

technology & modern civiliation HU 335 syllabus

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Course Sites cosmicscribbler.com/erau..... for course information
techciv335.wordpress.com..... for blog and assignments
Blackboard..... for grades

Course Description

This course is a humanistic analysis of technology, with attention to its influence upon modern American culture in a global context. Topics include the history and development of technology; the influence of technology upon certain philosophies such as determinism and utilitarianism; the influence of technology on the ecosphere; and the depiction of technology in imaginative literature and the fine arts.

Goals

Upon successful completion of the course, students will improve their abilities to deal rationally with philosophical issues involving technology and its impact upon human lives. Students will see more clearly than before the relationships between technology and their values, beliefs, and methods. Each student will prepare an original, documented, research or position project.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, you'll be able to:

- Describe and discuss the history of technology in at least one of the following periods: ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Hellenistic period, ancient Rome, the European middle ages, the 17th and 18th centuries (Age of Instrumentation), or American 19th and 20th centuries
- Complete an individual project based upon substantial research, having to do with the interaction of a technology and a society or social institution
- Define and discuss philosophical categories having to do with technology, such as: determinism, division of labor, deskilling of labor, centralization of technology, rationalism, decentralized technology, alternative technologies, etc.

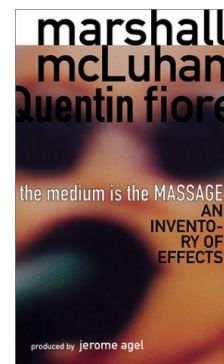
Texts & Technology

Required text:
McLuhan, Marshall. *the medium is the MESSAGE: an inventory of effects*. 1967.
Republished by Ginko Press.

Other texts are available online or will be provided.

Required technologies:
Internet access, email, a digital camera (can be borrowed from Media Services), basic image editing software (download for free)

Other expenses: Multimedia project production costs may include color printing, binding, and other costs (approx. \$0-\$25)



- Describe and provide examples of ways in which technology can affect politics, leisure, transportation, entertainment, personal values, religion, demographics, economics, and other social institutions and phenomena
- Demonstrate an understanding of commentaries on technology found in art, using examples from a novel, poetry, painting, sculpture, or music
- Construct effective written documents for technical and non-technical audiences
- Conduct and report research accurately and in accordance with professional standards
- Recognize the importance of ethical responsibility both professionally and socially
- Identify some of the important results of scientific inquiry in the natural and life sciences, and use scientific information in critical thinking and decision-making
- Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the values communicated through the humanities
- Describe some of the historical and contemporary issues that affect societies
- Recognize the complexity of human experience from a variety of perspectives, for example, cultural, aesthetic, social, technological, scientific, psychological, philosophical, and historical

Course Policies

Attendance

- This class requires your active participation. Four absences will affect your professionalism grade. If you anticipate four or more absences due to athletics or other university activities, notify me by email at the beginning of the semester so that we can make arrangements.
- Students who have missed five classes will fail the course.
- All absences are considered equal. You may be sick or otherwise unable to attend class without documentation. There is no distinction between “excused” or “unexcused.” Therefore, it’s unnecessary to provide medical excuses or documentation of death/injury when you’re absent. It is assumed that you would only miss class for good reason.
- You’re considered absent if you’re over 15 minutes late.
- If you are absent from class, you must still submit assignments when they are due to receive credit.

Technologies in the Classroom

Phones, iPads, iPods, laptops, or other personal technologies in the classroom may only be used when instructed for class activities.

Submitting Work/Late Work

Work must be submitted on time. Late work is poor practice in the workplace, a burden on both the student and instructor, and unfair to other students. Therefore, for the most part, no late work is accepted. If you have exceptional circumstances, please discuss them with me well before the assignment due date.

Academic Integrity

Violations include fraud and plagiarism. Incidents will be reported to the HU/SS department chair, and may be reported to the Dean of Students for additional action, including suspension or dismissal from the university. Sanctions for academic integrity violations may include failing the assignment or course.

- Fraud includes submitting substantially similar assignments to fulfill a requirement in more than one course without permission.
- Plagiarizing means to steal or pass off someone else’s words, images, or ideas as one’s own. You may submit some work to SafeAssign.

Coursework & Grades

General grading criteria is as follows:

General Grading Rubric	
A 100 – 90%	An A-project is one that might lead to a promotion in the workplace. It reflects the author's careful consideration of audience and purpose. It demonstrates strict adherence to the assignment instructions. It is complete, presented in an appropriate and engaging style, arranged logically, memorable, and visually appealing. It is visually cohesive and balanced. It introduces and credits sources properly. It avoids visual or textual clichés. It contains no superfluous material - every element has a purpose. It reflects a relatively sophisticated assimilation of class discussions and readings. Text contains few mechanical errors and no run-on sentences or fragments.
B 89 – 80%	A B-project satisfies most or all of the requirements but may contain a small number of minor errors that can be easily corrected. It would be considered acceptable in the workplace. It too is professional and reflects consideration of audience and purpose. It may contain some gratuitous visual or textual elements but still conveys a unified message overall. It reflects assimilation of class discussion and readings.
C 79 – 70%	A C-project is competent, though it would possibly be returned for revision in the workplace. It is generally average in terms of the major criteria listed above. It may have some mechanical errors.
D 69 – 60%	D work is weak. It would probably get the writer into a bad situation in the workplace. It falls below average in terms of one or more of the major criteria. It would be returned for extensive revision in the workplace.
F 59% or below	F work fails to adequately meet the criteria of the assignment, either in terms of the project parameters or quality of work. A consistent pattern of this level of production would probably get a person reprimanded or fired in the workplace.

Your final grade will consist of the following activities. Any activity not given a specific point value counts toward your participation grade.

Activity	Brief Description	Points
Five blog entries	Post five text/image entries to the class blog. Worth 40 points each. There are six blog opportunities. You can skip one or do six and drop your lowest grade.	200
Collide-o-Scopic project	With a partner or individually (your choice), publish an print or video adaptation of McLuhan's <i>the medium is the message</i> with text and visuals to 1) reflect some aspect of how you view specific 21st century information technologies as affecting perception, and 2) prophesize changes in the next century.	200
Final exam	Demonstrate reading comprehension	100
Participation	Contribute in class discussions and activities; read and respond to other student blogs; demonstrate understanding of the readings; be on time and prepared for class; have required texts, technologies, and materials in class; avoid excessive absences.	100
Total possible points (A 100 – 90%, B 89 – 80%, C 79 – 70%, D 69 – 60%, F 59% or below)		600