Georgia Tech Lorraine, European Campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology
Technology through the Ages (Technology and Society)
HTS 2084 – R1, R2
Summer 2023
Course Syllabus

Instructor
Dr. Timothy Stoneman
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Time and Place
MW: 10:25am-12:20pm; 1:30-3:25pm
Red Room

Office Hours: TBD

Course Attributes
HTS 2084 fulfills the social science and ethics requirements at Georgia Tech.

Course Prerequisites
None

Course Description
Technologies have formed the basis of material culture and influenced the course of social change throughout human history. Yet the shape of technologies' influence on society has varied significantly with time and place and usually goes unnoticed by engineering students. The present course combines the history of technology with world history, focusing predominantly on Europe and the city of Metz. Through a selection of historical case studies – prehistoric axes, medieval cathedrals, French bread, and fast food – we will see how technical practices ("engineering," broadly defined) evolved over major eras of the past. Our case studies will show how the relationship between technology and the social order shifted over the long course of history between various types of increasingly sophisticated societies, organized around tools, crafts, machines, and industrial systems, respectively. Our goal in recounting the large-scale course of technological change will be to prompt reflection about what it means to live in our current technological world – in which complex and interconnected systems increasingly dominate our lives.

Course Objectives
Students will accomplish the following objectives:

- Students will describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts.*
- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forcesthat influence social behavior.*
- Students will develop a critical perspective on changes in the relationship between technology, culture and society over major periods of human history.

-   Students will integrate aspects of their living experience while in Europe with their classroom study and develop self-awareness of their identity as travel consumers.
-   Students will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.*
-   Students will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.*
-   Students will develop effective oral and written communication skills.

(* Language is taken directly from the General Education Mission Statement of Georgia Tech's Core Curriculum, available on the Registrar website.)

Grading
Course assessment will be based on the following formula:

After-class discussion posts (Canvas)	5%
In-class assignments (incl. debate)	10%
Reading quizzes	10%
Final group presentation	10%
Group essay	20%
Semester review essay	20%
Test	25%

Georgia Tech Lorraine is a serious academic program. While not required, attendance is strongly encouraged at all classes. Please let me know in advance if you cannot attend for an official reason. Students are expected to pay attention in class and actively discuss readings. Please do not use electronic devices, including laptops and cell phones, without special permission.

To receive grades of excellence, students must demonstrate close understanding of course concepts and knowledge of relevant historical material covered in lectures, readings, videos, and class discussion. Final grading will be done on a letter basis and will not be rounded up (90% = A). Final grades will not be available through Oscar until the Monday following the end of the exam period (Aug 7). Please do not ask to have grades changed.

Students will sign up to lead class discussion of assigned readings once during the semester (10 minutes). Please sign in twos or threes in the spreadsheet provided under Collaborations on Canvas. Your grade for leading class discussion will be included as part of your in-class assignment grade, which will include other in-class work as well as a class debate. You must make up all missed in-class assignments within one week or receive a grade of zero. I will not make any grade changes after more than one week.

You will receive a grade for after-class responses completed through Discussions on Canvas. You are required to make 10 discussion posts over the semester. Each missing post or reply will count for 10% of your final Discussions post grade. Posts must be at least one paragraph in length, be written by midnight on the day after class, and cover any aspect of the class; only one post and reply will be counted per class day.

Reading quizzes will cover the assigned daily reading at the start of the following class. They will include T/F questions and I will grade them on the following scale: - (1) 90% - (2) 80% - (3) 70% - (4) 60%. Quizzes are not optional. If you come to class, you must take the quiz, even if you have not done the reading. Missed quizzes (i.e., missed classes) will not count in your grade and you do not have to make them up.

The test may include multiple-choice, short answer, and short essay questions. You will complete a group presentation based on course readings and short research during the final unit on RING technologies. The semester essay, in take-home format, will provide a comprehensive review of course themes.

Honor Policy
Students are expected to abide by the Georgia Tech honor code. All infractions will be handled through the Office of the Dean of Students and treated with the utmost seriousness.

Statement on Inclusion
The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society. (Statement taken from Ivan Allen College Dean's Office.)

Course Materials
There are no required textbooks. All reading material and course communication will occur through Canvas.

Course Units

Introduction: Technology & society
Tools in tool-using societies
  Prehistoric axes
Crafts in craft-making societies
  Gothic cathedrals
  French bread (& baguette tasting)
Industry in system-based societies
  Travel and tourism
Technologies in contemporary society
  Robotics, AI, and genetics
  Fate of the biosphere