Yukon University

COURSE OUTLINE

SOCI 209

SOCIETY, TECHNOLOGY, AND VALUES

3 CREDITS
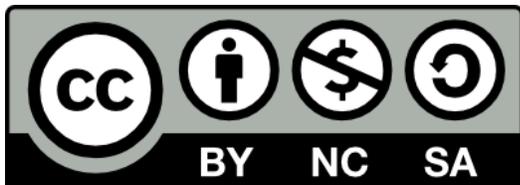
SOCIETY, TECHNOLOGY, AND VALUES

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Shawkat Shareef

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CRN: 20233

OFFICE HOURS: Moodle , Fridays, 10 am-12 pm

CLASSROOM: ONLINE CLASS

CLASS TIME: ONLINE

DATES: January 5 - April 29, 2022

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the interaction of three entities: The technologies developed by a society, the values of the individuals in that society, and its social organization. The goal of this course is to heighten students' powers of observation concerning technologies and to enhance their critical understanding of the changes new technologies may cause.

PREREQUISITES
Engl 100 with 100-level Soci, Anth or Phil recommended.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY
Find course transfer at https://www.bctransferguide.ca/

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit

You, Me, Society and Technology

Have you really thought about the fact that we cannot live without cell phones, cars, internet, and all the other amenities that we think and believe have made our lives easier, faster, and certainly more comfortable here in North America? Indeed, technology and science together have changed the face of the earth, the nature of human interactions or communication, reproductive scenarios, food culture/habit to the extent that the societies all over the world try to implement them, and try not to resist them. However, have science and technology been benevolent, useful and sustainable for all societies, for all human kind? Surely, new technologies have helped some societies to prosper, but not all. In the era of globalization when we like to talk about would like to see social, economic, and political justice being delivered across human societies, it

is important to understand the role science and technology play to either enhance those values or hinder them.

In this course, we will ask many questions, and will try to find out the answers: we understand technology has done wonders for humanity, but it's use and abuse have significantly shaped the core values in societies as well. To do that:

- Several theoretical frameworks regarding the tripartite relationships between society, technology and values will be introduced and discussed;
- Current issues and debates will be presented to further understand the theoretical claims of this threefold relationship;
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- Alternative actions/pathways will be pondered in case of the abuse of technology that creates inequality, leading to injustice as a result.

COURSE FORMAT

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, this course is being taught online using a variety of materials, activities, and technical solutions. You will need to visit the course Moodle site and participate in online activities and discussions as assigned and scheduled.

There are no in-person meetings scheduled for this course and you will work on your own schedule. While there may be no set meetings times, video- or audio-conferencing may be used for office hours tutorials, teaching sessions, seminars and class meetings. Although This is a self-paced course, the class will proceed on a timetable with set assignments and due dates.

ASSESSMENTS

Participation

Participation in class is essential to the development of class unity and the learning process for everyone. Discussion forums offer students a forum in which to express ideas and be educated through the ideas of others. We will create together a respectful environment where everyone will feel safe and encouraged to speak. This means that students and instructor must monitor their speech so as not to give more than their fair share.

Students will also write a number of short assignments through practicing reflexive commentaries, demonstrating their understanding of theories about families and the practical implications of those theories in the understanding of indigenous, non-indigenous and immigrant families. There are no points assigned to these practice reflexive commentaries, but performance on these short practice assignments (both completion and quality) will be added to the overall participation grade as a percentage. Also, practice reflexive commentaries will help stimulate the discussions the forums. For more details, see below.

Written Examinations
There will be two written exams: one midterm and the other is the final exam.

Assignments
There will be two reflexive commentary assignments. The topics for the assignments are self-chosen by the students based on their experience in practice reflexive commentaries. See below for details about assignments. More to follow in the Discussion Forum.

Research Paper
Students will write one research paper on a self-researched topic about technology and values in society. The paper topic must be approved by the professor. The paper should be documented and formatted according to APA style and maximum of eight (8) pages (excluding the references) using 1.5 line spacing and 12 point fonts.

STUDYING & LEARNING STRATEGY
Textbook aside, the on-line course environment containing several tools that would help you to get used to using the course material and enhance your learning experience. Please practice the following as your everyday guide to studying and learning.

The Beginning

At the very beginning, you should be able to familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, the Moodle course website, and the course textbook. Also, you should start reading the Week 1 readings and begin to address the concept of Reflexive Commentary based on the readings. Reflexive Commentary will be a big part of your learning throughout the course and it will certainly help you to do well in that.

Weekly Reading Strategy

As part of weekly readings, you should start by reading through Chapter Summary, Learning Objectives, and Time to Review Questions. *You can follow your own individual reading habit in order to address those sections mentioned above but please do note that if you read Chapter Summary and Learning Objectives first before you start with the actual textbook chapter, it will only help you to understand what to expect in the textbook chapter itself and how to focus on different topics.* Upon finishing reading the chapter, you can address some of the Time to Review Questions and try to answer them in rudimentary fashion (this will help you to do reflexive commentary later on).

Problem solving

It is very natural that you may run into difficulties to understand the textbook material. Do not worry when it happens because there are several tools to solve these problems: Learning objectives, critical thinking questions, online resources at the end of every chapter, Discussion Forum and Email. Besides the textbook chapter summary and key terms that will direct you to many broader online materials to understand the relevant topics at hand, Discussion Forum is to support you to clarify confusions regarding course materials. Don't understand a topic? Simply start a thread with your question to your classmates and try to generate a very cooperative and congenial discussion. However, do this only after you have really invested some time and energy to understand the material because your classmates will not give you full answers to any topic/issue in question and if anybody attempts to do that, it will be considered unethical. As said before, Discussion Forum is an online-substitute for in-class lecture and discussions here should be regarded as

discussions, not answers to questions (but definitely discussions will most likely lead you to the correct answers). Post your general course questions on the Forum. I will monitor the Discussion Forum and if necessary, will post comments to your inquiries/comments. If you are still struggling, send an Email to me through Moodle emailing environment and please be very specific topic/issue based in your emails. Personal problem related emails will be automatically ignored.

Reflexive Commentary
You have done your homework so far (reading textbook chapter, critical thinking questions and learning objectives for each chapter) and now it is time for you to proceed with Reflexive Commentary. Reflexive Commentary is a proof that you understand the course material and that you can engage with it through your critical reflection skills. It's basically your self-assessment tool to understand your own comprehension capacity of the course materials to develop your own reflective questions (other than the ones mentioned in the Critical Thinking Questions section at the end of every chapter). Reflexive Commentary will strengthen your skill and capacity that you need to write exams.

Practice Reflexive commentaries are written reflections of weekly readings. These practice reflexive commentaries will lead to **two** commentaries in total throughout the span of the course which are regarded as **two formal assignments** (see Reading List for the due dates). The commentaries will be submitted to the Discussion Forum when asked by me to do so using Moodle course website and in Word or PDF files. Submission of the commentaries are time sensitive and no late submissions will be accepted. There will be no make-up commentaries for missed opportunity. However, under extenuating circumstances (for which documentations are required), you can arrange for early submissions of the commentaries.

The purpose of the reflexive commentary is to enable you to develop critical analytical thought process. Therefore, the commentaries should not be just descriptive, rather they will be your own thoughts about different theories and concepts in textbook readings. Also, another aspect of the commentaries will focus on the Questions for Critical Thought at the end of the chapters where you will choose one question from each chapter to critically analyze and explain. In other words, the latter aspect of commentaries (critical thinking questions) are to enable you to think about the issue in more in-depth fashion. If your analysis and/or explanations can generate some debate/discussion among your peers, then you know that you have done a good job.

The **length of each reflexive commentary** in the Discussion Forum should not exceed *one and half pages* of type d text, using 1.5 line spacing and 12 pt Times New Roman font. No need to use a cover page for commentaries.

ASSIGNMENTS
You will write two formal assignments. Each assignment should not be exceeding 5 pages in length using Times New Roman font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing.

Exam preparations
On exam days, reviewing all study notes and Reflexive Commentaries will get you ready for the exam. When the exam is available online, first, read the question thoroughly to know what has been specifically asked in the question to address. It is up to you in which order you will answer the questions as long as the numbers of the questions are clearly specified. Always try to answer the questions that are easier and more familiar to you and save the challenging ones for the last. Exam time is limited and so, you have to do all the preparations beforehand so that you are not struggling for time. Topics will be provided before each exam for

your preparations. You will not be allowed to hand in the exam after the deadline: you fail to submit the exam on time, you miss the exam altogether.

EXAM FORMATS

First, there will be multiple-choice / true-false questions midterm and final exam. On top of multiple choice questions, all exams will use short and/or long essays. Second, short questions will be "definitions" based and will require two paragraph-long answer or half page. Finally, the long essay topics will be drawn from major ideas/themes from the course readings. Long essays will be up to three pages (1.5 line spacing and 12 pt Times New Roman font). Textbook will be used for all three exam materials and exam questions will be available on the Moodle course website on the day of the exam. You will have 120 minutes (2 hours) to work on and submit your answers using Moodle course website. Final exam can be partially cumulative. Please do note that exam submissions are strictly time sensitive and late admissions will not be accepted.

EVALUATION

Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	25% (February 19, 7-9 PM)
Final Exam	30% (April 14, 7-9PM)
Assignment 1: Reflexive Commentaries	10% (February 16,)
Assignment 2: Reflexive Commentaries	10% (March 25)
Research Paper	15% (Due April 12)
Total	**100%**

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS
Anadel Quan-Haase (2020). ***Technology & Society: Social Networks, Power, and Inequality***. Third Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

E-link for the textbook: https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/technology-and-society-anabel-quan-haase-v9780199032297

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

GENERAL RULES

Email: All emails will be considered official and thus, emails will be formal both in language and presentation. Emails sent through Moodle SOCI 203 course website will be answered. So, please no emails from your personal email address as they will not be answered. Consider Discussion Forum is the most formal platform to post your questions about all types of course materials.

Discussion Forum: Discussion Forum is the online substitute for in-class lecture and thus, it should be used formally and appropriately. Discussion, debate should never entail any abusive language and tone and there will be zero tolerance for any kind of disrespectful presentation.

Disclaimer: The information is subject to change and if any change occurs in this online course, will be notified through Moodle, in the Announcements section.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations. If a student requires an academic accommodation, they should contact the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): lac@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Week 1 (January 5) Week 1 (January 5-7)	*COURSE INTRODUCTION AND KNOW-YOUR-SYLLABUS* Readings Chapter 1: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. Chapter 1: The Technological Society	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 2 (January 10-14)	Reading • Chapter 2: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 2: Technology in Society: A Historical Overview	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 3 (January 17-21)	Reading • Chapter 3: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 3: Theoretical Perspectives on Technology	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 4 (January 24-28)	Reading • Chapter 4: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 4: Techno-social Designing	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 5 (January 31)	Reading • Chapter 5: Learning Objectives,	

Week 6 (February 1-4)	Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 5: The Adoptions and Diffusions of Technological Innovations	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 7 (February 7-11)	Reading • Chapter 6: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 6: Technology and Inequality	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 8 (February 14-18)	Reading • Chapter 7: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 7: The Labour of Technology	**Assignment # 1due: February 16**
Week 8	**MIDTERM, FEBRUARY 19**	**MOODLE, 7-9 PM**
Week 9 (February 21-24) **February 25**	**Reading Week Heritage Day**	**No classes**
Week 10 (February 28)	Reading • Chapter 8: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought. • Chapter 8: Genders and Technology	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 11 (March 1-4)	Reading • Chapter 8: Genders and Technology	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 12 (March 7-11)	Reading • Chapter 8: Genders and Technology	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum based on the articles posted in the Moodle)
Week 13 (March 14-18)	Reading • Chapter 9: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought • Chapter 9: Community in the Network	

	Society	
Week 14 (March 21-25)	Reading • Chapter 10: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought • Chapter 10: Technology-Mediated Social Relationships	**Assignment # 2 due: March 25**
Week 15 (March 28-31)	Reading • Chapter 11: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought • Chapter 11: The Surveillance Society	Practice Reflexive Commentary: What do you think about the issue (Discussion Forum)
Week 16/17 (April 1, 4-8)	Reading • Chapter 12: Learning Objectives, Questions for Critical Thought • Chapter 12: Ethical Dimensions of Technology • **Summary of the course**	
Week 18	Research Paper Due April 12	**MOODLE SUBMISSION**
Week 18	FINAL EXAM, APRIL 14	**MOODLE 7-9 PM**