Technology and Society
Upper-Level Course Outline

What is this course?

Philosophy of technology is an area of philosophy that explores the ethical, social, and political considerations regarding humanity's development and use of technology. Our ability to develop and use technology has been key to our evolution as a species, the advancement of science, the creation of a world-spanning civilization, and critically, it has deeply affected who we are and how we relate to one another. This class is primarily built around two key themes: (1) theoretical foundations in philosophy of technology and (2) technology in action. In other words, this course will first try to answer some fundamental questions about what technology is and what it means to us. Then, we will apply those theories more broadly to our contemporary world and the technologies that permeate it. The goal of this course is to provide you with a deep understanding of the effects of technology in your daily lives in order to map out a vision of using, changing, or refusing certain technologies for both meaningful personal change and positive social change.

This course will ask and try to find significant answers to some of the following questions:
- What is technology and what is our relationship to it? Do we drive technology or does technology drive us? Is technology value-neutral or is it always imbued with certain values?
- What is the relationship between our social and political world and the technologies that we, as a society, develop?
- How do different technologies of our digital world, such as the Internet and social media, affect culture, identity, and relationships with others?
- How ought we live in light of the technological society we have built?
- What does the future of work look like? Will robots replace our jobs? What kind of society is possible with the development of AI and automation? Will our future be dystopian or utopian?
- What does it mean to be human in a posthuman age?

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, all students will have developed the following knowledge and capacities:
- Students will be able to explain and evaluate important concerns in the tradition of the philosophy of technology
- Students will be able to critically evaluate both the positive and negative effects of certain technologies in our daily lives
- Students will develop the capacity to present clear, cogent arguments in favor or against the philosophical arguments we will engage in throughout our course
- Students will be able to clearly articulate their own values in writing, in person, and in concert with others
- Students will create evaluative criteria for socially responsible implementation technologies
- Students will build a capacity to respectfully discuss and debate core philosophical issues with their fellow students

Reading Schedule:

Week 10 – Can technology free us from want and work?
　　Day 1 – Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, "The Fragment on Machines" and Aguilar-Millan et. al., "The
　　　　　Post-Scarcity World of 2050-2075"
　　Day 2 – Aaron Benanav, *Automation and the Future of Work*, Part 2

Week 11 – Technology, the Environment, and Eco-Feminism
　　Day 1 – Carolyn Merchant, "Mining the Earth's Womb" and Rajni Kothari, "Environment,
　　　　　Technology, and Ethics"
　　Day 2 – Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement" and Ariel Kay Salleh, "Deeper than
　　　　　Ecology: The Eco-Feminist Connection"

Week 12 – Feminism and Posthumanism
　　Day 1 – Donna Haraway, *The Cyborg Manifesto*, Part 1
　　Day 2 – Donna Haraway, *The Cyborg Manifesto*, Part 2 and Nick Bostrom, "In Defense of
　　　　　Posthuman Dignity"

Week 13 – Our Huxlean Present
　　Day 1 – Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Chapters 1-6
　　Day 2 – Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Chapters 7-12

Week 14 – Our Huxlean Present
　　Day 1 – Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Chapters 12-18
　　Day 2 – Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, Foreword to Second Edition and Leon Kass,
　　　　　"Preventing a Brave New World"