HISTORY & SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENCE (HSSC)

HSSC 502 Public History
Taught by: Barnes
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 503 Current Issues in the History of Medicine
This seminar surveys a variety of popular and scholarly approaches to the study of medicine and its history, ranging from traditional physician-centered narratives to more recent cultural and epistemological methodologies. The potential values of journalistic, sociological, anthropological, geographical and other approaches to the historical study of health, disease, and health care will be explored.
Taught by: Barnes
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 504 Reading Seminar in History of Science
Survey of major themes and figures in the history of western science, technology, and medicine since the Renaissance, through reading and discussion of selected primary and secondary sources. Topics include: Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, Newtonainism, Pasteur, the Industrial Revolution, the rise of German science, etc. Concurrent attendance at STSC 1 lectures is recommended.
Taught by: Adams
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 505 Seminar in the History and Sociology of Science
Seminar for first-year graduate students, undergraduate majors, and advanced undergraduates. Reading will introduce the student to current work concerning the effect of social context on science, technology, and medicine.
Taught by: Linker/Benson
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 506 Readings in Race and Science
What accounts for the persistence and resilience of racial conceptions in science? In this course we will look for answers to this and other questions by examining the historiography of race, colonialism, and science. The standard historiography has focused on the rise and fall of racial typologies in the north Atlantic and their contributions to troublesome political projects such as the Atlantic slave trade, Jim Crow policies, the eugenics movement, and the Holocaust. More recent histories have taken inspiration from postcolonial studies, standpoint theories, and indigenous studies to insist on a more global reckoning of race and science. If we focus on the southern hemisphere, for instance, we can see scientific racial conceptions enrolled for a different though not necessarily less innocent set of projects: the dispossession of indigenous lands and effacement of indigenous peoples, the glorification of race-mixing as a tool of nation building, and the cultivation of whiteness as a means to modernity. By examining classic and recent approaches to race and science we will grapple with the following questions: Is 'race' a product of 18th century French and English science? Or can we find earlier iterations in the idioms of conquest of Spanish America during the early modern period? Do the standard narratives concerning the history of racial conceptions in science change when looked at from the frame of the global south? Does race get 'buried alive' after WWII? And do recent developments in human genomics bring "race" back from the dead, albeit in an anti-racist form?
Taught by: Gil-Riano, Sebastian
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 508 Knowledge in Motion
Taught by: Kucuk
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 509 Oral History
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
HSSC 510 Science and Popular Culture
This course will review major developments in biomolecular sciences and many historians of science, technology, and medicine have embraced the study of popular culture in recent years. They have drawn on a rich literature in mainstream history, on the history of reading, of the book, of museums, of oral culture, journalism, theater, and of the mass media including radio and television. Some have even proposed that popular culture provides insights into elite knowledge systems that are not accessible in other kinds of sources, thus privileging what is publicly known over the traditional private textual, visual, and material records of the archive or museum. In this graduate research seminar we will be exploring the relevance of the study of popular culture to the study of science, technology, and medicine. Participants will write an original research paper in which they draw on popular culture as a resource for the interpretation of practices, theories, and material resources in natural knowledge systems. Readings will generally focus on surveys that explicitly discuss methods, though we will also read some primary sources possibly including science fiction texts, memoirs of patients, engineers, physicians, and scientists, gee-whiz popular science books, and didactic books intended for children.
Taught by: Lindee
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 519 Topics in the Social History of Knowledge
This reading seminar will cover writings on the social history of knowledge that are often mentioned by historians of science but less often read; it will give students a chance to read and discuss authors who are neglected, trendy, difficult, and/or foundational in this field. We will begin with Lovejoy’s Great Chain of Being and critiques brought against it, moving to classic histories of scientific ideas with a focus on “mechanical philosophy” followed by recent rethinks of “the Scientific Revolution.” We will then visit major schools of historical interpretation: Foucault’s genealogies of knowledge and power, Marxist criticism and the Frankfurt School, Max Weber’s analysis of rationalization and the values of science, along with philosophical approaches to technoscience, biopower, the state of exception and artificial life. Throughout, our guiding questions will be the relationship between scientific knowledge and institutions, practices, technologies, and values, as well as the connection between local case studies and the “big picture” of science and technology in the modern world. The seminar is open to graduate students from any discipline who want to engage critically with these works.
Taught by: Tresch
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 524 Histories of the Cosmos
Taught by: Tresch, J
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 528 Gender and Science
With a special focus on methods, this course explores the rich literature on gender and technical knowledge.
Taught by: Lindee
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GSWS 528
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 529 Readings in Genetics and Genomics
Taught by: Lindee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 536 Imperial Medicine in the British World
Taught by: Mukharji
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: SAST 536
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 542 History and Sociology of Surgery
Taught by: Linker
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 546 Making India Modern
Taught by: Mukharji
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 548 Current Issues in the History of Medicine
This seminar surveys a variety of popular and scholarly approaches to the study of medicine and its history, ranging from traditional physician-centered narratives to more recent cultural and epistemological methodologies. The potential value of journalistic, sociological, anthropological, geographical, and other approaches to the historical study of health, disease and health care will be explored.
Taught by: Barnes
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ANTH 614
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 550 The Information Sciences
This course will explore the emergence and widespread adoption in the early Cold War-period of a set of interrelated tools, techniques, and discourses organized around the concept of “information.” These emerging information sciences included not only new disciplines such as cybernetics, information theory, operations research, and ecology, but also some traditional physical sciences - such as biology and chemistry - as well as a broad range of social sciences, including economics, political science, sociology and urban planning. The focus of the course will be on tracing the important structural changes in post-war science that encouraged the adoption of the rhetoric of information (if not its substance), as well as on extending the relevance of these developments to a wide range of topics in the history of science, medicine, and technology.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 561 Disability: History and Theory
Taught by: Linker
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
HSSC 564 History of Technology
In this course we read influential classic and recent works in the history and the philosophy of technology, tackling the ways in which the fields are analytically structured as well as their relation to each other. We also discuss approaches and methodological questions in general history and general philosophy. We start with Karl Marx, arguably the most influential historian and philosopher of technology of the modern era, and discuss him in relation to what has been one of the most visible debates in the historiography of technology - the question of technological determinism. We then travel in a roughly chronological order through key periods and methodological issues in the fields. During our journey we encounter the Middle Ages and historical theoreticians of the Annales School, the early modern period and questions about gender and microhistory, and the so-called Industrial Revolution and the questions it raises about what's modern about modern technology. Mid-way through the class, we discuss two classics in the philosophy of technology, Martin Heidegger and Jürgen Habermas, who grapple precisely with the question about the modern element in industrial technology. As we enter the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we expand our methodological horizon to include examples from the cultural history of technology and applications of the social constructivism debate to the history of technology. We end the class with works on the recently emerging fields of biotechnology and nanotechnology and with a set of monographs written in the nascent sub-discipline in the history and philosophy of technology, engineering studies.
Taught by: VOSKUHL, A
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 565 Environmental History
A survey of recent and influential works in environmental history, including works from both within and outside the American environmental history canon. The focus is on situating emerging historiographical trends within the long-term development of the field and in relation to other closely allied fields, including the history of science, technology, and medicine, social and cultural history, urban history, agricultural history, world history, historical ecology, environmental anthropology, and ecocriticism.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 567 Industrial and Post Industrial Ages
Taught by: Voskuhi
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 588 Humanities Beyond the Human
Taught by: Benson
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 594 The Trouble with Freud
Also Offered As: COML 523, GRMN 526, GSWS 525
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 597 Other Reasons: Interrogating Postcolonial Disenchantments
Postcolonial Theories, building largely on Frankfurt School theorists, have critiqued the totalizing aspirations of what it calls ‘Enlightenment Rationality’. Such critiques have also fed a range of critiques of Science. At the heart of such critiques is a rather restricted and plastic idea of Science as a singular, homogenous body of knowledge that has steadily promoted the disenchantment of the world. In this course we seek to destabilize this monolithic vision of science by revisiting its plural, heterogeneous histories. The course is particularly interested in exploring the historical entanglements between the sciences and the enchanted world of intangible entities such as spirits, ghosts and gods. The course will be divided into three broad sections. The first will deal with the theoretical critiques of ‘Enlightenment Rationality’ and ‘Science’ in postcolonial theory. The second will undertake a detailed and loosely chronological examination of the multifaceted entanglements of science and technology with the paranormal in the 19th and 20th centuries. Finally, the last section will explore the performative aspects of scientific rationality in colonial and postcolonial contexts in a bid to understand the background that led to the postcolonial theorization.
Taught by: Mukharji, P
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 611 Reading Seminar History of Medicine
A survey of key issues in the development of Western medicine during the past two centuries. Historiographically oriented, it will emphasize areas of recent historical concern such as the role of the patient, the institutionalization of medical care, and shifting conceptions of disease. The course itself will include some lecture as well as discussion. A paper will be required.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 620 Colloquium in European History
This course will focus on problems in European political, social, cultural, and economic development from 1750 to the close of the second World War. Readings will be major works in the different fields of European historical scholarship, ranging from family to diplomatic history and covering a wide variety of methodological approaches.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: HIST 620, JWST 620
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 622 Darwin
Taught by: Adams
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 626 Research Seminar in History of Technology
This graduate seminar provides a structured environment in which each student executes an independent research project. Early class meetings focus on the craft of researching and writing scholarly articles. Later meetings are devoted to discussion of students progress on their research projects. Each student defines their own research topic in the history of technology, subject to the Professor’s approval. One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit
HSSC 629 Readings in Genetics and Genomics
Taught by: Lindee, S
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 661 Cold War Technical Knowledge
Taught by: Lindee
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 665 Research Seminar in the History of Medicine
Taught by: Aronowitz, R; McKay, R
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1 Course Unit

HSSC 999 Graduate Independent Study
Available to doctoral students only.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1 Course Unit