



HIST 2100 Science and Technology in the Modern World

Professor: Germán Vergara

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to examine and understand the history of science and technology in the early modern era (ca. 1500-1800) and modern era (1800-present).

Objectives

Every reading assignment and classroom activity has been designed to improve your understanding of the global history of science and technology. Throughout the course, you will develop a good grasp of the main patterns and changes in the history of the relationship between human societies, science, and technology.

The other objective of the course is to develop your skills for engaging critically with reading material, both secondary and primary sources. Reading critically means to actively analyze a text (instead of merely accepting what it says at face value) and to ask questions about the author's purpose, assumptions, argument, and evidence. With primary sources, reading critically also means to learn as much as possible about the historical context in which the primary source was

created. This all means that helping students become more inquiring and thoughtful readers will be central to this course.

Requirements/Evaluation

Your course grade, based on a 100-point scale, will be determined by **attendance, the quality and regularity of your participation, and the completion and quality of assignments**. This is how I will break it down:

1. Class participation and attendance (15 points). Students are expected to participate actively, thoughtfully, and respectfully in class. You should come to every class having done *all* the reading assignments. Attendance: Students may have two unjustified absences. Every additional unjustified absence after the two "free" absences will lower your final grade 5 points. If you miss 4 classes (or a total of 6), you will fail the course.
2. Written responses (3 points each; 45 points total). Each week, students will turn in a written response on Canvas under the "Assignments" tab. The objective for these assignments will be to summarize the readings' main argument(s), their content, and analyze their empirical evidence. In other words, say in your own (and fewer) words what the author said. Responses should be between 500 and 600 words long.
3. Final exam (40 points). The exam will cover materials from lectures and readings and will consist primarily of IDs and short and long essay questions. I will give you a study guide before the exam.

Office Hours

You may meet with me throughout the semester as you progress with your reading and assignments. I will answer emails within 24 hours, except during the weekend.

Course Website

A course website is available through Canvas. There you will find course-related information, including the syllabus, paper assignments, required readings, and supplemental materials such as current newspaper and magazine articles related to the course content. This site also features a board (in the "Assignments" tab), where you will post your weekly reading responses. Additionally, in the "Resources" tab you will find a variety of materials to assist you with the complexities of historical reading, research, and writing.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism means using the words AND ideas of others without giving them due credit. **The use of ChatGPT or any other essay-writing chatbot will be considered plagiarism. You may NOT use AI for any course task, including summarizing reading assignments, taking notes, or writing any part of your weekly responses. Students who use AI will fail the course.**

Please review Georgia Tech's statement on plagiarism on <http://osi.gatech.edu/content/honor-code>

Computing Devices

Unless you have a formal, sanctioned accommodation that requires it, laptops, smart phones, tablets, and other electronic devices are not allowed in the classroom. Unless a classroom activity requires that you use your laptop, we will rely on discussion, old-fashioned paper note-taking, and a variety of classroom techniques to enhance our understanding of the course material. Computing devices tend to be a source of distraction for the student using them and for the rest of the class.

This course fulfills the Ethics Requirement, International Relations (IP), Social Science Requirement, and Core Impacts.

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

Course Readings:

James Poskett, *Horizons: The Global Origins of Modern Science*, Mariner Books, Boston, 2022. Other than the main text, course readings will be available through the Canvas class website as PDF files.