

SPRING
2008

Comparative Studies 597.01
Science, Technology in a Global Setting
DB 80 , 930-11:18
Dr. Nancy Jesser
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Office Hours: MW 12-12:30 and by appt, 468 Hagerty Hall

Please contact me through email if you need to contact me urgently. If it's not urgent, you may leave a message at 292-0389.

TEXTS

Readings will be available on Carmen in PDF format or web-based

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at (614) 292-3307, or visit 150 Pomerene Hall, to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

We will analyze the intersection of values, scientific thought, and technological practice in a global setting. Over the term we will read about scientific and technical controversies, histories of the use of science to support political ideologies and explore the technical and scientific approaches to social, political and environmental global issues. We will be focusing on how nature is articulated through science and mediated through human technical interactions and how this affects our past, present, and future. Through critical analyses of scientific and technological issues we will seek neither to vilify nor glorify scientific-technological practice, but rather demystify and engage with it. Specifically students will examine the technical and scientific challenges facing the planet.

Some key questions we will explore are:

- How are scientific knowledges and practices related to the cultural situations and historical moments in which they are produced and enacted?
- How are decisions and arguments about the uses and dangers of technology made and how are these decisions justified?
- What is the relationship between the globalization of science, transnational business, conflicts over values and the conditions of life on this planet?
- How are local, national, and ruling/hegemonic group's undertakings affected by disparate access to scientific knowledge and technological resources?
- How are scientific and technological practices changing?

Through specific global issues, student groups will examine the context and implications of political, social, technical and scientific decisions that shape the future of human societies and nature.

REQUIREMENTS

IN-CLASS: In order to foster class participation, regular attendance and accountability for assigned readings, in addition to discussion there be short in-class writings and occasional short quizzes--neither extensive, nor time-consuming (5-10 mins). You will be rewarded for your attention to the readings and your attendance. If you need any special accommodations, please let me know at the beginning of the term. In-class writing assignments/quizzes will relate to that day's assigned reading.

After two missed classes, your participation grade will begin to be negatively affected.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments will lose 5 pts, and then 5 more for every class period after that. That is 100 to 95, and so on. Short papers will not be accepted more than a week. There can be no late finals! Articles will be accepted only in class on due date.

ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory and especially important in a discussion-centered course. Absences in excess of two classes may jeopardize your final grade **no matter** the quality of your other work.

The class will spend a substantial amount of time discussing the readings and topics as a class and in smaller groups. Your cooperation is important. The atmosphere will be casual, open, but intellectually rigorous. If you feel someone is detracting from this atmosphere seriously or intentionally, please bring it to my attention.

A respectful and questioning attitude is crucial for successful discussion. The readings are difficult and sometimes controversial and disturbing; class discussions will help you to formulate and clarify your thoughts on the readings and to understand the positions others take. The issues of difference and diversity we discuss will be particularly and personally important to you and others in the class. Because we are engaging directly in issues that have social and political relevance, it is crucial that we take this seriously as well as behave respectfully, even as we question or challenge each other's views—this includes me.

Class discussions are an opportunity to explore the author's idea's relevance to your own personal and intellectual experiences. It is likely that you will be challenged or even upset by something said or read in this classroom. These ideas need to be brought into the discussion--opened to respectful questioning and disagreement. If you do not feel you can bring them up, I encourage you make an appointment to discuss them with me.

FINAL GRADES

In-Class (in-class writings, participation, quizzes, clippings)	15%
Group Presentation	15%
Short Papers	40%
Final Essay	30%

You are expected to know, understand and adhere to the Student Code of Academic Conduct. A paper that is plagiarized-- i.e. maliciously documented or without proper attribution-- may result in a hearing before the academic misconduct committee. If you have **any doubts** about whether you have properly documented and attributed the ideas and words of others in your work, feel free to consult me. If you do not know the code of academic conduct, see web site:

http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp

PLEASE TALK TO ME **NOW** IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT COURSE REQUIREMENTS OR MY EXPECTATIONS.

Week Eight: Problems/Solutions

May 12: "Predictions: Technology of the New Century and the New Millennium," and "Case Study 2: The Development and Progress of the Ambitious UN 2000 Millennium Project" , by Barbara Eichler, from *Technology and Society*

May 14: "Environmental Challenges Go Global" and "The Eightfold Way" excerpts from Speth, *Red Sky at morning: America and the crisis of the Global Environment*

Week Nine: Groups Present Global Problem, Context and assessing Scientific/Technical "Solutions"

May 19: Groups 1 and 2

Paper Due Date no. 3 (Readings May 5-May 14)

May 21: Groups 3 and 4

Week Ten

May 26: No CLASS

May 38: Groups 5 and 6