LBST 2213-110: Science, Technology, and Society
HTAS 2100-110: Introduction to Humanities, Technology, and Science
Spring 2017

Dr. Aaron A. Toscano (atoscano)
Office: Fretwell 280F
Class: Fretwell 113, Mon. & Wed. 3:30 – 4:45 pm
Office hours: Mon. 1:30 – 2:30 pm (and by appt.)
https://clas-pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/htas2100spring2017/

LBST 2213 “Science, Technology, and Society” Course Description and Purpose

This course introduces students to the role of science and technology in society. We emphasize how science and technology are products of a culture and not just the work of individuals in a laboratory. We navigate through a world full of technologies and sciences that we don’t fully comprehend. Citizens are bombarded with a plethora of discourse surrounding science and technology. However, the methods of the sciences, the importance of major scientific discoveries, and public expectations of technologies are often misunderstood. To help students begin to understand the complex messages in media, this course will cover a wide range of literature about science and technology, including histories of technology, science fiction, journalism, and public perceptions of hot-button topics such as violent video games and evolution.

HTAS 2100 “Introduction to Humanities, Technology, and Science” Course Description and Purpose

This is an introduction to ways of considering interrelationships among three of the major dimensions of our culture: its science, its technology, and its humanistic orientation. To help students begin to understand the complex messages in media, this course will cover a wide range of literature about science and technology, including histories of technology, science fiction, journalism, and public perceptions of hot-button topics such as violent video games and evolution. Students taking this course are deemed to have met the requirements for the “Ethical and Cultural Critique” area of the LBST requirements and do not have to take an additional course to satisfy that area of General Education.

Texts and Materials

**Required:**
Available online through Atkins Library:
https://librarylink.uncc.edu/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107295612
Available online through Atkins Library:
https://librarylink.uncc.edu/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107589049
Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1816. [any edition...not the movies.]
Available here: http://literature.org/authors/shelley-mary/frankenstein
Wells, H. G. *Time Machine*. 1895. [any edition...not the movies.]
Access to Canvas
Willingness To Learn

Expectations

I expect students to be prepared when they come to class. **There is quite a bit of reading in this course, but it’s manageable if you plan your school-work-life needs. Again, there is quite a bit of reading in this course.** Students should have read the assigned reading prior to coming to class. Also, to get the most out of this course, students should read and take good notes.
on the reading. I will have a Web page devoted to this class, and Canvas will have additional information. This is a large lecture class, so it’s vital that you follow along with the syllabus and class Web page. Don’t expect detailed notes about the readings via e-mail. In addition to the readings, tests, and exams, students must post 250-word reflections weekly about a specific topic or the reading in general on Canvas. Students can expect responses at least once (but probably more times) a semester, so make sure you post reflections. Reflections aren’t right or wrong; instead, they’re chances for you to write out your thoughts and have a record—this is vital for developing critical thinking faculties. Remember, you are here to learn. This course, specifically, and LBST requirements, in general, are supposed to help you expand your thinking. It’s not to tell you what to think—that’s up to you. My goal is to demonstrate how ideas, discourse, and society provide filters for how we understand science and technology. Liberal studies is a discipline that attempts to foster learning not for any specific job but to be an informed (perhaps, well-rounded) citizen. The critical thinker and informed citizen don’t look to be spoon fed ideas. He or she strives to ask appropriate questions about topics or situations or life itself. These questions are ways to discover meaning and meanings related to the knowledge and tools cultures produce. Our bias in this course is on American and Western cultures.

This 3-credit course requires 3 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction and 6 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks. Out-of-class work may include but is not limited to: required reading, research, assignments, and studying for tests and exams. The above outside-of-class work expectations are derived from Academic Affairs: http://provost.uncc.edu/policies/academic-calendar (see III. Definitions).

Work Requirements

In order to assess how well students understand the readings and class lectures, students will take two tests, a Midterm Exam, and a Final Exam. If all goes according to plan, those tests and exams will be on Canvas, and students will take them wherever they have Internet access, so we won’t meet as a class on those days.

Grading Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests, Exams, Posts</th>
<th>pts.</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>A= 90 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>B= 80 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>C= 70 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>D= 60 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canvas Posts</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>F= Below 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
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Please notice that the Canvas Posts are worth 42.85% of your overall grade. Not doing them isn’t a good strategy to pass this class.

Late Work and Canvas Access

Although you aren’t turning anything in as a hardcopy, I expect you’ll post the reflections by 11:00 pm on Wednesdays when the Canvas posts are due. No late posts will be accepted. Please be aware that any online system may “time out” randomly. It is your responsibility to make sure your posts weren’t lost. Therefore, after you post to Canvas, you need to check to make sure your post is up. My advice is to type your post in Microsoft Word and then copy and paste the text into the Moodle box. Do not upload the Word Document. Again, don’t upload a Word Document. Typing your post directly into the Canvas box is risky because you may lose your post because of a glitch. It’s better to word process your response, save it, and then paste it into the Canvas box. Students are responsible for making sure they have access to the Internet (at home, on campus, on a handheld device, etc.). Get on Canvas, and make sure you have reliable access. You don’t want to find out you don’t have a good connection the day of a test. If you are absent, follow along with the syllabus and webpage or get class notes from another student. Do not expect me to e-mail the class notes to you. Of course, never e-mail me and ask, “so…like, Dr. Toscano, man…did we…like…you know…do anything the other day in class?”
Attendance

I won’t be taking attendance. We have over 100 students, so monitoring who’s here and who isn’t wastes valuable class time. It is very important that you attend every class in order to keep up with the discussion. **YOU WILL NOT DO WELL IN THIS CLASS IF YOU MISS CLASS.** Class discussion is important because it reinforces the material you read and explains, when appropriate, how authors draw the conclusions they make. Author assumptions aren’t always obvious on a first reading, so come to class to better understand the context in which authors, scientists, and engineers worked. What I’ve noticed from past semesters is that students who miss class also forget what’s coming up—readings, exams, etc. Don’t expect a test or exam makeup. Ultimately, your success in this course lies with your decision to commit to the course requirements and appropriately balance school-work-life needs. There are no such things as excused absences. Only students participating in UNC Charlotte sponsored activities (with the proper documentation) will be allowed to change test or exam times. I will ask you to request a meeting with the Dean of Students if you have situations that you feel should allow you an exception to these course policies. Cars break down, parking is limited, students get sick, and traffic is brutal, but class still happens. Please get to class on time, and, if you’re late, be courteous and don’t disturb the class with your noise. Also, if you have to leave class, do so quietly.

Important Dates and Administrative Information

The syllabus schedule on the last two pages has important dates for readings, tests, and exams. Students are responsible for not only knowing course deadlines but also knowing UNC Charlotte deadlines (drop/add, billing, vacation, etc.). Please visit the following link for the registrar’s calendar: [http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendar](http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendar).

Academic Integrity

All UNC Charlotte students have the responsibility to be familiar with and to observe the requirements of *The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity*. This Code forbids cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials (such as Library books on reserve), and complicity in academic dishonesty (helping others to violate the Code). Any further specific requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor, and are also binding on the students in this course. Students who violate the Code can be punished to the extent of being permanently expelled from UNC Charlotte and having this fact recorded on their official transcripts. The normal penalty is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to “F.” If you do not have a copy of the Code, you can view it on UNC Charlotte’s Academic Integrity website at [http://integrity.uncc.edu/](http://integrity.uncc.edu/). Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty they become aware of to the course instructor who is responsible for dealing with them.

**If you try to pass off any work in full or part as your own without proper credit being given to the original source—you will receive an ‘F’ in this course.** If you use non-sanctioned resources (e.g., other classmates) to complete tests and exams, you will receive an ‘F’ in this course.

In addition to the above identification of Academic Dishonesty, students should be aware of technology-mediated concerns related to Academic Integrity. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "integrity" as "The condition of having no part or element taken away or wanting; undivided or unbroken state; material wholeness, completeness, entirety." A second definition states that integrity means "The condition of not being marred or violated; unimpaired or uncorrupted condition; original perfect state; soundness." Therefore, anything that draws students' attention away from course activities and goals is a violation of academic integrity because it corrupts the soundness and condition of learning. For instance, engaging in critical thinking/awareness is a sound, perfect state activity for this course; on the other hand, devoting attention to Facebook, texting/messaging, non-class-related Web surfing or e-mailing, etc. violates or corrupts the learning goals of this course. Although we may point to the Internet in general and social media sites specifically in our discussions of 21st-Century communication, engaging oneself in them during class to "catch up with friends" divides your attention and may be distracting to members of this class. This violation is as serious as plagiarism and will result in an ‘F’ in participation (Canvas Posts) the first time and an ‘F’ in this course for a subsequent violation. This syllabus section is your warning. Yes, it is obvious when you are using laptops and handheld devices to take notes or when you use them to corrupt the learning environment.
You will also receive an ‘F’ in the course for other academic integrity violations. Do not expect another warning—this is it. Please see me if you need further clarification regarding cheating, fabric or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, or complicity in academic dishonesty. Again, so there’s no confusion, you will most likely fail the course if you violate any part of the academic integrity code.

Statement of Academic Freedom

I strongly encourage students to use class as a place for free inquiry and intellectual growth. Although we as a class will not always agree or be comfortable with the views of others, every student has the right to his or her own tastes and convictions. I promise to be fair and always support your right to look at the world from your own position, but I encourage all students to branch out and consider multiple perspectives. If you think texts have single, objectively reasoned meanings...well, you’re about to get a radical new perspective in this course. Our biases filter our interpretations of the world around us. Family, culture, media, law, religion, etc. influence how we perceive the world. Your perspectives might be similar to those close to you, but your worldview isn’t universally held. I will not tolerate any harassment or abuse (emotional or physical) or any instance where others adversely affect students’ learning. Remember, harassment isn’t just verbal—making harassing or abusive posts won’t be tolerated.

Additionally, this course will discuss evolution, which is a fact. The controversy surrounding evolution isn’t whether or not it’s true; the controversy relates to the misreading of evolution—both the theory and facts—and the large portion of the American population that doesn’t believe it’s true. We will talk quite a bit about scientific authority and bias, but please don’t assume that means evolution is going to be debunked. Many people think evolution is wrong because their particular convictions claim it’s wrong. UNC Charlotte is a public school, and, as a public school, we teach evolution as a fact. Although you’re entitled to your religious beliefs, you cannot force your beliefs on others. This class isn’t the place to proselytize, evangelize, or use religion to carry on about why evolution isn’t a fact. You will have to post about the readings on evolution. Many religions accept evolution, the science, to be compatible with their doctrines. Your posts should be related to the course readings. You reflect on those readings. Mentioning your religion isn’t an issue; arguing your religion denies evolution, and that’s the end of the discussion is inappropriate for this class. Don’t expect to debate this. If you have a problem with evolution as a fact, you should reconsider your enrollment in this course. In fact, if you’re interested in alternative approaches to science, you might want to consider being educated at schools that teach creationism, young Earth, and intelligent design: [http://nwcreation.net/colleges.html](http://nwcreation.net/colleges.html). Below are links to three of the schools’ tuition pages:

- Liberty University
- Bryan College
- Clearwater Christian College

Instructional Modifications

Students who have a condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with professionals to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. Please inform me about circumstances as soon as possible. I don’t need specifics, but I do need to know what accommodations to make. For information and assistance, contact the Disabilities Resource Center:

[http://ds.uncc.edu/](http://ds.uncc.edu/)

Inclement Weather/Building Issues

Some buildings can have HVAC problems. Occasionally, the powers that be close buildings and classes are canceled because it is too brutally hot to remain inside. If a building related “issue” cancels class, continue to keep up with the class webpage, readings, and Canvas posts. The library has lots of space and many computers. We’ll pick up where we left off on the syllabus when we return to class. This also goes for inclement weather.

Right to Make Changes

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or to make our lives easier.
**Schedule for Readings and Assignments**
*(have readings and assignments done before class)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 9</th>
<th>Introduction to the Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 11</td>
<td>Introduction on how to think about science and technology from a humanistic perspective. Vocabulary for discussing science and technology using a cultural studies lens</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 16*</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—University Closed</td>
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*January 16th: Big day for the semester:*
- Last day to register. If you’re not registered, you will not be allowed to continue in the course.
- Last day to submit a grade replacement request.
- 2nd Cancellation for non-payment at 11:59 pm (all deadlines are 11:59 pm).

| January 30 | Catch-up day for Ch. 4 (most likely) |
| February 1 | Collins & Pinch. *The Golem: What You Should Know About Science, 2nd Ed.* Ch. 5 and 6 |
| February 8 | Test 1 |

*February 6th: Deadline to apply for May 2017 graduation*

| February 15 | Collins & Pinch. *The Golem at Large: What You Should Know about Technology*. Ch. 2 |
| February 20 | Collins & Pinch. *The Golem at Large: What You Should Know about Technology*. Ch. 3 and 4 |
| February 22 | Collins & Pinch. *The Golem at Large: What You Should Know about Technology*. Ch. 5 and 6 |
| March 1 | Midterm Exam (cumulative) |

**March 4th – March 12th: No Class—Spring Break**

| March 13 | Berra, Tim. *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism*. Preface and Ch. 1 |
| March 15 | Berra, Tim. *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism*. Ch. 2 and 3 |
| March 20* | Berra, Tim. *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism*. Ch. 4 |
| March 22 | Berra, Tim. *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism*. Ch. 5 and Appendixes (A and B). *March 21st: Last day to withdraw from a course or courses; grade subject to new Withdrawal Policy.* |
| March 27 | Wells, H. G. *Time Machine*. (1895) |
| March 29 | Wells, H. G. *Time Machine*. (1895) |

*March 27th: Registration for Summer and Fall 2017 begins*

| April 3 | Is the Earth Warming? |
| April 5 | Test 2 |

<p>| April 10 | <em>Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein, 1818</em>. Preface-Ch. 8 |
| April 12 | <em>Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein, 1818</em>. Ch. 9-Ch. 16 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Shelley, Mary. <em>Frankenstein</em>. 1818. Ch. 17-Ch. 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>Video Game Readings on Canvas</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Complicating the idea that Video Game Play Leads to Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>Catch-up Day...possibly more on video games</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td><strong>Last Day of Class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summarizing Science and Technology from a Humanistic Perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Reading Day—No class meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam (cumulative)—Available on Canvas 8:00 am—11:59pm. You’ll have two and a half hours.</strong> <a href="http://registrar.uncc.edu/sites/registrar.uncc.edu/files/media/Spring%202017%20FE%20Table.pdf">Link</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Commencement May 12th and 13th