

# LMC 2100: Introduction to Science, Technology, and Culture

[Fall]

## Instructor Information

### Instructor

André Brock

### Email

andre.brock@lmc.gatech.edu

### Office Location & Hours

TSRB 318  
Wednesdays 2p-4p by  
appointment

***\*This syllabus subject to change at the discretion of the instructor<sup>1</sup>\****

## General Information

### Description

The practice of setting science and technology apart in an effort to distance them from culture (in its broadest sense) is the focus of this, the first course in the Program in Science Technology, and Culture (STAC). The course will explore the systems and practices of scientific inquiry and will examine them both as they present themselves and as they are represented in our culture. The readings in the course draw on literature (poetry, drama, fiction) from various periods, as well as theoretical texts that address the cultural contexts of science. All of the texts—which will include some readings from recent scientific publications—will be considered in the context of the structure, organization, and classification of knowledge (scientia). Part of the function of this course is to help students develop the analytical skills that are needed to make sense of representation of knowledge. In other words, we will look at the way that knowledge achieves meaning, and at the way in which communities agree and disagree about what "things" mean

### Format and Expectations

The class consists of a combination of participatory lectures, in-class and online discussions based on the assigned readings, and multiple writing assignments both online and offline. The writing assignments are designed to build up to the final paper, so there will be opportunities for revision and peer-review during the semester.

As a student in this class, you are expected to:

- Bring an open mind and critical perspective to the course materials, in-class, and online discussions
- read the assigned readings BEFORE class, not during
- complete writing assignments in a timely fashion.

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<sup>1</sup> With as much advance notice as possible. There may be typos.

As your instructor, I will:

- provide stimulating OR informative course materials
- actively facilitate in-class discussions and monitor/moderate online discussions,
- and give feedback on writing and assignments in a timely fashion

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- *Science and Technology Knowledge Construction:* Students will understand that scientific and technological innovation occurs in a cultural context, and they will be able to recognize how society and culture influences science and technology design, use, policy, and discourse.
- *Textual/Visual Analysis:* Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret scientific and technical artifacts, practices, industries, and research through the lenses of cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media.
- *Interpretive Frameworks:* Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.
- *Humanities Skills:* Students will be able to describe the relationships among science, technology, and the narrative arts.

### Required Texts and Materials

All readings can be found on the course Canvas site in either PDF or ePub form (but not both). Feel free to buy physical copies to support the authors. The readings below are not exhaustive; other supplemental readings will be suggested by myself or your classmates.

We'll be using a pair of (new to me) tools this semester: Piazza and Hypothes.is.

This term we will be using Piazza for class discussion. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates and myself. Rather than emailing me questions I encourage you to post your questions on Piazza. If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email [team@piazza.com](mailto:team@piazza.com).

### Find our class page on Canvas:

### Assignments and Assessments

Your final grade will be determined by the following assignments:

Assignments	%age of Total Grade
IT Biography	10%
Portfolio - Annotations, Reading Reflections, and Responses	30%
Class Participation (online/offline)	60%

### Grade Policies

A good grade requires thoughtful, informed participation in class and online, well executed arguments in writing, and an outstanding portfolio. Readings will be DISCUSSED on the day marked on the syllabus. Assignments are due as scheduled.

### Absence Policies

I will expect you to attend class regularly. You will be allowed five absences. If you have six absences, your final grade will be lowered 10 points (a full letter grade). If you have seven unexcused absences, you will receive a grade of “F” for the course. You may use your five absences for job interviews, illness, trips home—all the usual reasons—but five is the limit. I will make exceptions only in the case of extended hospitalization, for which I will require documentation.

### Students with Disabilities

For any student needing an accommodation for any sort of disability: please visit the Office of Disability Services to obtain an accommodation letter. Once you have that, make an appointment to see me during my office hours; you must bring your accommodation letter. The Office of Disability Services for Students offers a variety of resources for students with disabilities. Learn more about the ADAPTS program here: <http://adapts.gatech.edu>.

### Honor Code

The penalties for plagiarism (submitting other people’s words or ideas as your own) are severe. I will report all cases of academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Integrity. Please adhere to the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code. You may review that code at [www.honor.gatech.edu](http://www.honor.gatech.edu).

### Course Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
<i>August 21</i>	Introduction	Syllabus
<i>August 23</i>		Wachowski D., and Wachowski, R. (2003) The Second Renaissance, Part I
<i>August 28</i>	Logistics, Technology, and You	Assignment Discussions Introduction to Hypothes.is Introduction to Piazza
<i>August 30</i>	Thinking about Technology	Pacey, A (1983) The Culture of Technology pp 1-34
<i>September 4</i>		Winner, L. (1996). Who will we be in cyberspace?. The Information Society, 12(1), 63-72.
<i>September 6</i>		“A Honey-pot For Assholes”: Inside Twitter’s 10-Year Failure To Stop Harassment <a href="https://www.buzzfeed.com/charliwarzel/a-honey-pot-for-assholes-inside-twitters-10-year-failure-to-">https://www.buzzfeed.com/charliwarzel/a-honey-pot-for-assholes-inside-twitters-10-year-failure-to-</a>

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<i>September 11</i>	Technology and American Culture	Vaidhyanathan, S. (2006). Introduction Rewiring the "Nation": The Place of Technology in American Studies. <i>American Quarterly</i> , 58(3), 555-567. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068383">http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068383</a>
<i>September 13</i>		Winner, L. (2001) "Who Will We Be in Cyberspace?"
<i>September 18</i>	Technology and History	Headrick, D.R. (2000) Chapter 1. When information came of age!: technologies of knowledge in the age of reason and revolution, 1700-1850. New York: Oxford University Press. [Scan]
<i>September 20</i>		The Internet May Be as Segregated as a City <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/09/the-internet-may-be-as-segregated-as-a-city/498608/">http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/09/the-internet-may-be-as-segregated-as-a-city/498608/</a>
<i>September 25</i>		Marvin, C. "Annihilating space, time, and difference: Experiments in cultural homogenization". <i>When Old Technologies were New</i> . 191-231 [Scan]
<i>September 27</i>		Video: Is The Internet a Public Place? PBS IDEA CHANNEL 14 minutes <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmZbdaqGqlc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmZbdaqGqlc</a>
<i>October 2</i>	Technology and Philosophy	Kirkpatrick, G. (2004) "The aesthetics of personal computing". in <i>Critical Technology: A Social Theory of Personal Computing</i> . 47-68 [Scan]
<i>October 4</i>		Is Snapchat stealing filters from makeup artists? <a href="https://theringer.com/snapchat-stealing-filters-ae39a061c274#.mqbebl34c">https://theringer.com/snapchat-stealing-filters-ae39a061c274#.mqbebl34c</a>
<i>October 9</i>		MIDTERM RECESS
<i>October 11</i>	No Class	Kirkpatrick, G. (2007) <i>Critical technology: a social theory of personal computing</i> . pp. vii-24 [Course blog]
<i>October 16</i>		Is technology making us dumber or smarter? Yes <a href="http://theconversation.com/is-technology-making-us-dumber-or-smarter-yes-58124">http://theconversation.com/is-technology-making-us-dumber-or-smarter-yes-58124</a>
<i>October 18</i>	Technology and Belief [NO CLASS]	Carey, J. and Quirk, J. (1989) The mythos of the electronic revolution. In James Carey (ed) <i>Communication as Culture, Revised Edition: Essays on Media and Society</i> . pp. 87-109
<i>October 23</i>		How language took over the internet, and how the internet is changing language. <a href="http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/the_next_20/2016/09/the_past_and_future_of_language_on_the_internet.html">http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/the_next_20/2016/09/the_past_and_future_of_language_on_the_internet.html</a>
<i>October 25</i>	Technology and Identity [NO CLASS]	Dunbar-Hester, Christina. (2010). Beyond "Dudecore": Challenging Gendered and "Raced" Technologies through Media Activism. <i>Journal of Broadcasting &amp; Electronic Media</i> , 54(1) 121-135.
<i>October 30</i>		"I asked Tinder for my data. It sent me 800 pages of my deepest, darkest secrets   Technology   The Guardian" <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/sep/26/tinder-personal-data-dating-app-messages-hacked-sold?CMP=share_btn_fb">https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/sep/26/tinder-personal-data-dating-app-messages-hacked-sold?CMP=share_btn_fb</a>

<i>November 1</i>		Fouché, R. (2006). Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud: African Americans, American Artifactual Culture, and Black Vernacular Technological Creativity. <i>American Quarterly</i> , 58(3), 639-661. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068387">http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068387</a>
<i>November 6</i>		Byrne, D. N. (2007). Public discourse, community concerns, and civic engagement: Exploring black social networking traditions on BlackPlanet.com. <i>Journal of Computer- Mediated Communication</i> , 13(1), article 16. <a href="http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/byrne.html">http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/byrne.html</a>
<i>November 8</i>	NO CLASS	video: Key & Peele - Text Message Confusion - Uncensored 3 min <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naleynXS7yo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naleynXS7yo</a>
<i>November 13</i>		Nye, D. (2006). Technology and the Production of Difference. <i>American Quarterly</i> , 58(3), 597-618. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068385">http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068385</a>
<i>November 15</i>		Class Selects
<i>November 20</i>	NO CLASS	Douglas, S. (2006). The Turn Within: The Irony of Technology in a Globalized World. <i>American Quarterly</i> , 58(3), 619-638. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068386">http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068386</a>
<i>November 22</i>		THANKSGIVING RECESS
<i>November 27</i>		De la Peza, C. (2006). "Slow and Low Progress," or Why American Studies Should Do Technology. <i>American Quarterly</i> , 58(3), 915-941. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068398">http://www.jstor.org/stable/40068398</a>
<i>November 29</i>		Class Selects
<i>December 4</i>		Reflections and Post-Mortems

## Assignments

Due Date	Subject
September 4	IT Biography
Every Class	Online Discussion in Piazza + Annotations
As Assigned	Discussion Lead + Media Example
December 4	IT Reflection

## Assignments in detail

### Information Technology Biography and Reflection

Part One (Due September 4):

In approximately 1000 words, write an autobiographical account of your history of, experiences with, and beliefs about information and communication technologies.

Part Two: (Due December 4)

Using your written discussion portfolio as reference and as citations, update your IT bio to reflect upon what you've discovered during this class. If you haven't learned anything, that's fine - but you still need to tell me what you already knew that wasn't enhanced by the readings and discussion

### Annotations

This semester, we'll be using Hypothes.is to annotate each assigned reading as a class. Hypothes.is is an annotation layer for any online content; this tool is intended to allow y'all to collaborate on your reading, synthesis, and understanding of the reading selections across the semester. I'll send out the invitation link and explain how we'll use this tool during class.

In addition to highlighting snippets of text that you find interesting (or confusing), Hypothes.is also allows the use of images and other multimedia content within your annotations. I am inclined to offer extra credit for those whose annotations include compelling, relevant multimedia content illustrating difficult or interesting concepts in the reading.

Your annotations will count as 15% of your participation grade.

### Discussion Leader

**You are required to lead a discussion on a reading of your choice. There are multiple aspects to this assignment:**

1. **You must provide an analysis of the arguments made in your assigned reading.**
2. **You must also provide at least ONE discussion question (see below) with your analysis**
  - a. Post your analysis and discussion questions to the Canvas/Piazza "Reading Summaries and Discussion" for the course.
3. **In class, lead the discussion by offering a (brief) media example that highlights an element or argument found in the reading**

Your discussion question can/should be based on current (or recently completed) readings. You must also ANSWER your question using your experiences, knowledge of, or reactions to the subject matter of the reading.

*Suggestions for Discussion questions:*

- What social or cultural theories about science and technology were presented in these readings?
- What ideas did you find the most challenging or provocative? Why?
- Can you map any of the ideas from the readings into your own life or work experiences?
- How comfortable or difficult did you find reading and discussing these topics? Why do you think this is?

Tuesday reading responses must be posted by Friday at 11PM. Comments to these posts should ideally be made by Monday at 12 midnight.

Thursday reading responses must be posted by Tuesday at 11pm<sup>1</sup>. Comments to these posts should ideally be made by Wednesday at 12 midnight.

### Discussion Participation

If you're not the discussion leader, you must follow, post, and contribute to the Canvas/Piazza "Reading Summaries and Discussion" for the appropriate reading. You should post a MINIMUM of five (5) comments on your classmates' posts during the semester.

Participation online can include:

- Posting questions or responding to other students' forum postings
- Providing examples and counter-examples
- Performing scholarly, constructive criticism of the assigned reading
- Proposing additional literature, websites or resources
- Sharing current news items and media reports that are relevant to class topics

The best comments will respond actively to the topic of discussion, or extend discussions from section or even lecture. Thread-jacking or trolling will not be tolerated and will result in a grade reduction.

### Discussion Portfolio

Your Discussion Leader post, together with your THREE best responses to another classmate's forum/post, will comprise your written participation grade. Fulfilling the bare minimum requirements will earn only 60% for written participation.

Both discussion comments and reading responses will be assessed based on clarity of argument, skill in framing the issue, and the weight of supporting evidence drawn from course materials and lectures. Attempting to complete this assignment in its entirety in the first few (or the last few) weeks of the semester will be considered SPAM and will result in a reduction of your grade.

**NB: Canvas tracks your participation across the semester. Your participation counts will affect your grade. This means that you should not wait until the end of the semester to write comments.**