

History and Philosophy of Technology

Doane University – Lincoln Campus Winter II 2018 Term Syllabus

1. Course Information

Course Description: This course focuses on aspects of the history of technology; the moral and social dilemmas that past technologies gave rise to (even when those dilemmas were not clearly acknowledged); the potentials of selected current technologies; and the moral and social dilemmas that those technologies raise. Students study the ways major thinkers have tried to deal with the dilemmas technologies have posed, and are asked to think through their own responsibilities concerning the technologies discussed.

- a. **Course number:** PRE 231
- b. **Course title:** History and Philosophy of Technology
- c. **Number of credits :** 3
- d. **Course Meeting Time:** January 18 – March 10, Thursday Evenings, 6 – 9:30 PM.
- e. **Instructor's name:** Steven Millet
- f. **Instructor's contact information:** steven.millet@doane.edu email anytime. Immediate response between 10 AM – 12 AM daily, 10 hour delay thereafter.

2. Course Materials

- a. **Required Texts:**
 - Technopoly by Neil Postman, Knopf Publishing Group, 1993, ISBN-13: 978-0679745402.
 - Society & Technological Change, 8th Ed., by Rudi Volti, Worth Publishers, Inc, 2017, **ISBN:** 9781319058258.
- b. **Optional:** Flash (thumb) Drive for saving backups

3. Learning outcomes

- a. **Foundation Areas of Knowledge (FAK):** In Search of Meaning and Values
Description: Doane students will consider the importance and significance of what it means to be human. Students will work to:
 - 1. Consider ways that humans have come to understand the meaning of existence

2. Evaluate the philosophical or spiritual implications of human actions and policies
3. Develop an understanding of their ethical values

b. Course Learning Goals and Specific Objectives:

- Understand why we should study the history of technology.
- Have a general understanding of present and past philosophical thought.
- Understand the relation between society and technology.
- Be familiar with some of the popular themes facing society today.
- Understand current and past issues effect the moral and ethical fiber of society (and individuals).
- Develop their own views on philosophical topics facing today's society.
- Be familiar with the major technological advances that have taken place over the last 250 years.
- Understand how the future fits into today's issues.

4. Course Schedule

Week or Module	Topic	Content	Assignments	Due dates
1	Postman	Course Overview Philosophical Thought and Technology		
2	Postman	Why Study the History of Technology?	Assignment #1	Week 4
3	Postman	How Far Has Society Advanced in the Last 250 Years?	Assignment #2	Week 5
4		Midterm Exam		
5	Volti	The History of Technology 1770 – 1972 and Beyond	Assignment #3	Week 7
6	Volti	Technology and the Future	Assignment #4	Week8
7	Volti	Philosophical Dilemmas	Project Work Time During Class	
8		Final Exam	Project Presentations	

5. Grading

a. List of assessments

Type of assessment	% of total
Exams (2)	40
Assignments	30
Class Project	20
Class Participation	10

b. Grade scheme (percentages)

A+	100 - 97	B+	89 - 87	C+	79 - 77	D+	69 - 67	F	Below 60
A	96 - 94	B	86 - 84	C	76 - 74	D	66 - 64		
A-	93 - 90	B-	83 - 80	C-	73 - 70	D-	63 - 60		

6. Course policies

a. Required:

- i. **Attendance policy** Students are required to complete all assignments even if absent. To receive class participation credit students are required to be present in class, unless the absence is for an excused reason.
- ii. **Study time** - Expectation of the amount of time the course requires students to spend preparing and completing assignments. (Typically, students could expect to spend approximately 12 hours a week preparing for and actively participating in this 8-week 3 credit hour course. This actual time for study varies depending on students' backgrounds.)
- iii. **Late work – Incomplete grades.** The federal requirement states that students must complete 75% of the course work in order to receive an incomplete grade. If students fall more than two weeks behind, they cannot meet this requirement.
- iv. **Rewrites/drafts** – Students can submit assignments prior to the due date.
- v. **Assignments** - can be submitted in class, or by Doane email.
- vi. **Academic Integrity** - Doane University expects and requires all its students to act with honesty and integrity, and respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. Academic dishonesty, the act of knowingly and willingly attempting or assisting others to gain academic success by dishonest means, is manifested in various measures. Gehring, et al, (1986) suggests that four categories of academic dishonesty exist¹:
 1. Cheating
 2. Fabrication
 3. Facilitating academic dishonesty
 4. Plagiarism

vii. **Student Accommodations** – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504) and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) provide that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States... shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by any institution receiving federal financial assistance." This regulation requires that Doane programs be accessible to the disabled, but it does not require that every building or part of a building be accessible. Thus it may be necessary to reschedule classes to accessible classrooms or take other steps to open some of the programs to students with mobility impairments.

1. Students interested in services related to a disability should notify the college of any special circumstances that would affect their ability to compete equally in the college environment. To assist the college in providing services, documentation of such disabilities must be provided by qualified professionals upon request.
2. While students are encouraged to self-identify at the earliest possible time, they can access services at any time by initiating the process described in number one above.

To initiate this process, students are encouraged to contact the Dean of Undergraduate Studies before beginning classes so their needs can be anticipated, reviewed and accommodated.

viii. **Student Support Center** –Doane professors have high expectations. They want you to be prepared and engaged in class. (College would be easy if grades were based on attendance.

The engaged part is what gives a Doane degree its worth.)

The Academic Success Center helps you meet those expectations and your own. They can help with a specific project such as prepping for a professional school entry exam. Or they can introduce you to the trifecta of academics: study habits, time management and exam preparation skills. Cost: FREE!

- ix. **Anti-Harassment Policy** – It is the policy of Doane College not to discriminate on the basis of gender in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to the Director of Human Resources, Doane College, 1014 Boswell Avenue, Crete, NE 68333 or to the ***Director of the Office for Civil Rights***, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 20202.
- x. **Grade appeal process** - If a student thinks an instructor has graded him or her in a way that is inconsistent with the grading policy outlined in the course syllabus, the student may initiate the grade appeal process below. (Students who think their grade was calculated in error should consult the Grade Change Policy.) If at any stage of the process the appeal is withdrawn or resolved, the process stops. The Grade Appeal Request form and a written statement of the resolution will be kept in the student's record.

Steps:

1. Within 10 days of the grade's release, the student will contact the instructor to discuss the student's concern.
2. To continue with the appeal, the student will contact the Dean no later than 10 days following the discussion with the instructor to set up a meeting with the student and instructor to discuss the student's concern. (If the Dean is the instructor, the Dean will designate another division faculty member to act as Dean in this matter.)

If the student wishes to appeal the Dean's decision, the student will file a Grade Appeal Request form with the Registrar's Office within 3 days, and schedule a meeting with the Vice President of Academic Affairs within 7 days. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will review the process. If the process has been followed as stipulated in this policy, the Dean's decision will be final.