COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

The fields of medical anthropology and science and technology studies have been shaped in recent decades by a series of questions regarding scientific inquiry, health and illness, and technological development. This course is predicated on the realization that the social phenomena studied by “medical anthropology” and “STS” are inextricably linked, and understanding these convergences requires moving among disparate fields of inquiry.

The objective of this course is to introduce students to the literatures and practices that constitute MSTS as a discipline and scholarly approach today. We will approach MSTS as 1) a body of literature, 2) an emergent (or merging) discipline with complex genealogies, 3) a growing emphasis within sociocultural anthropology, 4) a way of framing inquiries and selecting methods and data, and 5) a mode of social engagement.

Topics examined include the foundations of scientific knowledge; spaces and practices through which authoritative knowledge and “truth” is made; machines, humans, and technological systems; race, gender, and postcolonial perspectives; public engagement with medicine, science, and technology; and bioscience and biopower.

This course is open to all graduate students, and it is required of those seeking the M.A. in MSTS or the Graduate Concentration in Anthropologies of Medicine, Science, and Technology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade will be based on the following components:

1) Attendance and Participation (20%)

This class depends on student presence and engagement. Participation includes: being present in class and having completed the required readings; being able to discuss the readings and to constructively critique them; making comments that are pertinent to the course content; being able to contextualize the readings in relation to the broader themes of the course; and listening with integrity to what other students have to say. In pairs or small groups, you will facilitate at least two class discussions. You may conduct these sessions in any manner you choose, but your facilitation should focus on encouraging vigorous and thoughtful discussion about the ideas raised in and related to the assigned reading.

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Course Materials

All required readings can be downloaded from the course website: https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/579
2) Critical Reading Responses (20%)

You will complete critical reaction papers discussing the assigned readings for six (6) class sessions of your choosing. Responses should be approximately 500 words and should be posted to the course forums no later than 9pm on Monday evening before class. Please read your colleague’s responses before class. Additional guidelines and analytical resources will be posted on the course website.

3) Keywords Contributions (20%)

The inspiration for this assignment comes from Raymond Williams’s *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976). Williams explains his approach:

> It is not a dictionary or glossary of a particular academic subject. It is not a series of footnotes to dictionary histories or definitions of a number of words. It is, rather, the record of an inquiry into a *vocabulary*. … I called these *Keywords* in two connected senses: they are significant, binding words in certain activities and their interpretation; they are significant, indicative words in certain forms of thought.” (13)

Collectively, we will build a shared vocabulary of **Keywords in Medicine, Science, and Technology Studies**. Throughout the quarter, select 10-15 keywords (~1-2/week) related to the assigned or recommended readings, weekly themes, and/or class discussions. Post brief (300-500 word) entries to the shared Keywords document no later than 9pm on Monday evening before class. You are welcome to expand on previous entries as well as add new ones.

3) Analytic Paper & Presentation (40%)

Identify an artifact (broadly defined) related to the study of medicine, science, and technology. This may be an image, sound, device, space, etc. I encourage you to choose an artifact related to your planned thesis research.

Drawing on course themes and approaches, submit a 10-12 page theoretical analysis of this artifact and its social, cultural, or political significance.

In addition, each student will deliver, in a manner appropriate for a professional meeting, a 15-minute oral presentation on his or her artifact.
COURSE SCHEDULE

The following readings are required. Additional recommended readings will be listed on the course website.

**Week 1, September 29**  
**Introductions, Genealogies, and Orientations**


**Week 2, October 6**  
**Paradigm Shifts: Science as Culture and Practice**


**Week 3, October 13**  
**Producing Knowledge: Facts, Laboratories, and Practices**


**Week 4, October 20**  
**From Networks To Assemblages**


**COURSE SCHEDULE, cont.**

**Week 5, October 27**  
**Feminist and Antiracist Critiques**


**Week 6, November 3**  
**Global Science**


**Week 7, November 10**  
**Multiple Knowledges: Experts and Publics**


Week 8, November 17  Making Technology


Week 9, November 24  Life Itself: Bioscience, Biosociality, and Biopolitics


Week 10, December 1  Presentations and Papers Due