

Georgia Tech Lorraine, European Campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology
Technology through the Ages (Technology and Society)
HTS 2084
Spring 2020
Course Syllabus

| Instructor | Time and place |
|--|-----------------------|
| Dr. Timothy Stoneman | 11am-12:20pm |
| School of History and Sociology | Red Room |
| tim.stoneman@hsoc.gatech.edu | |
| Office 226, GTL Building | |

Course Attributes

HTS 2084 fulfills the social science and ethics requirements at Georgia Tech.

Course Description

Technologies have formed the basis of material culture and influenced the course of social change throughout human history. Yet the shape of technologies' influence on society has varied significantly with time and place. The present course combines the history of technology with world history, focusing predominantly on Europe and the city of Metz. Through a wide-ranging series of historical case studies – prehistoric axes, Roman aqueducts, medieval cathedrals, French bread, fast food, and global tourism – we will see how technical practices (“engineering,” broadly defined) evolved over major eras of the past. Our case studies will show how the relationship between technology and the social order shifted over the long course of history between various types of increasingly sophisticated societies, organized around tools, crafts, machines, and industrial systems. In recounting the large-scale course of technological change, the class will prompt reflection about what it means to live in our current technological world – one in which complex and interconnected systems increasingly dominate our lives. In addition, you will personally consider the role of Georgia Tech Lorraine students as travelers/tourists in a global consumer society.

Course Objectives

Students will accomplish the following objectives:

- Students will describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts.*
- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.*
- Students will develop a critical perspective on changes in the relationship between technology, culture and society over major periods of human history.
- Students will integrate aspects of their living experience while in Europe with their classroom study and develop self-awareness of their identity as travel consumers.
- Students will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.*
- Students will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.*

- Students will develop effective oral and written communication skills.

(* Language is taken directly from the General Education Mission Statement of Georgia Tech's Core Curriculum, available on the Registrar website.)

Grading

Course assessment will be based on the following formula:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Reading quizzes | 5% |
| Discussions posts (Canvas) | 5% |
| In-class assignments (incl. debate) | 10% |
| Class discussion | 10% |
| Group essay | 10% |
| Test 1 | 15% |
| Test 2 | 20% |
| Final exam | 25% |

Georgia Tech Lorraine is a serious academic program. Please let me know in advance if you cannot attend class for an official reason. Students are expected to pay attention in class and discuss readings. Please do not use electronic devices, including laptops and cell phones, without special permission.

To receive grades of excellence, students must demonstrate close understanding of course concepts and knowledge of relevant historical material covered in lectures, readings, videos, and class discussion. Final grading will be done on a letter basis and will be rounded up on the half percentage point (i.e. 89.5% = A). Final grades will not be available through Oscar until the Monday following the end of the exam period (May 4). Please do not ask to have grades changed.

In order to facilitate communication, please add a profile photo on Canvas.

Students will receive a grade for class discussion on the following scale: 95% (regular and significant contribution) – 88% (moderate contribution) – 83% (little or no contribution). Discussion grades will be posted three times on Canvas during the semester, with the final discussion grade an average score. Students will lead class discussion of assigned readings once (in pairs). Discussion contributions in class should increase our group understanding rather than merely repeat points.

Students will also receive a grade for in-class assignments, including a class debate on fast food in Unit IV. You must make up all missed in-class assignments within one week or receive a grade of zero. No grade changes of any kind will be made after more than one week.

You will receive a grade for after-class responses completed through the Discussions feature on Canvas. You are required to make 15 discussion posts over the semester – 10 direct posts and 5 replies to other students' posts. Each missing post will count for 5% of your final Discussions post grade. Posts must be at least one paragraph in length, be written by midnight on the day of class, and cover any aspect of the daily class; only one post and reply is allowed per day. Once you have met the required 15 posts, you may also earn extra points through additional posts or

replies, which will count for 0.25 raw points each and will be added to the final exam grade (with a maximum of five (5) additional posts for the semester, or 1.25 total points).

Reading quizzes will cover the assigned daily reading at the start of the following class. They will include T/F questions and will be graded on the following scale (100% - (1) 90% - (2) 80% - (3) 70% - (4) 60%). Quizzes are not optional. Missed quizzes will not count in your grade and do not have to be made up. Tests will include multiple choice and short essay questions. Each test will cover the preceding unit, plus relevant course concepts from the introduction; the final exam will cover the last unit plus major course concepts and a full-length, comprehensive semester essay. The course includes a full-length, take-home group essay as part of the third unit. Students must take tests and the final exam in their assigned slots according to the official exam schedule. Exceptions will only be made for emergency situations.

Honor Policy

Students are expected to abide by the Georgia Tech honor code. All infractions will be handled through the Office of the Dean of Students and treated with the utmost seriousness.

Statement on Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society. (Statement taken from Ivan Allen College Dean's Office.)

Course Materials

There are no required textbooks. All reading material and course communication will occur through Canvas.

Course Schedule

- Introduction: Technology & society (Unit I)
- Tool-using societies (Unit II)
 - Prehistoric axes
- Craft-based societies (Unit III)
 - Roman aqueducts
 - Gothic cathedrals
 - French bread (& baguette tasting)
- Industrial system-based societies (Unit IV)
 - Fast vs. slow food
 - Global tourism
- The technological society (Unit V)
 - RING technologies