Technology and Society

Sociology 415

Instructor: Jonathan Dial

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays; 10:30 – 11:45am

Location: ARCH 101A

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30pm-4pm or by appointment

Office: Saunders 211

Email: dialjonathan@gmail.com

Class Objectives:

This course will explore the sociological perspective on the relationship between technology and society. Readings will be drawn from texts both within and outside of the discipline of sociology. Many people believe that changes in technology necessarily lead to changes in society, and we can see that this is true in some cases. However, others (especially sociologists) contend that social forces shape technology, and we can see that this is true in other cases. Some argue that the relationship between society and technology is reciprocal. Through a wide range of academic articles, this course will examine each of these arguments in depth, as well as the history of technology, case studies of old and new technologies, and possibilities for the future.

Students in this course will develop a familiarity with relevant academic literature and hone critical thinking skills to understand how both science and technology are shaped by social factors and how society itself is molded by technological advancement and scientific knowledge. In order to foster that development, writing assignments will call upon students to determine their own opinions, express them, and support their stances using academic sources. Hence, students will be expected to keep up with and understand the assigned readings, as well as to participate in class discussions.

The first paper will be an analysis of a current technological debate that will require engagement with assigned readings as well as bringing in outside sources. The final paper will take the form of a research proposal on a topic chosen by the students.

Readings & Quizzes:
You are expected to have readings completed by the day they are assigned in order to participate in and contribute to the class discussion. There will be a brief quiz on the readings at the beginning of each class on the day on which they will be discussed. Quizzes will be conducted digitally on Google Classroom, so a mobile device is necessary. These quizzes will comprise the largest portion of overall grades for the course. Missed quizzes can be made up by submission of a makeup paper no later than one week after the date of the absence. Makeup papers must be a three-page summary and reaction to the assigned reading.

Textbook:

Science, Technology, and Society: A Sociological Approach. (2006). Written by Wenda K. Bauchspies, Jennifer Croissant, and Sal Restivo. ISBN: 978-0-631-23210-0

The textbook is available for free in digital form for UH Students through the library. Follow this link to access it: https://uhmanoa.lib.hawaii.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=4381886&sk=manoa

Supplemental Readings:

Assigned articles from academic journals, books, and edited volumes will be posted to Laulima.

Presentations:
Each student will choose one of the assigned readings and will provide a 15-minute presentation to the class on the day of that article's discussion. Presentations should summarize the reading, clarify its concepts and/or theories, and relate it to other assigned literature. Visual aids are welcome but not required, and the format of presentations is flexible. Students are encouraged to set meetings with the instructor prior to presentations in order to discuss the literature.

Written Work:
Written work for this course is comprised of three parts and is expected to adhere to the American Sociological Association's (ASA) citation guidelines. All writing is expected to be grammatically correct, purposeful, and coherent. We will discuss the guidelines and expectations of the writing assignments in greater detail in class. Written assignments **must be submitted via email in Microsoft Word format**.

(1) Students will compose a 4-page summary of and reaction to the article selected for their presentation. No more than two pages should be devoted to summarizing the content. The remaining space will convey the student's reactions to the concepts, theories, and arguments conveyed in the material, with an emphasis on how it relates to other literature covered in class. These papers are **due exactly one week prior to presentations**.

(2) A midterm paper (5-6 pages) will analyze a current debate, chosen by each student, concerning a particular technology (or set of related technologies) and its relationship with society. Students must locate, describe, and analyze at least three recent news articles, opinion pieces, magazine articles, etc. from the perspectives of the theories discussed in class. More specifically, each article must be identified as technological determinism, SCOT, or ANT, and examples from each article should be provided to support that classification. This means that each major theory should be clearly defined and cited within the paper. Finally, students must take a personal stance concerning the debate and support it using the theories and articles from class.

(3) The final paper is a full research proposal (8 pages). The goal of this paper is to propose a hypothetical and/or potential project intended to answer a research question

of your own creation on a technological topic of your choosing. Your research question should incorporate at least one of the main theories discussed in this course, but using more than one theory is allowed (even encouraged). Essentially, you should design a study that analyzes the relationship between people and some technology, and your proposal is a written, in-depth description of that study. The proposal's requirements include Introduction, Literature Review, Data & Methods, Expected Findings & Analysis, and Reference sections.

Attendance and Participation
As this class relies heavily upon class discussions, your presence is mandatory. Attendance will be taken daily and will count toward your overall grade. However, simply attending class is not equivalent to contributing to the discussion; consequently, students who attend class but do not participate in the discussion may be counted as absent.

Grading:

Quizzes	30%
Presentation	15%
Presentation Paper	15%
Midterm Paper	15%
Research Proposal	15%
Attendance/Participation	10%

CLASS SCHEDULE

8/22/17:   Introduction

8/24/17:   Leo Marx: Does Improved Technology Mean Progress? (Laulima) 1

8/29/17:   Frieden: Prologue: Into the Twentieth Century (Laulima) 2

8/31/17:   Edmund Russell - History of Technology (Laulima) 3

Deadline for selecting presentations

9/5/17:   Chapter 1: Introduction (Textbook) 4

9/7/17:   Nye: Does Technology Control Us? (Laulima) 5

11/7/17:   Chapter 4: STS and Power in the Modern World – Pages 73-90 (Textbook) 20

                 (Midterm Paper Response Due Today)

11/9/17:   Elison and boyd: Sociality Through Social Network Sites (Laulima) 21

11/14/17:   Bucher: The Friendship Assemblage: Investigating Programmed Sociality on Facebook (Laulima) 22

11/16/17:   Murthy - Towards a Sociological Understanding of Social Media - Theorizing Twitter (Laulima) 23

11/21/17:   Tufekci: Computational Politics and Engineering the Public (Laulima) 24

11/23/17:   NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING DAY

11/28/17:   Bill Joy: Why the Future Doesn't Need Us (Laulima) 25

11/30/17:   Seely Brown and Paul Duguid: Don't Count Society Out (Laulima) 26

12/5/17:   Allenby: Are New Technologies Undermining the Laws of War? (Laulima) 27

12/7/17:   Coveney, Gabe, and Williams: The sociology of cognitive enhancement (Laulima) 28
                 Proposal Papers Due Today

The Sociology Department has established three Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that support the Institutional Learning Objectives:

- o SLO 1: Students will be able to evaluate sociological theories and use them to analyze and understand aspects of the social world.
- o SLO 2: Students will be able to collect, analyze, and interpret data, and draw valid conclusions from their analyses.
- o SLO 3: Students will have clear and effective verbal and written communication skills.

Additionally, Student Learning Objectives for this course include:

- Improving abilities to clearly and effectively communicate about the relationship between science, technology, and society;

- Developing familiarity with sociological concepts around the issues of technology and science;
- Learning to independently search for and analyze empirical data and literature from scholarly sources;
- Understanding one's own beliefs, misconceptions, and expectations about technology; and,
- Designing a research agenda.

Kokua

Any student in need of additional help, due to disability, can contact me personally and the KOKUA program officer to discuss ways to accommodate specific needs. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 or by email (kokua@hawaii.edu).
The KOKUA office is located in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

Plagiarism
"*Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student's language and style; paraphrasing a passage so closely that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; and "dry-labbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data from other students without the express consent of the instructor, utilizing experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms, and fabricating data to fit the expected results.*"
   - University of Hawai`i at Manoa *Student Conduct*
< http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm>

It is ultimately each student's responsibility to learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Ignorance of the rules, saying "I forgot about that" or "I made a mistake" are not considered valid excuses when it comes to plagiarism.