

SOCI 3333 (01) **TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY** Spring 2016

Instructor: Tim Lubben

Class Time: T/TH 12:30

Office Hours:

by appointment

Email Address:

tlubben@kennesaw.edu

[du](#)

Course Description and Goals

In high income societies, more so than in low income societies, most social processes and the functioning of primary social institutions are increasingly being mediated by various forms of technology. Thus ours, more than previous generations, has appropriately been described as “age of technology”. Commenting on the centrality of technology in human society over the centuries Habermas (1970:87), argues that “*there is an immanent connection between technology known to us and the structure of purposive-rational action.*” This is partly because technical implements substitute, supplement, augment and expand what humans have to, and can do. To the extent that it performs these critical functions in helping us to better understand, and sometimes control, our social and natural environments, it may be concluded that technology is very beneficial. This golden view of technology is, however, tempered by the fact the development and deployment of technology are almost exclusively shaped by instrumental rationality. The latter implies that technology in its various manifestations can be socially disruptive, especially with regard to the norms and values infrastructure of society. Can such disruptions have socially “useful” or redeeming qualities? In light of such disruptions and the rapid pace of technological changes should factors other than technical and economic efficiency and efficacy necessarily guide the development and use technologies?

This course examines these critical sociological questions and issues by exploring the social dimensions of technology. This course highlights interactions and interrelationships between the technological and social worlds.

This course will primarily consist of lectures, in-class student presentations/ discussions and student review papers.

Required Text

Technology and Democracy

ISBN# 9781609270667

Course Requirements

Attendance

Class attendance is expected of all students and will be excused **only in serious documented cases, such as medical emergencies**. Past experience indicates that students who attend and participate in class tend to be more successful. Besides, the structure of this class requires students to come to class prepared to engage in the learning process through critical discussion of techno-society issues. Active participation in class is dependent on regular attendance. Thus multiple absences will lead to less participation automatically a reduction in final grade as explained below.

Participation. 20%

Students are expected to come to class ready to participate in discussions each week.

Part these discussions will come from your weekly technology journal.

Speaker responses 30%

We will have several speakers. These speakers will address the use of technology in their jobs. These will be real world examples of technology. After each speaker I will open a discussion. Your comments should explain how technology, from their point of view, fits into our society.

Technology Journal. 20%

In this journal you should approximately 2 hours a week commenting on the world around you. What technology seems to work well? What technologies do we rely on. Does draw is together or

Technology Paper 1 - 30%

This paper should be 4 pages not including citation page. There should be a least 4 citations.

20% For this paper pick one technology.

40% Show how this technology has had a positive impact on our society.

40% Show this technology has impacted our society from a theoretical expecting. Technology Paper 2

- This paper should be 4 pages not including citation page. There should be a least 4 citations.

20% For this paper pick one technology.

40% Show how this technology has had a negative impact on our society.

40% Show this technology has impacted our society from a theoretical expecting.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

ACADEMIC ATTENDANCE:

“Students are solely responsible for managing their enrollment status in a class; nonattendance does not constitute a withdrawal.”

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

Students are expected to follow the Kennesaw State University’s Student Code of Conduct at all times. In addition, cell phones must be put on silence/vibrate during class, and laptops, iPads, MP3 Players, etc. must be turned off. The instructor may approve written requests for use of laptop or iPad for notes-taking, etc. (not for activities unrelated to the class).

If you need to answer a call or text, please quietly step outside the classroom.

Failure to do so may result in your being asked to leave the class for that day.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. A student who is more than 15 minutes late for class should not walk in and disrupt the class. That student will be considered as having been absent.

Academic Integrity – Plagiarism and Cheating Statement

“No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, es-says, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating.

When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s)” (KSU Department of Student Conduct and

Academic Integrity).

Quality Writing Is Expected

“The KSU Writing Center helps students in all disciplines improve their written work. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you on topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit www.kennesaw.edu/writingcenter, or stop by Room 242 in the English Building”

POSSIBLE RESEARCH TOPICS

NOTE: You are **not** required to choose your research topic from this suggested list. You can come up with your own research topic, and the topic should be relevant to this course.

1. A critical analysis of the societal implications of the so-called “big data” and surveillance
2. Critical assessment of the incidence and implications of employer-deployed monitoring technology at the workplace
3. Analyses of whether Amazon will lead to demise of paper book publishers and the societal implications of that possibility
4. A critical review of impacts of social media on the public as citizens and as employees
5. Analysis of the role of the state compared with the private sector in technological innovation
6. Analysis of the implications and impact of communication technology on politics and governance
7. Critical assessment of the role of technological innovations in sociocultural globalization
8. A critical review of impacts of two technologies on the physical environment
9. Assessment of the relationship between medical technological innovations and quality of life in contemporary society
10. Assessment of the impacts of a technological innovation of your choice on one of the primary social institutions (Education, Economy, Family, Government/ Politics, Religion,) in the US