



**EFFECTIVE: SEPTEMBER 2004**  
**CURRICULUM GUIDELINES**

A: Division: **INSTRUCTIONAL** Effective Date: **SEPTEMBER 2004**

B: Department / Program Area: **SOCIOLOGY**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES** Revision  New Course

If Revision, Section(s) Revised: **C, H**

Date of Previous Revision: **FEBRUARY 1999**

Date of Current Revision: **APRIL 2004**

C: **SOCI 2290** D: **SOCIETY AND TECHNOLOGY** E: **3**

Subject & Course No.	Descriptive Title	Semester Credits
<b>F:</b> Calendar Description: This course examines the impact of technology on the social relations of people in contemporary industrial societies. It investigates the social bases of technological innovation and examines the forces associated with the institutionalized uses of technology, as well as the consequences of those uses. Critical evaluation of a range of important questions and issues will be undertaken in relation to the social uses and impacts of technology at micro- (e.g., experiential, identity, subjective interpretation) and macro- (e.g., workplace, institutional, economic) sociological levels.		
<b>G:</b> Allocation of Contact Hours to Type of Instruction / Learning Settings  Primary Methods of Instructional Delivery and/or Learning Settings:  <b>Lecture and Seminar</b>  Number of Contact Hours: (per week /semester for each descriptor)  <b>Lecture: 2 hrs. per week / semester</b> <b>Seminar: 2 hrs. per week / semester</b>  Number of Weeks per Semester: <b>15</b>	<b>H:</b> Course Prerequisites:  <b>SOCI 1125 or SOCI 1145 or SOCI 1155 or OLD SOCI 135</b>  <b>I:</b> Course Corequisites:  <b>NONE</b>  <b>J:</b> Course for which this Course is a Prerequisite  <b>NONE</b>  <b>K:</b> Maximum Class Size:  <b>35</b>	
<b>L:</b> PLEASE INDICATE: <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Credit <input type="checkbox"/> College Credit Non-Transfer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Credit Transfer: SEE BC TRANSFER GUIDE FOR TRANSFER DETAILS ( <a href="http://www.bccat.bc.ca">www.bccat.bc.ca</a> )		

**M: Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes:**

At the conclusion of the course the successful student will be able to:

1. Critically assess the major perspectives and theories employed to describe and analyze technology.
2. Apply the sociological perspectives discussed in the course to specific issues and problems having to do with contemporary uses of technology.
3. Identify the main social forces that help to bring about technological developments.
4. Identify the political, economic military communicative, and other consequences of technologies and their uses.
5. Describe and critically assess the intended and unintended consequences of institutionalized uses of technology.
6. Describe the chief benefits and drawbacks of changes in technology as these affect different social domains, especially the contemporary workplace communications practices, and strategies of social control.
7. Describe how institutionalized uses of technology impact on individual identity and subjective experience.
8. Apply the sociological perspectives (previewed in the course) to critically analyze a contemporary or historical case of technology use.

**N: Course Content:**

1. Introduction: Overview of "Technology" and Technological Change
  - Orienting Concepts and Definitions of Technology
  - The Differential Consequences of Technological Change
  - The Limits of Technology
2. Critical Perspectives: Theoretical Approaches
  - Marx's Theory of Technology
  - The Ogburn Generation
  - Recent Theoretical Approaches
3. Processes of Technological Change
  - Sources of Technological Change
  - Inventors, Inventions
  - Invention as Social Process
4. Science, Technology, and Sponsorship
  - Interrelationship of Science and Technology
  - Sponsors and Social Supports for Technology
5. Diffusion of Technology
  - Diffusion of Innovation
  - Economic Incentives of Diffusion
  - Adaptation and Adoption
  - Adapting and Tinkering

**Course Content Cont'd.**

6. Technology's Impacts on Health and Environment
  - Technology, Energy and Environment
  - Dilemmas of Medical and Biological Technologies
  - Technological Accidents
  
7. Technology and the Changing Workplace
  - Points of Comparison: Work in Nonindustrial Societies
  - Technology's Impact on Work and its Organization in Industrial Societies
  - Changes in Occupation With Increase Technological Innovations
  
8. Communications Technology
  - Typographic Culture: Effects of "Print" on Society
  - Electronic Media's Social Impacts: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly
  - New Communications Technologies:
    - New Information Technologies as Mechanisms of Social Control
    - No Sense of Place: Revolutionizing Communication and Social Interaction
  - The Distancing Effects of Technology
  
9. Weapons and the Conduct of War
  - Technology's Effects on Institutionalized Conflict: Tactical and Strategic Incentives of
    - Technological Development and Use
  - Social Structure and the Development of Military Technologies
  - Controlling Proliferation of New Weapons?
  
10. Shaping, Controlling, and Assessing Technology
  - Technology and its Creators
    - Technological Determinism
    - Experts and Expertise
    - Technology Assessment
  
11. Organizations and Technological Change
  - Technology as Cause and Consequence of Organizational Structure
  - Interorganizational Relations and Technological Development
  - Entrepreneurs and Organization
  
12. Government and the Control of Technology
  - Government Actions and the Shaping of Technology
  - Guiding Technological Development
  - Democratic Control of Technology
  - Future Challenges

**O: Methods of Instruction:**

The course will employ a variety of instructional methods to accomplish its objectives, including some of the following: lectures, audio visual materials (including overheads, films), small group discussions, oral presentations (discussion seminars), and specialist guest speakers.

**P: Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students:**

Texts will be updated periodically. Typical examples are:

Rudi Volti. Society and Technological Change. (3rd Edition). New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

Ron Westrum. Technologies & Society: The Shaping of People and Things. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1991.

**Q: Means of Assessment:**

Course evaluation is based on formative and summative elements and is in accord with the Douglas College student evaluation policy. Specific components of evaluation will include some of the following: two exams made up of short answer and short essay questions; an essay assignment; oral presentation; and participation in class discussions, student presentations, and group discussions. Students will complete a research project where the aim is to describe and critically evaluate a specific technology topic. Specific evaluation criteria will be provided by the instructor at the beginning of the semester and will vary according to the instructor's assessment of appropriate evaluation methods.

An example of one evaluation scheme:

Mid Term Examination	25%
Essay/Written Assignment	25%
Essay/Outline	5%
Final Examination	25%
Participation	<u>20%</u>
	100%

**R: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: specify whether course is open for PLAR**

No.

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Course Designer(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Education Council / Curriculum Committee Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean / Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar