

GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY
Core Curriculum Area B GC1Y Section Approval Form

Title of Section: Tech Support: The Promise and Peril of Technology

Name & Department (of proposing faculty member): Philosophy, Religion, and Liberal Studies

Proposed Effective Date: Spring, 2019
Semester Year

If the content of this section is based on an existing course, please list the course prefix, number and title: _____
NOTE: If this section is approved, the existing course will need to be removed from the catalog.

Please answer these questions and attach the syllabus (see below) concerning the new section of GC1Y that you are proposing.

I. Area B Learning Outcome (SLO 3): *Students will be able to explain multiple intellectual approaches that clarify or respond to problems, topics, themes, and/or issues.*

This course is designed to be a critical exploration of the nature of human technology and its role in human life as it has developed over time and continues to develop in the present day. The study of technology is inherently interdisciplinary. This course will incorporate theories and concepts from anthropology, sociology, design studies, material culture studies, continental and contemporary philosophy. Technology is understood broadly to include both artifact and technique. Technology, for the purposes of this course, goes beyond the restricted sense of technology as grounded in modern science and engineering.

1) What intellectual approaches will your section of this course include?

This course will use five main pedagogical approaches to the course material: reflective journaling, intensive reading, in-class and online discussions, essay exams, and a final group project.

- a. Students will maintain a journal throughout the course that will be turned in every other week. They will receive prompts that guide their writing. For example, in the first journal writing, the students will be asked to give an account of their own relationship to technology. How often do they use things like phones, computers, and television? What is their general view on the character of our current technological developments? Later in the semester, the students will return to this original writing and reflect on whether their views have changed or strengthened.
- b. Students will read texts from anthropology, architecture, sociology, and philosophy. These will be challenging but accessible texts that are intended to highlight human development and relationships to technology over time. These texts will be read critically in order to 1) gauge central claims and support for those claims, 2) evaluate those claims, and 3) assess the broader implications of those claims to our own lives.
- c. This is intended to be a strongly discussion-based course. Students will participate in both in-class and online discussions. Each week, two or three students will be "discussion observers." These students will briefly summarize the in-class discussion and formulate discussion questions for the online forum. They will also complete an "Observation Response" exercise in which they reflect on both the particular discussion of that day, as well as the role of discussion in facilitating understanding, in general.
- d. There will be three essay exams. These exams consist of one question on which the students will write a short paper. The students will be given a list of possible questions before each exam. This will allow them to construct detailed outlines that will prepare them for each of the questions.
- e. During the final exam period, the students will give group presentations on their own "Focal Practice." In one of the required texts, the student will learn about how to participate in focal practices that forge a healthier relationship to technology and the world around them. They will be put into groups in which they must come up with a focal practice of their own. The presentation will cover their practice, how their fits the criteria of focal practices, any limitations they found with their practice, and what they took away from the experience.

2) What problems, topics, themes, and/or issues will your section of this course address?

The primary theme of the course is the human being's relationship to technology. Specifically, how does the promise of technology drive human endeavors, and what are the drawbacks to such endeavors?

- a. The course will touch on some seemingly basic but perplexing questions like, what is technology? What is progress? Is "progress" good?
- b. The course will be arranged to engage these questions through the themes of
 - i. Origins – Here students take a historic look at very early human civilization leading up to the present day and the technologies that drove human society. In these texts, technology is understood very broadly and discuss at length the revolutionary technology of agriculture.
 - ii. Distrust – In this section of the course, students will read authors who are suspicious of technology, especially modern technology. They will read thinkers such as Martin Heidegger, Jacques Ellul, and Herbert Marcuse.
 - iii. Ambiguity – Here, the course will turn from distrust to those philosophers who take a more nuanced stance toward technology. These philosophers blur the categories of good and bad technologies.
 - iv. Hope – The course will end on positive note, asking students to conceive of ways toward new and better relationships to technology. Here, students will read philosophers that see promise in human-technology relations.

Additional Required Components: *In addition to meeting the Area B learning outcome, these courses must also (II) address Critical Thinking Overlay Outcome, (III) emphasize Writing Skills, (IV) include a "Learning Beyond the Classroom (LBTC)" component*

II. Critical Thinking Overlay Outcome: *(1) Students will be able to use appropriate tools to (a) Implement effective search strategies, (b) Evaluate sources for relevance, authority, format (primary vs. secondary sources, scholarly vs. popular, print vs. online). (2) Students will be able to effectively explain and analyze evidence in support of an argument, and (3) Students will be able to form logical conclusions from information presented.*

1) Please explain how your section will require students to achieve critical thinking in terms of effective research strategies (including evaluating sources).

Students will begin this course learning how to construct and deconstruct arguments. They will learn strategies for evaluating claims and support for those claims. Students will then use these strategies to both evaluate the texts that they read and to construct arguments for their own positions. In all assignments and in class discussions, they will be required to identify key claims, support for those claims, and then evaluate the truth and validity of arguments as a whole.

2) How will your students be required to effectively explain and analyze evidence in support of an argument (name specific assignments, how long they will be, in what format, etc.)?

Most formally, the students will demonstrate their abilities to explain and analyze evidence in support of claims during the essay exams. The exams are one- to two-page essays (500-750 words) specifically designed to evaluate the students in this respect. For example, an essay question would likely have two parts. The first part would be related directly to materials we have read: *How does Heidegger characterize modern technology? How does he support such a characterization?* The second part would ask the student to write their own support or rejection of the main claim: *Are Heidegger's claims convincing? What are the strengths and weaknesses of his argument? Do you agree with him? Construct your own argument in favor of or against Heidegger's characterization.*

More informally, students will practice analyzing arguments in their reflective journals. These journals are sites where students can get feedback from the instructor without being heavily penalized for making mistakes. Journals are one- to two-page reflections on questions and prompts that arise while reading through assigned texted.

3) What assignments/class work will enable your students to form logical conclusions from information presented?

The journals, observations, and exams are intended to enable the students to critically engage the text and form their own conclusions.

4) Discuss how your section will integrate critical thinking fundamentally as a priority in the course plan

This course is primarily philosophical in nature. The underlying purpose to all writing assignments and readings is to think critically about the information given. Students will learn how to evaluate both the arguments engaged in class, as well as their own relationships to and opinions on the role of technology in human life.

III. Writing Skills Component: *Please discuss how your course will emphasize analytical writing skills.*

1) What written assignments will your section include (please be specific)? Indicate the length & nature of required writing (including how these assignments will be analytical in nature).

The students are required to complete Reflection Journals, an Observation Response, and three Essay Exams. The journals required throughout the course will be turned in every other week and are meant to be approximately 500-750 words. They will receive prompts that guide their writing. For example, in the first journal writing, the students will be asked to give an account of their own relationship to technology. How often do they use things like phones, computers, and television? What is their general view on the character of our current technological developments? Later in the semester, the students will return to this original writing and reflect on whether their views have changed or strengthened.

The Observation Response written reflection in which they consider both the discussion of that day, as well as the role of discussion in facilitating understanding, in general. They are asked four questions that prompt them to investigate the role of text and the role of discussion in learning. They are also asked about the character of the class discussion. For example, how well does the class come together and work through difficult claims and arguments?

Finally, there will be three essay exams. These exams consist of one question on which the students will write a short paper. The students will be given a list of possible questions before each exam. This will allow them to construct detailed outlines that will prepare them for each of the questions. The essays should be approximately 1000 words each.

IV. Learning Beyond the Classroom Component (LBTC) ~ *LBTC, a pillar of distinction at GCSU, supports the notion that active learning and creative engaging pedagogies are central to the course experience for our students. LBTC endeavors may include but are not limited to undergraduate research, creative course activities, service learning, lab activities, field trips, study abroad, problem-based learning, fieldwork, and out of class (course related) learning activities.*

1) How will you incorporate learning beyond the classroom in such a way that it is significant and integral to the course? Be specific; including how this will be tied back into the class?

Beyond the classroom students will have several activities and “experiments” throughout the course that will guide their Reflection Journals. For example, the students will be asked in the beginning of the course to give an account of their use of technologies like smart phones, television, and computers. Then they will be asked to track their use of such devices. In the journals they will then reflect on the divide between how much they *thought* they used these devices and how much they actually do. This activity ties into philosophical discussions about the character of our relationships to technology. Another activity asks students to take a weekend break from technology. That is, they should not use their phones, televisions, or computers (insofar as is possible, given other coursework and immediate needs). They will then reflect on the difficulties of taking such a break. This activity highlights philosophical questions about the level of dependency humans have come to have on such technologies.

Another LBTC activity for the course is the final project. This project requires that the students form groups of 4 or 5 and create their own “Focal Practice,” a practice described in one of the primary texts of the course. They have to develop and participate in this practice outside of class and then present their results as their final project.

V. Mission Focus ~ *Area B courses should particularly reflect the mission of Georgia College and contribute to a distinctive liberal arts core. (Mission and Vision statements are available on our guidelines page on D2L and on the rubric for this proposal)*

1. How will your section align with GC’s liberal arts mission and values as a distinctive core experience?

Students are growing and learning in an increasingly technological world, yet rarely take the time to consider the

relationships they have or might want to have to technology itself. This course is designed to bring those relationships to the fore of students' experiences, allowing them to critically examine themselves and the activities in which they often participate. This course integrates the mission and values of a liberal arts education by encouraging and teaching students to be more thoughtful, ethical, and engaged citizens in relation to the realities of a rapidly developing technological environment.

Section Description Please provide a brief paragraph to serve as a section description (Note: students will see a list of these descriptions when choosing a GC'Y section)

This course is a critical exploration of the nature of human technology and its role in human life as it has developed over time and continues to develop in the present day. This course will incorporate theory from anthropology, sociology, design studies, continental and contemporary philosophy. Technology, for the purposes of this course, goes beyond the restricted sense of technology as grounded in modern science and engineering and will include both artifact and technique.

List any other Relevant Information:

Main Subject Area(s) to be covered: Philosophy (e.g. history, literature, religion, or philosophy, etc.)

Minimum SACS requirement to teach this section: 18 hours of graduate coursework in philosophy (e.g. 18 hours of graduate coursework in history)

Submit a syllabus (at least a partial – 2 page syllabus) **Note:** this may be a tentative, shorter, planning syllabus or it may be longer. It should be in line with how the course will actually be taught. This syllabus should include at least: required readings & written work, grading criteria, course outcomes, tentative weekly calendar (e.g. Week 1. Read & Discuss Thoreau's *Walden*)

Section to taught by: Bronke Rudow-Abouharb (printed name, may list additional names of qualified faculty)

Signature of Submitting Faculty Member: Bronke Rudow-Abouharb 9/7/2018
Faculty Member Date

Recommendations (First 2 Signatures Required Before Submitting to SuCC)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>Sandra Marasa</u>	<u>September 7, 2018</u>
		Department Chair **	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9-7-18</u>
		College Dean	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9/22/18</u>
		Chair, Sub-Committee on the Core Curriculum- GEC	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acknowledged		<u>Sybilae Mueschel</u>	<u>9/28/18</u>
		Chair, Curriculum & Assessment Policy Committee	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>uCC</u>	
		Provost	Date

* A "Not Recommend" recommendation should include a brief explanation of the reviewer's reason(s) for the decision
 ** By signing/recommending, the Department Chair certifies that this faculty member has SACS qualifications to teach this section

relationships they have or might want to have to technology itself. This course is designed to bring those relationships to the fore of students' experiences, allowing them to critically examine themselves and the activities in which they often participate. This course integrates the mission and values of a liberal arts education by encouraging and teaching students to be more thoughtful, ethical, and engaged citizens in relation to the realities of a rapidly developing technological environment.

Section Description Please provide a brief paragraph to serve as a section description (Note: students will see a list of these descriptions when choosing a GCIV section)

This course is a critical exploration of the nature of human technology and its role in human life as it has developed over time and continues to develop in the present day. This course will incorporate theory from anthropology, sociology, design studies, continental and contemporary philosophy. Technology, for the purposes of this course, goes beyond the restricted sense of technology as grounded in modern science and engineering and will include both artifact and technique.

List any other Relevant Information:

Main Subject Area(s) to be covered: Philosophy (e.g. history, literature, religion, or philosophy, etc.)

Minimum SACS requirement to teach this section: 18 hours of graduate coursework in philosophy (e.g. 18 hours of graduate coursework in history)

Submit a syllabus (at least a partial -- 2 page syllabus) **Note:** this may be a tentative, shorter, planning syllabus or it may be longer. It should be in line with how the course will actually be taught. This syllabus should include at least: required readings & written work, grading criteria, course outcomes, tentative weekly calendar (e.g. Week 1. Read & Discuss Thoreau's *Walden*)

Section to taught by: Brooke Rudow-Abouharb (printed name; may list additional names of qualified faculty)

Signature of Submitting Faculty Member: Brooke Rudow-Abouharb Date 9/7/2018
Faculty Member Date

Recommendations (First 2 Signatures Required Before Submitting to SoCC)*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>Sandra Warner</u>	<u>September 7, 2018</u>
		Department Chair **	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9-7-18</u>
		College Dean	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9/22/18</u>
		Chair, Sub-Committee on the Core Curriculum	GEC Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acknowledged		<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9/28/18</u>
		Chair, Curriculum & Assessment Policy Committee	Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommend	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>9/28/18</u>
		Provost	Date

* A "Not Recommend" recommendation should include a brief explanation of the reviewer's reason(s) for the decision.
** By signing/recommending, the Department Chair certifies that this faculty member has SACS qualifications to teach this section

TECH SUPPORT: The Promise and Peril of Technology

Spring Semester 2019

Brooke Rudow-Abouharb

Office: Beeson 357

Contact: brooke.rudowabouharb@gesu.edu, 478.445.8543

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 11:00-12:00; Tuesday, Thursday 8:15-9:15

Course Description: This course is designed to be a critical exploration of the nature of human technology and its role in human life as it has developed over time and continues to develop in the present day. The study of technology is inherently interdisciplinary. This course will incorporate theories and concepts from anthropology, sociology, design studies, material culture studies, and continental and contemporary philosophy. Technology is understood broadly to include both artifact and technique. Technology, for the purposes of this course, goes beyond the restricted sense of technology as grounded in modern science and engineering.

As a student in this course you will learn about the history of technology, and about the diversity of technologies employed by different cultures. You will become familiar with the major writers on philosophy of technology through reading original texts. You will learn from them different approaches to analyzing and evaluating the nature of technology. You will also be encouraged to formulate your own analyses and evaluations of technology through the required assignments.

Required Texts:

- 1) Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Translated by Donald Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992.
- 2) Borgmann, Albert. *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life*. Chicago: The University of Chicago University Press, 1984.
- 3) Ihde, Don. *Technology and the Lifeworld*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- 4) Gertz, Nolen. *Nihilism and Technology*. London: Rowan & Littlefield, 2018.
- 5) Vogel, Steven. *Thinking Like a Mall*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018. ****Maybe****

(Other required readings will be provided in class or online)

Preliminary Remarks:

Your grade in this class is something you will earn. That is, you should not think of your grade as an A that goes down as you lose points. Rather, you start with nothing and build points. The grade you earn in this class will be determined by what you put into it. You can earn up to 200 points in this class. The corresponding letter grades are as follows:

A: 200-180 (Excellent)

B: 179-160 (Good)

C: 159-140 (Satisfactory)

D: 139-120 (Passing)

F: 119 or below (Failing)

1. Attendance (30 points):

Class attendance and participation in class activities and discussion are important aspects of this course. Students are expected to attend class on time. Arriving late to class or leaving early is disruptive to the class. If you must do so, please alert me, and sit where you can leave the room unobtrusively. When you do not attend class, you miss an integral part of the learning experience provided in this course.

Each day that you attend class *on time* you will receive 1 point. If you are late (after I've closed the door), you will receive a ½ point. *You will have to tell me after class to give you credit for your late arrival*, as I will not constantly update the attendance sheet as students arrive late.

2. Class Participation:

Class participation is a crucial part of this class. You should be able to demonstrate your understanding of the assigned readings by formulating questions about the readings and articulating key points. Keep in mind that participation is not just talking a lot. You should be mindful of participating *well*. That is, you should respond to other students, ask relevant questions, and listen. During discussion I expect many of you to disagree from time to time, but I require a high level of respect for and from all students. As a way of boosting participation points, there *may* be occasional unannounced quizzes in class or quizzes made available online. These are intended to gage your understanding of assigned readings and your ability to reconstruct the arguments therein, so come to class, pay attention and do your reading! **There will be no make-ups for in-class quizzes and online quizzes are also time-limited.**

3. Reflection Journals

Students will turn in Reflection Journals every other week as noted on the course schedule. Each journal writing should be one to two pages in length and respond to a prompt posted in the online folder. Don't let the name "journal" fool you. I expect appropriate structure, grammar, and spelling. Although you need not include a bibliography, the first time you refer to a class text or material, put the title and author's last name in parentheses following the sentence where it is used. For example: The example in our reading this week was fascinating (*Technology and the Lifeworld*, Ihde).

4. Observation Response

Each student will complete a discussion observation and Observation Response. This activity is intended to allow the "Observers" to remove themselves from the active discussion in order to think critically about how philosophy as a dialog functions differently than philosophy as a text. There will be two to three Observers for each class period, and they will be assigned in alphabetical order. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- a. **Keep track of the students who participate in the class discussion.** When someone asks a substantive question or makes a substantive contribution, write down their name. You will turn this in to me right after class.
- b. **Take notes on the discussion.** When someone speaks, jot down a brief reminder about what they said or what thoughts their comment brought up to you. You will keep this in order to write your summary, discussion question, and response, so do this on a separate paper than what you will submit to me.
- c. **Post a summary and discussion question in the Online Discussion forum for that week's readings.** By 11:59pm on the day of your observation, you must post the highlights from our discussion as a reminder to the class. Then pose a question based on the discussion or something important that you think the discussion missed. ****These will serve as the prompts for your classmates for the week, so make sure you do it on time**.**
- d. **Finally, submit your Observation Response.** In GeorgiaView, you will find the Observation Response activity. It is due one week from the date of your assigned Observation.

Observers will automatically receive in-class participation points for the day they observe. **However, observers are not allowed to speak in class that day.** An important part of this activity is removing yourself from the discussion and, thus, participating in a different way.

4. Exams

Read Closely: Although I offer four exams, you are only required to take the first three exams. If you choose to take the fourth exam, you may replace your lowest exam grade with the grade you receive on the fourth exam. **You may not take the fourth exam if you have not taken all three previous exams.**

Make-up exams will only be given if you schedule them with me *prior to exam day*. Do not email me after or the day of to make arrangements.

Each exam will consist in 1 or 2 long essay questions. You will receive a list of potential exam questions approximately a week before each exam. This will give you the opportunity to work through each question prior to the exam. I encourage you to write out full essays or detailed outlines to each and every potential question you receive. No notes will be permitted during exams.

5. Focal Practice Project

During the final exam period, students will give group presentations on their own "Focal Practice." You will be put into groups in which you must decide upon and participate in a focal

practice of you own. More details on this project will follow our reading of *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life*.

Miscellaneous Clarifications and Suggestions:

- ALWAYS bring your reading assignments and/or book to class.
- As you are reading you should be taking notes on key points or unclear passages to ask about in class. I recommend reading the text at least two times. On the first reading, pick out the main claims. On the second reading, pay closer attention to what the author has claimed and how (and if!) she or he supports those claims.
- On the schedule you will see the date with "Readings" all the way to the right. We will discuss that reading that day in class. *Read ahead*. Do not save your reading for the night before we discuss it in class.
- **Movie Nights** are optional events that I'll hold, given there is a room available for showings.

*****The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*****

Topics	Class Date	Assignments	Readings
	Jan 14	What is an argument?	
<i>Origins</i>	Jan 16		<i>Discourse</i> Preface, Part One, and Notes 1-15
	Jan 18	Journal 1 due	<i>Discourse</i> Part Two, and Notes 16-19
	Jan 21	(no class)	
	Jan 23		"The First Affluent Society" Marshall Sahlins (online)
	Jan 25		"Egalitarian Societies," James Woodburn (online)
	Jan 28		"Agriculture's Mixed Blessings," Jared Diamond
	Jan 30		"The String Revolution," Elizabeth Wayland Barber
	Feb 1	Journal 2 due/ Movie Night: <i>New World</i>	"Neo-thingess," Ian Hodder
	Feb 4		"From Trust to Domination," Tim Ingold
	Feb 6		<i>Capital</i> , Chapter XIV, Sections 1 - 3
	Feb 8		<i>Capital</i> , Chapter XV, Sections 1 & 4

	Feb 11	Exam 1	
<i>Distrust</i>	Feb 13		"The Question Concerning Technology," Martin Heidegger
	Feb 15	Journal 3 due/ Movie Night: <i>The Village</i>	"Building Dwelling Thinking," Martin Heidegger
	Feb 18		Excerpts from <i>The Technological Society</i> , Jacques Ellul
	Feb 20		"Technology and Responsibility," Hans Jonas
	Feb 22		"Panopticism," Michele Foucault
	Feb 25		"New Forms of Control," Herbert Marcuse
	Feb 27		<i>Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life</i> , Part 1
	Mar 1	Journal 4 due/Movie Night <i>Minority Report</i>	TCCL, Chapters 8-10
<i>Ambiguity</i>	Mar 4		TCCL
	Mar 6		TCCL
	Mar 8		TCCL
	Mar 11		TCCL
	Mar 13	Journal 5 due/Movie Night: <i>Gattaca</i>	TCCL
	Mar 15	Exam 2	
	Mar 18-22	<i>No classes Spring Break</i>	
	Mar 25		<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Mar 27		<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Mar 29	Movie Night: <i>Terminator 2</i>	<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Apr 1		<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Apr 3		<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Apr 5	Journal 6 due	<i>Technology and the Lifeworld</i>
	Apr 8		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 10		

	Apr 12	Movie Night: <i>Her</i>	Latour
	Apr 15		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 17		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 19	Journal 7 due	<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
<i>Hope?</i>	Apr 22		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 24		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 26	Movie Night: <i>Interstellar or Wall-E</i>	<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	Apr 29		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	May 1		<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
	May 3	Journal 8 due	<i>Nihilism and Technology</i>
<i>Last Day of Class</i>	May 6	Exam 3	
	May 10	Movie Night: <i>Contact?</i>	
FINAL		Final Practice Presentations	