ARTSSCI 3B03 / Technology and Society I

2022-2023 (Term 1, Fall 2022)

Course Instructor: Lev Marder

Email: lmarder@mcmaster.ca

Class: Mon 4:30-6:20 & Wed 4:30-5:20, BSB/108

Office Hours: Fridays 3:00-4:00pm in LRW-3038

TA: Nicole McNair, mcnairnk@mcmaster.ca

Course Description:

Technological advancement is never an isolated process. On the one hand, it is a vehicle of the expression and satisfaction of societal needs and desires. On the other hand, it drives societal needs and desires. They are two sides of the same coin. To answer ethical questions, questions about the past, present, and future directions of both technological and societal progress, we need to develop better understanding of the interaction between technology and society.

We will do so in this course by focusing on something humans have created and re-create for both nefarious and noble purposes. We will focus on deception in its many forms to better assess the value of science, truth, expertise, and authenticity, and raise perennial questions about the ethics and success of lies and truth, forgery, and our identities. This will allow us to examine the role of technology in reinforcing and undermining trust in what and who we see and know—the cornerstone of a community.

To understand the complex relation between technology and society, we will examine the creation, proliferation, and exposure of deceptions drawing on a variety of fields including anthropology, politics, science and technology studies, gender studies, linguistics, history of course, films, and other fields and media. We will try on several interdisciplinary lenses or glasses combining those fields to better understand the relation between technology and society from multiple perspectives, to compare them (some of the lenses might be more to your liking than others), and critically analyze them. How we treat deceptions and talk about them affects what they do, what we do with them, and vice versa. This is an exciting journey that will equip you with the tools to carry out interdisciplinary inquiry on a wide variety of subjects!

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students should be able:

* Describe, discuss, compare and evaluate a wide range of arguments about the interrelations between technology and society
* Develop, investigate, and respond effectively to compelling and researchable questions about technology and society by drawing on and integrating the protocols and methods of the humanities/social sciences and sciences

### communicate in both oral and written forms for both academic and general audiences and appreciate the difficulties of communicating science to the public

### conduct research using both traditional and electronic sources in both humanities/social sciences and scientific contexts

### to be creative, collaborative, and analytical thinkers and practitioners

* to practice appropriate academic conduct and accountability

### to integrate academic work and broader issues of global citizenship through experiential learning

Text:

*All course readings will be available through Avenue to Learn.*

Method of Evaluation:

Forum post (due date decided during the second week) 5%

Podcast--group project due Oct 21 15%

Cumulative Major Project (65%)—individual:

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due Sept 23rd 10%

Small support group meetings 5% x 2 (Sept 28+Nov 23) 10%

Peer-review: Nov 9th 5%

Final product Presentation: Dec 3rd + 5th 15%

Final product: Due Dec 12th 25%

Participation in class and online 15%

TOTAL 100%

Description of Assignments:

*Podcast (15%):* You will be working in groups of 4-5 students to create a 5-10 minute podcast. It is an opportunity for you to process the course material, research a particular aspect of the topic in more depth, try on interdisciplinary glasses, and practice communicating science to the public. Detailed description of the assignment will be handed out during week 2.

*Major Project and Associated Assignments (65%):* These assignments ask 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 validity and appropriateness of the evidence, to draw reasoned conclusions, and to communicate a coherent and persuasive response in an essay of 10-12pp in length. Your capstone paper cannot take up the same topic as your group exploration, unless it is sufficiently distinctive in approach/focus.

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: As a first step in this process, you will be required to submit a brief (2pp) proposal that outlines your planned research question and indicates its significance, and describes the approach you intend to take to exploring it. The proposal should also include a preliminary discussion of scholarly sources of relevance to your research question. Detailed description of the paper proposal will be handed out during the first week of class.

Small support group meetings: Just after submitting your proposals and before completing your projects, you will meet with your instructor/TA in small groups to support each other’s projects. During the first meeting, you will share the anticipated challenges and collectively look for solutions. During the second meeting, you will reflect on how you dealt with the challenges and support each other in completing the final stages of the project. You will be graded on your preparedness, participation, and reflection. Detailed instructions will be shared during the first weeks of classes.

Peer-review: By November 9th, you should have 75% of your project complete and ready for peer-review. In class, you will exchange your paper with another student who will grade your work based on the same criteria the final project will be graded on and the student will give written feedback. They will hand in the grading scheme and feedback. You will do the same for their paper. This will help you support the research of classmates, learn to evaluate the work of others and your own and reflect on your own inquiry process.

Final Product Presentation: The final product presentation will take the form of a five minute video presentation you will post on our A2L forum. You will briefly discuss your project and more importantly explain how it is possible to apply the lenses for examining the society-technology nexus you learned in class to your project. You will post your presentation on the forum on December 3rd and on the forum discuss the presentations of two classmates by December 5th. Detailed instructions will be shared by week 9 of the course.

*Course Participation (15%):* Excellent course participation involves consistently engaging with course material both in class and online. In class it means coming to class demonstrably having read the material, handing in in-class assignments for participation, staying for the entire class, paying full attention to what others in the class are contributing (which means not giggling and having ten chats open on your laptop or smartphone), and making valuable contributions to the discussion. 10% of your participation mark is based on in-class participation. Online, participation means responding during five weeks on the forum contributing your course-based analysis to the forum discussion (five times). Online participation makes up 5% of your class participation grade. Each forum response should be a 5-7 sentence paragraph that substantively directly responds to the thread and cites evidence as appropriate.

*Forum Post (5%):* During the second week, we will figure out the schedule for posting the lead post on the forum. 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 2022, and to write a 10-15 sentence critical analysis of the ways in which these texts represent and speak to the issues at the technology-society nexus discussed during that unit. Your analysis should briefly 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.

Tentative Course Schedule:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Readings/viewing, etc. |
| Week 1  Sept 7-12  “Introduction” | -The social dimension of the technology and society nexus |
| Week 2  Sept 19  What is the role of the scientist at the nexus of society and technology? | -Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation” |
| Week 3  Sept 26  On Originality: “What happens when you open the black box of science?” or the Science, Technology, Society Lens I | -Bruno Latour, “Give me a laboratory and I will raise the world”  -Radiolab, “Breaking News” |
| Week 4  Oct 3  On Originality: “What happens when you open the black box of science?” or the Science, Technology, Society Lens II | -Ken Alder, “ History’s Greatest Forger: Science, Fiction, and Fraud along the Seine”  -Alex Nagle, “The Copy and Its Evil Twin: Thirteen Notes on Forgery”  Key terms: authenticity, originality, expertise, communication and community |
| Week 5  Oct 10  Midterm recess | -No class, midterm recess |
| Week 6  Oct 17  On Originality: “What happens when you open the black box of science?” or the Science, Technology, Society Lens III | -Screening of “Merchants of Doubt” (2014) |
| Week 7  Oct 24  “What is normal or true and why does it matter?” or the Foucauldian Lens I | Thaler and Sustain, “Nudging” |
| Week 8  Oct 31  “What is normal or true and why does it matter?” or the Foucauldian Lens II | -Michel Foucault, “Discipline and Punish”  -Michel Foucault, “The birth of biopolitics” |
| Week 9  Nov 7  “What is normal or true and why does it matter?” or the Foucauldian Lens III | -Michel Foucault, “Discipline and Punish”  -Michel Foucault, “The birth of biopolitics” |
| Week 10  Nov 14  “Who is the liar? (social) science, and identity” or the Feminist lens I | -Donna Haraway, “Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millenium” |
| Week 11  Nov 21  “Who is the liar? (social) science, and identity” or the Feminist lens II | -Screening of “Hidden Figures” |
| Week 12  Nov 28  “Who is the liar? (social) science, and identity” or the Feminist lens III | -Helen Wheeler, “Informed decision-making with Indigenous and local knowledge and science”  -Jorge Luis Borges, “The Lottery in Babylon” |
| Week 13  Dec 5 | -Presentations and final project submission |

**Course Policies:**

Submission/Late Policy for Written and Other Assignments:

Written assignments are due in the Dropbox on A2L one hour before the lecture on the due date listed on the course outline. Do not slip assignments under your prof’s office door. Assignments will be assessed 10% late penalty every 24 hours after the due date, including weekends.

If you know that you will have a few assignments due in several classes on the same day, come talk to me about it early (at least a week before deadline) and a short extension may be granted. Extensions are official only in written form, when confirmed through email.

Reading, Email, Office Hour and Other Rules:

Every student is responsible for all required readings. Some of the texts are more difficult than others. Students are expected to come to every class having read the reading assigned for that class.

I will be happy to meet with you in person or over Zoom, during a time that is convenient for both of us. Come, sit, relax and if you want to talk about the university in general or the course in particular, I’ll be glad to see you. My rule for both email communication and office hours is that you meet me half way. (For example, just asking what does Proctor think of science or what is the meaning of life, doesn’t give me anything to work with in order to help you out). Be prepared to tell me what you know and what you understand so that we can build on that basis to enrich your understanding and experience.

Sometimes, an email requires a very long response. If your email is really long and requires a long response, it is probably better for us to meet in person or over zoom so that we can have a back and forth and that will also reduce misunderstandings.

I will reply to emails within 24 hours (and usually much quicker), so if you do not get a reply from me within 24 hours, the wires must have crossed somewhere and you should email me again to make sure your email gets through. It doesn’t bother me at all, just sometimes an email gets lost in the email box and I actually really appreciate it if you resend after the 24 hours, if I haven’t responded to you.

**SENATE-APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS**

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. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [*Academic Integrity Policy*](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-1-1.pdf)*,* located at [https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures- guidelines/](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-%20guidelines/).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* improper collaboration in group work.
* copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., online search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](https://mcmasteru365-my.sharepoint.com/personal/rbishop_mcmaster_ca/Documents/www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

**Some courses may** use online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

**Some courses may** use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [*Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities*](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](https://sas.mcmaster.ca/) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [*Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Academic-Accommodations-Policy.pdf) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [*Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work*](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Requests-for-Relief-for-Missed-Academic-Term-Work-Policy-on.pdf).

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](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2019/02/Academic-Accommodation-for-Religious-Indigenous-and-Spiritual-Observances-Policy-on.pdf) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty 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.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done either by the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to 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.

NOTES FOR ALL ARTS & SCIENCE COURSES

1. Some of the statements above refer to a “Faculty Office”; please note that the Arts & Science Program Office serves in this capacity.
2. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email regularly. Announcements will be made in class, via A2L, and/or via the course email distribution list.
3. For additional information regarding requests for accommodation, relief for missed term work (e.g. MSAF), deferred examinations, etc., students should read carefully the [Requests](https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/forms-requests/) and [Resources](https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/current-students/resources/) pages on the Arts & Science Program website.