B154

Instructor

Dr. Beth Marquis
Mills Library 522 (MacPherson Institute)
905.525.9140 x27667
beth.marquis@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours:
 M 4:30-5:30 or by
 appointment

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Describe, discuss, compare and evaluate a wide range of arguments about the interrelations between technology and society.
2. Apply and extend scholarly understandings of the technology-society interface in order to conduct insightful analyses of historical and/or current case studies.
3. Develop, investigate, and respond effectively to compelling and researchable questions about technology and society.
4. Take an active, inquisitive, and analytical approach to their interactions with technology in their daily lives

Required Texts:

There are no texts to purchase for this course; all readings will be accessible through online channels such as public websites and McMaster's eBook collections and journal databases. Links to these materials will be available on the course Avenue site. See the schedule below for initial reading assignments. Additional readings may be assigned as we move through the term.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Group Exploration/Facilitation	Various (Sept. 26-Nov. 21)	= 25%
Media Case Study	Due October 17, 2018*	= 25%
Final Paper	Due November 30, 2018	= 35%
Participation	Throughout term	= 15%

Students leading the group exploration on Oct. 17 will have until Oct. 22 to submit their case studies

Assignment Descriptions & Evaluation Criteria:

Group Exploration & Facilitation (25%)

Working in groups of ~4, students will be expected to select an example or issue related to the week's theme, and to lead discussion of it during the Wednesday class. This will involve locating a brief news article or other introductory source (e.g., a website/video/advertisement) about the topic/example chosen, preparing 1-2 central questions for discussion, circulating the discussion questions & introductory material in advance, and leading the session on the assigned day. The facilitation should be structured such that all group members participate actively in some way, and should involve no more than 20 minutes of introductory presentation, followed by (or interspersed with) 25 minutes for group discussion, activities, etc.

Final Paper (35%)

This assignment asks you to develop, investigate, and respond to a researchable question about the interrelations between technology and society. You will be required to construct a research question of interest to you, to identify and obtain information relevant to answering the question, to evaluate the appropriateness of the evidence, to draw reasoned conclusions, and to communicate a coherent and persuasive response in an essay of 3500-4500 words in length. Your capstone paper cannot take up the same topic as your group exploration, unless it is sufficiently distinctive in approach/focus. While a formal proposal is not required, all students are expected to clear their research question and approach with me by **November 5, 2018**.

Media Case Study (25%)

For this assignment, you will be required to locate one or two brief, technology-relevant media texts (e.g., newspaper/magazine articles, advertisements, editorial cartoons) from 2017 or 2018, and to write a 1750-2000 word critical analysis of the ways in which these texts represent and speak to the technology-society nexus. Your analysis should connect the example(s) to issues taken up in class, evaluate the implications and ramifications of the text(s)' representational choices, and raise questions for further consideration.

Participation (15%)

Participation in the class process is one of the key indicators of your understanding of the course material. The expectations include: regular attendance, reading the assigned materials, contributing to class discussion, completing in class activities, listening respectfully, and engaging with others' comments to further our understandings of the materials and thematics. If you wish, you may also demonstrate your engagement by submitting brief written reflections on course readings or class discussions. An Avenue Dropbox will be set up for this purpose.

A grading rubric, which lists the criteria by which participation will be assessed, will be posted on Avenue to Learn early in the term. Students will also be given an opportunity to engage in reasoned self-assessment of their participation over the duration of the course. This self-assessment (which will need to be explicitly justified) will count toward 5% of the final participation grade.

Policy Statements

Assignment Deadlines & Missed/Late Work:

Students are expected to hand in all assignments on the specified due dates. Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 3% per day (including weekend days). Assignments submitted after the specified submission time on the due date will be counted as one day late. No assignments will be accepted after December 10, 2018. Given that course assignments require electronic submission, you should familiarize yourself with the Avenue to Learn dropbox in advance of the deadlines, and ask for assistance as necessary. Problems with electronic submission WILL NOT be accepted as an excuse for lateness.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF):

In the event of an absence, students should review and follow the Academic Regulations in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work." Please consult the MSAF statement on our website (https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/forms-requests/) and direct any questions or concerns to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program Office.

McMaster Policy on Academic Integrity:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences—e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at: http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: 1) Plagiarism—e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. 2) Improper collaboration in group work. 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. SAS can be contacted by phone 905-

525-9140 ext. 28652 or email sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO):

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous, or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office (i.e. to Shelley Anderson or Rebecca Bishop in the Arts & Science Program Office) normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Sustainable Written Work Submission Guidelines

The written work submission guidelines have been chosen to support the more sustainable use of paper, energy, and toner, and meet the Platinum standard of the Office of Sustainability; http://www.mcmaster.ca/sustainability/. All written work should be submitted in the following format: double-sided pages, reduced line spacing (1.5 lines), exclusion of title page, sans-serif font. Most work will also be submitted and returned online.

Email Contact and Student Responsibility Statement

Please Note: The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L, and/or McMaster email. It is the responsibility of students to check **their McMaster email** and course websites regularly during the term and to note any changes. Announcements will be made in class and by using the course email distribution list.

Course Schedule

A. Definitions & Foundations
Week 1 (September 5): Introduction: Popular Visions & Received Views
- o No required readings

Week 2 (September 10, 12): Approaches to Understanding the Intersection
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Franklin, U. (1999). *The Real World of Technology* (pp. 1-26)*.* Toronto: House of Anansi Press.
  - Winner, L. (1986). Technologies as forms of life. In *The Whale and The Reactor.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pp. 3-18).

B. Issues in the Intersection
Week 3 (September 17, 19): Control and Trust
- o **Required Readings:**

- Slack, J.D. & Wise, J.M. (2015). Control. In *Culture and Technology* (2nd ed.) (pp. 59-73). New York: Peter Lang.
- Shapiro, A. (2018). Between autonomy and control: Strategies of arbitrage in the 'on demand' economy. *New Media & Society, 20*(8), 2954-2971.
  - **Recommended Reading:**
    - Waytz, A., Heafner, J., & Epley, N. (2014). The mind in the machine: Anthropomorphism increases trust in an autonomous vehicle. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 52,* 113-117.

Week 4 (September 24, 26): Privacy, Security, and Surveillance
  - **Required Readings:**
    - Bauman, Z. & Lyon, D. (2013). In/security and surveillance. In *Liquid Surveillance* (pp. 100-120). Cambridge: Polity Press.
    - Reilly, P. (2015). Every little helps? YouTube, sousveillance and the 'anti-Tesco' riot in Stokes Croft. *New Media & Society, 17*(5), 755-771.

Week 5 (October 1, 3): Identity
  - **Required Readings:**
    - Bivens, R. (2017). The gender binary will not be deprogrammed: Ten years of coding gender on Facebook. *New Media & Society, 19*(6), 880-898.
    - Gal, N., Shifman, L., & Kampf, Z. (2016). 'It Gets Better': Internet memes and the construction of collective identity. *New Media & Society, 18*(8), 1698-1714.

Week 6 (October 8, 10): Fall Break – No classes

Week 7 (October 15, 17): Humanity, Posthumanism, & Transhumanism
  - **Required Readings:**
    - Braidotti, R. (2013). Post-anthropocentrism: Life beyond the species. In *The Posthuman* (pp. 55-67 only)*.* Cambridge: Polity Press*.*
    - More, M. (2013). The philosophy of transhumanism. In *The Transhumanist Reader* (pp. 3-17). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
      ### *Media Case Study due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, October 17**

Week 8 (October 22, 24): Democracy & Journalism
  - **Guest lecture (M):** Dr. Tony Porter: Digital democracy
  - **Required Readings:**
    - Vaidhyanathan, S. (2018). The disinformation machine. In *Antisocial media: How Facebook disconnects US and undermines democracy* (pp.175-195). New York: Oxford University Press.
    - Papacharissi, Z. (2010). *A Private Sphere: Democracy in a Digital Age* (pp. 103-111 and pp.131-137). Cambridge, UK/Malden, MA: Polity.
  - **Guest lecture (W)**: Blake Dillon: Technology in/and journalism

Week 9 (October 29, 31): Human/Non-Human Encounters
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Turkle, S. (2011). Love's labor lost. In *Alone Together* (pp.103-126). New York: Basic Books.
  - Kahn Jr., P.H., Gary, H.E., & Shen, S. (2013). Children's social relationships with current and near-future robots. *Child Development Perspectives, 7*(1), 32-37.

C. Sites of Intersection
Week 10 (November 5, 7): Work
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Nakamura, L. (2014). Indigenous circuits: Navajo women and the racialization of early electronic manufacture. *American Quarterly, 66*(4), 919-941.
  - Trottier, D. (2014). Crowdsourcing CCTV surveillance on the Internet. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(5), 609-626.

Week 11 (November 12, 14): Art
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Benjamin, W. (1936/1968). The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. In H. Arendt (Ed.), *Illuminations* (pp. 217-251). New York: Schocken Books.
  - Bazin, A. (1945/2009). The ontology of the photographic image. In L. Braudy & M. Cohen (Eds.), *Film Theory & Criticism* (7th ed.) (pp. 159-163). New York: Oxford University Press.

Week 12 (November 19, 21): Health Care
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Owens, K. (2017). Too much of a good thing? American childbirth, intentional ignorance, and the boundaries of responsible knowledge. *Science, Technology, & Human Values, 42*(5), 848-871.
  - Oudshoorn, N. (2012). How places matter: Telecare technologies and the changing spatial dimensions of healthcare. *Social Studies of Science, 42*(1), 121-142.

Week 13 (November 26, 28): War
- o **Required Readings:**
  - Lin, P., Abney, K., & Bekey, G. (2014). Ethics, war, and robots. In R.L. Sandler (ed.), *Ethics and Emerging Technologies* (pp. 349-362). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
  - Hall Kindervater, K. (2017). The technological rationality of the drone strike. *Critical Studies on Security, 5*(1), 28-44.

Final Paper due by 11:59pm on Friday, November 30

Week 14 (December 3, 5): Reflections, Wrap Up, and Future Directions
- o **M:** In-class screening and discussion (no required readings)
- o **W: Guest Lecture**: Dr. Hendrik Poinar: Gene editing and de-extinction