

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Soc 415

D. Swift

Fall 2009

This course is concerned with the interaction of technology and society. Neither exists apart from the other, yet sociologists have generally looked at this relationship only in passing, viewing (and blaming) technology as the cause of many social ills, or less frequently, praising technology for improving their lives.

This class does neither. Instead it attempts to remain neutral, examining the nature of technology, the process of innovation, the forces encouraging or inhibiting the adoption of technology, etc.

The course is intended for mature students in any major who are willing to explore a new field -- technology -- which many students find intimidating.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of attendance, weekly readings, quizzes, written reports, and participation in class discussions. Regular attendance is absolutely essential. Because this is not a lecture course, activities and information during the class period are crucial. You must be here in order to know what is going on. The class meets only once a week, and there are only about 14 meetings in all, so each class counts. Get here on time and stay for the whole period. If you cannot do this, regardless of the reason - work, sports, overlapping courses, family problems, etc., DO NOT TAKE THIS COURSE.

TEXTS:

Required: Rudy Volti, SOCIETY & TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE
Sixth Edition, paperback