STS 304 Introduction to Science, Technology and Society
Syllabus
Spring 2009

Note: *The Instructor reserves the right to update this syllabus. If he does so, he will post the changed syllabus to Course Information on Blackboard and will notify you via email of the changes.*

Instructor Information

Instructor: William A. Foster, PhD
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Phone: 520-440-0807 (cell) Feel free to call in the evening or over the weekend
Email: wafoster@asu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday by appointment. I am available to meet at West, Tempe, or Polytechnic

Course Description: This on-line course is meant to serve as an upper level introduction to the study of science, technology, and society (STS). No one would dispute the fact that science and technology have transformed human society and that they will continue to do so. This course will provide an opportunity for students to think critically about science and technology and to explore the choices we as a global society face around science and technology issues. In addition, this course will introduction to methodologies relevant to the study of STS including positivism, neo-Marxism, post-modernism, and hermeneutics. Topics that will be studied in the course include:

- Applied Genomics
- Climate Change (both global warming and global cooling)
- The Internet and Information technology
- Nanotechnology

Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop a better understanding of their career options in science or technology fields and what they can do to prepare for careers in the field of their choice.
- Students will be able to articulate the societal issues involved in science and technology.
- Students will understand possible methodological options for the study of STS.
- Students will begin to hone their ability to do research in STS including the ability to build expertise in a very specific area and the ability to deal with the immense amount of video and text information that is available.
- Students will develop skills with social networking tools including Blackboard, Wikis, Blogs, and YouTube,.
- Students will hone their writing skills, particularly the ability to write short essays with a enticing thesis sentence, a body that justifies the thesis, and a conclusion.
- Students will be able to work in on-line teams.

About the Instructor

William Abbott Foster, PhD has worked at the intersection of information technology and governance for 25 years. He is a Faculty Associate in the Science, Technology and Society program at Arizona State University Polytechnic. He also runs a management consulting firm, Foster and Brahm (http://www.FosterandBrahm.com). He has a Bachelors degree in Religion with a minor in Economics from Williams College in Massachusetts. He has a PhD in Management from the University of Arizona and a minor in Chinese studies. His dissertation on the *Diffusion of the Internet in China* was published by CISAC at Stanford University in 2001. His books and articles are available at http://www.FosterandBrahm.com. He has been interviewed on NPR and quoted in the New York Times, the Arizona Republic, the Washington Post and other print media. His research team, the MOSAIC Group (http://MOSAIC.UNOmaha.edu/gdi.html) has studied Internet diffusion in 40 countries. They are known as the "Sociologists of the Internet".

Course *Blackboard*™ Site

I have established a *Blackboard*™ site for this course. It includes course documents, a course grade book, links to sites with information relating to course concepts and topics, and discussion areas. To access the site, click on "myASU" on the ASU homepage or point your browser to https://my.asu.edu. I will write comments on all Safe Assignment submissions. When you get a grade go back to assignments to read the comments.

Graded Work

Discussion Board

You are expected to actively participate on the class discussion board. The weeks when a discussion question is due, on the Sunday I will create a forum and assign a reading and or video for that week. I will ask a specific question for you to address on the discussion board. I will also email you the reading and the question. By Thursday, I would like you to provide a substantive response to the question. You should point the class to at least one website or an idea in *Taking Sides* that backs up your answer. You will have until Sat. midnight to post a minimum of two responses to your classmates posts.

I will assign a maximum of 15 points to your participation in each forum. You will get 5 points for participating. Upto 5 points for the quality of your response. Upto 3 points for your responses to two of your classmates posts. Upto 2 points for your pointers to other sources.

When pointing to a website or video, you should provide a short explanation about what it is about and why the reader should click on it.

Final Paper

At the beginning of the semester, you will choose a topic to focus on. The more focused the sciece or technology is the better. Some of the exercieses during the class will provide research ideas and sources for your paper.

The Final Paper should be between 1500 and 3000 words. It should have 10 citations, at least 4 from journals. It should have a strong thesis sentence and the rest of the essay should follow from

it. MLA citation style should be used. When citing a Web site, type out in the bibliography the whole URL and the date cited. It should be submitted via SafeAssign on August 6th.

Class Schedule

	Assigned	Due by
Introcution Forum	Posted July 6th	Due by Midnight July 8
Google Alterts	July 8th	Due by Ju;y 11th
Peer Reviewed Literature	July 12th	Due July 15th
Applied Genomics	July 15th	Due by July 18th
Web of Science	07/19/09	Due by July 22nd
Climate Change and US Congess	July 22nd	July 25th
Nanotechnology and NSF	July26th	July 29th
Dissertation Exercise	July 29th	August 1st
Final Paper Due		August 6th