

STS 122: Health and Medical Technologies — Advancing Health Care Equity Winter 2021

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Thursday 10:30 – 11:50am (Zoom)

Course Description: This course will introduce you to critical social scientific approaches to health and medical technologies grounded in the interdisciplinary field of science and technology studies (STS). It takes a historical approach to the topic, encouraging you to think about the ways in which the past shapes the present.

STS 122 fulfills the **Domestic Diversity** requirement and will therefore foreground the role of medical technologies in the production, maintenance, and contestation of various forms of social difference, notably race, gender, sexuality, and disability. Many of our readings, lectures, and discussions will address these issues. In particular, we will focus on each of the following topics: race and genetic technologies (weeks 3-4); disability and wearable/implantable technologies (week 5); and gender, sexuality, and contraceptive and reproductive technologies (weeks 7-9). Through this course's readings, activities, and assignments, you will develop competency in thinking, speaking, and writing about diversity. This competency will be assessed in your weekly one-paragraph essays and your final video project.

Course Outcomes: In this course, you will learn that technologies arise from and interact with society in complex ways. Assuming that you attend class regularly, complete required readings, and submit assignments on time, you can expect to be able to do the following by the end of the quarter:

- **Find** STS scholarship about medical technologies using bibliographic databases.
- **Read and summarize** scholarly articles about the social shaping of medical technology and the social inequalities embedded within them.
- **Synthesize** perspectives from multiple readings to answer questions about the medical and non-medical work performed by medical technologies and the ways in which they reinforce and/or challenge existing social inequalities.
- **Communicate** what you have learned in writing and orally.
- **Produce multi-media products** to communicate what you have learned.

Weekly Activities: Most weeks (weeks 2-5 and 7-10) will follow a similar pattern. You will complete an assignment on perusall.com that will involve reading articles, watching videos, and/or listening to podcasts, and annotating all of these sources. You will also respond to your classmates' annotations. This assignment and all annotations must be completed by 5pm on Wednesday of the given week. In class (on Zoom), we will use polls to review factual information and grapple with discussion questions in small groups. After class, you will write a one-paragraph answer to the week's discussion question, citing the majority of the week's sources in Chicago author/date format (chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2). This paragraph is due by 5pm on Friday of each week. During weeks 2-5 and 7-10, you can earn a total of nine points from these activities (three for Perusall, one for participating in class, and five for your one-paragraph essay). In addition, during week 1, you can earn up to two points for your Perusall assignment and one for class participation. **Altogether, these activities will account for 75% of your grade.**

Video Project: This quarter you will produce a video that introduces viewers to the sociotechnical issues associated with a medical technology of your choosing. The video *must* address diversity in some way. It should deal with the themes of the course, but be accessible to viewers who have not taken the course. The video must be in .mp4 format. You may work on this video on your own or in

pairs. If you are working alone, the video should be approximately 3-5 minutes in length; if you are working with a partner, it should be 5-8 minutes. If you and another member of the class are working on the same topic, I highly encourage you to team up so that you can make a longer video that goes into more depth as opposed to two shorter videos that cover the same material. Your video must have a bibliography of at least three sources per person; all sources must be scholarly works in STS. The video is worth **10 points**, and there will be a series of preparatory assignments that are also worth a total of **10 points**. You are also required to watch and evaluate your classmates' videos, for an additional **5 points**. **Altogether, this will account for 25% of your grade.**

Attendance and Participation: Attendance at synchronous Zoom sessions is **required** in weeks 1-5 and 7-10. In order to earn the point, you are expected to have your camera on and to participate in polls and group activities. Please let me know if your hardware and/or internet connection won't support video. The purpose of class participation is to help one another grapple with the material. Therefore, absences cannot be excused or made up, with the exception of long-term emergencies.

Grading: The course is worth a total of **100 points**:

Perusall assignments	26
Attendance/participation	9
One-paragraph essays	40
Preparation for video	10
Final video	10
Video evaluation	5

Grades will be assigned as follows: A+ [100, 97), A [97, 93), A- [93, 90), B+ [90, 87), B [87, 83), B- [83, 80), C+ [80, 77), C [77, 73), C- [73, 70), D+ [70, 67), D [67, 63), D- [63, 60), F [60, 0].

Books: You do not need to purchase any books for this course.

Late Work and Extensions: I am unable to accept later Perusall assignments, as these are meant to keep you on-track with your weekly readings, videos, and podcasts, and I am also unable to accept late videos or video evaluations, as these are your "final exam." For all other assignments, there will be a 12-hour grace period after the due date, during which you may submit your work without penalty. If you need more time, you may request a three-day extension by submitting a form on Canvas *at least 48 hours before the assignment is due*. Work submitted after the grace period without an extension request, or work submitted after a granted extension, will not be considered for credit.

Accommodations: I will work with the Student Disability Center (sdc.ucdavis.edu) to make accommodations for documented disabilities. All requests must be initiated through the SDC, but do let me know if your needs are not being adequately addressed. If you think you might have a disability or medical or psychological condition that affects your learning, please do not hesitate to contact the SDC for evaluation.

Technology: You will need a computer (with camera and microphone) and a high-speed internet connection to participate in this class. If you do not have a suitable laptop, you may borrow one from UC Davis (keep-teaching.ucdavis.edu/student-resources/need-wi-fi). If you do not have a suitable internet connection, please check your city's website for public hotspots. Sacramento and other cities have wi-fi buses, and UCD has several outdoor hotspots (keep-teaching.ucdavis.edu/student-resources/need-wi-fi).

Zoom Etiquette: During synchronous sessions, I expect you to have your camera on to best simulate a classroom environment. Please keep yourself muted unless you are speaking and use Zoom's hand-raising functionality to indicate when you would like to speak. You may type comments into the chat whenever you like, and I will address them as soon as I am able. Please rename yourself in Zoom with the name you would like to be called (first name only is fine, though please include something distinguishing if you have the same name as someone else in class) and your preferred pronouns. Please refer to everyone using their preferred names and pronouns. You may at times need to use other windows on your computer to participate in class-related activities, but everything else should be closed and your full attention should be on the class. Class sessions will be recorded, but these recordings should only be watched by class members and should not be shared with anyone else. They will be automatically destroyed after the end of the quarter. Anything said or shown on Zoom stays on Zoom.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and with all perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of all types of diversity. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know how I might improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. This course will involve conversations about historical and contemporary constructions of gender, race, sexuality, and disability. These conversations may be difficult, but the virtual classroom is a safe place to discuss and write about these issues. *Scholarly disagreements are allowed and debate is encouraged, but your comments should refer to course materials, not another person.* You will learn how to support your arguments in writing and conversation with quotes and textual references. For an up-to-date guide to appropriate and inappropriate terminology, consult the UC Davis LGBTQIA+ Resource Center Glossary (lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary) or the Radical Copy Editor (radicalcopyeditor.com). I expect you to be courteous to your classmates and their ideas, to allow them to speak, and to listen to them carefully. If you think a reading or discussion may be triggering to you personally, please discuss with me in advance how we can manage the situation to protect your physical and emotional safety.

Meeting and Communication: I will hold **weekly office hours on Thursdays at 9-10:20am.** Please schedule these meetings in advance at calendly.com/ekmerchant. You may contact me through Canvas and/or Slack about anything course-related at any time. For other matters (e.g. recommendation letters), please email me at ekmerchant@ucdavis.edu. I will check and respond to messages once per day on Monday-Friday, so please plan accordingly.

Academic Integrity: As in all courses at UC Davis, you will be held to the University's Code of Academic Conduct (sja.ucdavis.edu/files/cac.pdf), which prohibits all forms of academic misconduct, from outright cheating or plagiarism to inadequate citation. You must acknowledge this Code of Academic Conduct for each course in which you are registered on the Academic Participation website (participate.ucdavis.edu). All work that you submit for this class must be your own and must not have been submitted for a grade in any other class without prior approval from myself and the instructor of the other class. I will report all cases of suspected misconduct to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs (sja.ucdavis.edu). We will discuss proper citation practices in class. Please do not hesitate to ask *in advance* if you are unsure whether something you plan to do violates the code.

Campus Resources: UC Davis offers many resources to help you cope with the challenges of college life. Please see the “Campus Resources” page on the Canvas site for the course for links to current resources.

Schedule

Week 1: Introduction

1/6: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (2 points)

1/7: Attend class at 10:10 (1 point)

Week 2: Thinking Critically About Technology and Medicine

1/13: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

1/14: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

1/15: Week two paragraph (5 points) and first video source (1 point) due by 5pm

Week 3: Scientific Racism and Racialized Medicine

1/20: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

1/21: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

1/22: Week three paragraph (5 points) and second video source (1 point) due by 5pm

Week 4: Race and Genetic Ancestry

1/27: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

1/28: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

1/29: Week four paragraph (5 points) and third video source (1 point) due by 5pm

Week 5: Disability and Wearable/Implantable Technologies

2/3: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

2/4: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

2/5: Week five paragraph due by 5pm (5 points)

Week 6: Work on Video Project

2/8-2/12: Meet with Emily to discuss video project

2/12: Annotated bibliography due by 5pm (3 points)

Week 7: Gender, Sexuality, and Technologies of Reproductive Health

2/17: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

2/18: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

2/19: Week seven paragraph due by 5pm (5 points)

Week 8: Birth Control and Population Control

2/24: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

2/25: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

2/26: Week eight paragraph (5 points) and video plan (3 points) due by 5pm (5 points)

Week 9: Gender, Sexuality, and Assisted Reproductive Technologies

3/3: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

3/4: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

3/5: Week nine paragraph due by 5pm (5 points)

Week 10: Genetics, Disability, Race, and Prenatal Testing

3/10: Complete Perusall assignment by 5pm (3 points)

3/11: Attend class at 10:30 (1 point)

3/12: Week ten paragraph due by 5pm (5 points)

Finals Week

3/15: Final video due by 5pm (10 points)

3/19: Video evaluations due by 5pm (5 points)