Questions? Contact your Faculty Graduate Dean’s Office (FGO).

Governance Form C: Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Change Proposal Type</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
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</table>
| • New Course
• Changing Weight of Existing Course* | 1. Chair/Director sends proposal to FGO. Proposal must include: a. Governance Form C
b. Academic Activity (ROSI) Form, attached below (also available separately from the [SGS website](https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca)). 2. FGO accepts proposal (or refers back) and posts it on Graduate Curriculum Tracker (GCT). 3. School of Graduate Studies (SGS) reviews proposal. **4. Proposal goes to Faculty Council (FC) for final approval.**
4. FGO posts FC approval on GCT. 6. SGS updates ROSI as needed. |
| • Changing Grading Scale of Existing Course (i.e. letter grades vs. CR/NCR)
• New Delivery Mode of Existing Course (e.g. eLearning) | 1. Chair/Director sends proposal to FGO in relevant Faculty using Governance Form C.
2. FGO accepts proposal (or refers back) and posts it on GCT.
3. SGS reviews proposal. **4. Proposal goes to FC for final approval.**
5. FGO posts FC approval on GCT. |

* Not including splitting one existing full course into two half-courses or amalgamating two existing half-courses into one full course.

Policies, guidelines and definitions pertaining to graduate courses are available from SGS; see Governance Form C: Guidelines (below).

For other changes to existing courses, see Governance Form B.

A complete list of graduate curriculum proposal types, appropriate forms to use and required approvals is available from the [SGS website](https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca).

**Administrators:** Please delete the procedures and guidelines sections before the form is posted on the GCT.
Governance Form C

Proposal Type: [Mark one; see Governance Form C Procedures and Guidelines]

✔ New Course (ROSI Form also required)

Changing Weight of Existing Course (ROSI Form also required)

Changing Grading Scale of Existing Course

New Delivery Mode of Existing Course

Faculty: [E.g. Arts and Science, Medicine, etc. If Collaborative Program, please indicate lead Faculty]

Faculty of Information

Name of Graduate Unit: [Graduate department/centre/institute/school; if this is a Collaborative Program, please provide name of collaborative program]

Faculty of Information

Course Title: [The full title of the course. Maximum 60 characters recommended]

INF1501H - Culture & Technology I

Rationale: [State the reason for creating the course, changing its weight, changing its grading scheme, or introducing a new mode of delivery; also explain the place of the course in your program.]

Role: This course will serve as the first required course in the newly-inaugurated Culture & Technology (C&T) concentration within the Master of Information (MI) degree offered by the Faculty of Information. The aim of the course is to introduce students within the concentration to the wide range of issues and methodologies employed across the academy to identify, understand, analyze, investigate, and critique issues of substantial social and intellectual concern at the intersection of culture and technology.

Context: The name “Culture & Technology,” and the general field of inquiry to which students will be introduced, meshes with the focus of the McLuhan Program in Culture & Technology, a program of the Coach House Institute (CHI), which in turn operates as an extra-departmental unit (EDU) within the Faculty of Information. Although the McLuhan Program historically focused on media and communication, the CHI is expanding the “Culture & Technology” mandate to encompass a wider range of socio-technical issues, especially those having to do with information systems and services, digital technologies, and the internet and social media. By connecting students with cutting-edge research projects of faculty members associated with the CHI, students in INF1501H will be given direct, experiential participation in the exploration of issues of grave social importance.

Course Description: [Approx. 100-150 words; may include further description of format or course presentation.]

An introduction to some of the methods and traditions used to identify, understand, analyze, investigate, and critique issues at the intersection of culture and technology. Provides a background in philosophy of computing and information, philosophy of technology, and science and technology studies. Particular focus on issues relevant to computing, information systems and services, digital technologies, the internet, and social media. Affiliated with the McLuhan Program in Culture & Technology, a program of the Coach House Institute (CHI).

Course Designator, Number and Weight: [E.g. ABC 1000Y]

INF 1501H

Abbreviated Course Title: [Maximum 30 characters including spaces/punctuation. Separate words using spaces/punctuation. Use the full course title if possible. Note: this is the title that will appear on a student's transcript.]

CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY
A Graduate Faculty Member has been or will be assigned to teach/coordinate this course:

[Please check]  
✔ Yes

Course Format: [E.g. lecture, seminar, etc.; if eLearning format, 100% of instructional interaction occurs online. Please see Governance Form C: Guidelines]

Seminar if enrolment is <20; lecture & discussion otherwise

Regular/Modular/Continuous/Extended Course: [Mark one; see Governance Form C: Guidelines.]

✔ Regular  □ Modular  □ Continuous  □ Extended

Does this change involve a course that is required to complete a graduate program? [Mark one]

□ NO  ✔ YES (please also submit a completed Governance Form A with revised Calendar entry)

Contact Hours: [For modular courses, list the overall contact hours for the course; for all other course types, list the contact hours per week. For more information, see Governance Form C: Guidelines.]

3 hours / week

Grading Scale: [Mark one. If this is a seminar series course, see Governance Form C: Guidelines.]

✔ Letter Grades  □ CR/NCR

NOTE: Information on Evaluation Components, Percentage Value and Timing are no longer required on this form. Details are kept on record in the graduate unit. According to the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy (effective July 2012), participation may not constitute more than 20% of the overall grade.

Enrolment Projection: [Provide an estimate.]

35

Prerequisites/Co-requisites/Exclusions/Enrolment Restrictions: [If any.]

N/A

Similarity/Overlap: [List graduate units where significant similarity or overlap may occur. Confirm that consultation with other graduate units has occurred; attach documentation as appropriate. Indicate “None” if there is no similarity or overlap.]

Resources Required: [Mark one.]

✔ All elements of the course will be met with existing resources

□ Additional resources will be required
  [contact your Faculty Graduate Dean’s Office, and provide a brief description below]

Effective Session Date: [Month / Day / Year; sessions begin in September, January or May. The Faculty Graduate Office and SGS reserve the right to alter the effective session date.]

September 2013

Approvals/Actions prior to Faculty Governance Approval: [List graduate unit bodies that have approved the proposal. Include the date of each approval, and summarize substantial questions that have arisen. Consultation with graduate students should be included; indicate how it has occurred.]

• Approved by FI Programs Committee on Jan 18, 2013
Chair/Director Name(s): [Name of the Graduate Chair/Director of the unit(s) involved. Also list names and contact information for other individuals who will attend meetings at which the proposal will be discussed.]

- Brian Cantwell Smith, Professor, Faculty of Information

Date:
January 13, 2013

Faculty Council Meeting Date: [Identify the Faculty Council or delegated body that will consider the proposal for final approval and provide the expected meeting date.]

- To be approved by FI Executive Committee (mid-Feb) or by FI Council (Mar 1).

Please note: Posting of this form on the GCT indicates that the Faculty Vice-Dean Graduate, or designate, has reviewed the proposal.

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<th>For SGS use only</th>
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<td>GPO</td>
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<td>Comments</td>
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**Governance Form C: Guidelines**

Effective August 1, 2012

**Naming and Identifying Courses:** The name of the course must clearly reflect the content and be appropriate to the discipline. A glossary of course codes, definitions of the alphabetical characters and symbols that may be used following a course number are available online. Previously-used course numbers may only be reused after the previous course has been dormant for five or more years.

**Course Format:** The SGS Policy and Guidelines on Graduate Courses and Other Academic Activities provides a general definition of a graduate course. This includes possible variations in course weight (e.g. modular, extended and continuous courses), various delivery modes of courses and alternate course types. In particular, “graduate seminars” (generally defined in the policy referred to above) are viewed as distinct from seminar series, for which SGS has made specific guidelines available.

**eLearning:** All instructional interaction occurs without the student and instructor being in the same physical location, with the exception of final or interim assessment requiring attendance on campus no more than once per term. Instruction made be synchronous or asynchronous web-based learning technologies. Please review the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation – Online Course Design Guidelines for full details.

**Contact Hours:** See the SGS policy for minimum contact hours required.

**Evaluation Components, Percentage Value and Timing:** The School of Graduate Studies is governed by the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy.

**Effective Session Date:** Proposals are effective no sooner than the beginning of the following session. Retroactive proposals require SGS approval.

**Turnitin.com:** Instructors wishing to use Turnitin, or a similar service, must explain this at the outset of the course. Turnitin.com is an electronic resource that assists in the detection and deterrence of plagiarism. Further information is available from the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation.
OISE Graduate Units: OISE also requires proposals to include a New Course Proposal Supplementary Form. OISE graduate units should contact the OISE Faculty Graduate Office for further information.

Medicine Graduate Units: The Faculty of Medicine requires a detailed course syllabus to be appended to this form (the syllabus will not be posted on the GCT).

All Graduate Units: Some proposal types require an SGS Academic Activity (ROSI) Form (attached). If required, please complete it and submit it with this completed form to your Faculty Graduate Dean's Office.

References: SGS Policy and Guidelines on Graduate Courses and Other Academic Activities, Graduate Seminar Series Course Guidelines, University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy, Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation – Online Course Design Guidelines
This form is to be completed by the Graduate Administrator to accompany Governance Form C* (for new courses or changing the weight of an existing course) or Governance Form B* (for other changes to existing courses except course renaming, de-activation or changing a course into an extended course).

**New Academic Activity Codes (ADD)**
If a new course number is required, please check to make sure that it has not been used previously. Previously-used course numbers may only be reused after the previous course has been dormant for five or more years. If a new abbreviation is required, please check that it is not already being used by another program.

**Reusing Academic Activity Codes (MODIFY)**
Previously-used course numbers may only be reused after the previous course has been dormant for five or more years.

**Is this a new course or changing the weight of an existing course (Form C)?**
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**Is this a change to an existing course (excl. changing its weight) (Form B)?**
(i.e. renumbering a course, new course designator, splitting one full course into two half-courses, amalgamating two half-courses into one full course, or changing an existing course into a continuous course)
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

SGS division codes: Division I HUMGS; Division II SSCGS; Division III PHSGS; Division IV LFSGS

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<th>ACTIVITY 2</th>
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<td>Minimum Credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum Credit</td>
<td>These should be the same value. If credit is variable please consult with SGS.</td>
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<td>Science Credit Y/N</td>
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* A complete list of graduate curriculum proposal types, appropriate forms to use and required approvals is available from the [SGS website](#).

SGS Academic Activity (ROSI) Form – 2012-13 v1
INF1501 — Culture & Technology · I — Syllabus

Part I • General

I • Overview

An introduction to some of the methods and traditions used to identify, understand, analyze, investigate, and critique issues at the intersection of culture and technology. Provides a background in philosophy of computing and information, philosophy of technology, and science and technology studies. Particular focus on issues relevant to computing, information systems and services, digital technologies, the internet, and social media. Affiliated with the McLuhan Program in Culture & Technology, a program of the Coach House Institute (CHI).

Learning outcomes: In this course, students will develop:

1. An historical perspective on the emergence of mechanical conceptions of science and technology;
2. An understanding of the mechanical (material) and semantic (semiotic, intentional) aspects of contemporary computing and information technologies;
3. Analytic, conceptual, and critical skills necessary in order to analyse issues at the intersection of technology and culture;
4. Expertise and familiarity with reading across disciplinary boundaries; and
5. Experience in presenting, critiquing, and understanding diverse intellectual viewpoints, though mentored participation in processes of peer review and collaborative discussion.

II • Format

1. The class will consist of 12 three-hour sessions, to be held in the (small) main conference room of the Coach House Institute, at 69A Queen’s Park East (on the University of St. Michael’s College Campus)
2. Each week’s class will consist of three parts
   a. Lecture and/or presentation of the readings (lecture notes will be provided after class)
   b. Student-led questions for discussion: Each week, a different group of students will be assigned the task of (i) forming their own questions from the readings, as a basis for discussion, and (ii) collecting proposed questions and discussion points from the other members of the class, (iii) integrating these into a framework for discussion, and (iv) presenting this framework, following the lecture, as a catalyst for discussion.
   c. Class discussion, based on the lecture, readings, and student presentation of part (ii).
3. Assignment: Students will write a 6,000-8,000 word paper, and provide peer review commentary on the work of other students, in a four stage process:
   a. Students will submit a short (1–2 page) “skeleton” of a topic and proposed argument or set of questions to be addressed (week 4). Skeletons will be returned, with comments, within 1 week of submission.
   b. Students will post first drafts of their paper to the class website on Blackboard (week 7).
   c. The class will be divided, by random drawing, into groups of 4 people. Each member of each group will read and post comments on the first drafts of the other 3 students’ papers. Comments are to be posted within one week of when the drafts are posted. During this time, students will not be allowed to modify the posted first drafts.
d. Based on both (i) their own further readings and thoughts, (ii) the comments that have been posted on their first drafts, (iii) what they have learned commenting on the drafts of the other members of their group, students will complete a final version of their paper (to be submitted on the last day of class).

A. Grading

1. 10% — Presentation: distillation of readings, framework of questions for discussion.
2. 10% — “Skeleton’ of topic, with questions and (if possible) argument framework.
3. 20% — First draft of paper
4. 15% — Comments on the 3 other students’ first drafts (3 x 5%)
5. 35% — Final version of paper: 45%
6. 10% — Class participation
   ————
7. 100% — Total

**Part II • Syllabus**

**I • The Rise of Mechanism (2 weeks)**

— In which we begin the exploration by developing a grounding in the origins of the Philosophy of Mechanism: the view, nearly universally accepted in science as traditionally conceived, that science involves providing “mechanistic explanations” of structures, phenomena, and events, and that a universe of “causal bumping and shoving” (so-called “atoms in the void”) underlies all of reality. As will be examined in subsequent sections (see esp. §…), this classical view is both epistemologically and ontologically challenged by current thinkers, for example in Science Technology Studies (STS) and feminist philosophy of science. One cannot really understand those critiques, however, without first understanding the target of their criticism. In spite of these critiques, moreover, questions about “what constitutes a mechanism” remain widely debated in contemporary science—for example, in theoretical biology. In addition, contemporary efforts to provide “scientific” theories of fundamental aspects of human culture and the human condition, including altruism, fidelity, intelligence, emotion, language, and sociality, tend to devolve into mechanist analyses. As best we can, therefore, we need to understand what it is to be a mechanism. Later in the course we will also want to ask whether computers and information technologies are “mechanisms” in this sense.

A. Week 1

1. Required
   a. Origins
   b. The Scientific Revolution—original sources
      i. Descartes: Sixth meditation. In *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 1641. 8 pp.¹
      iii. Newton: “General Scholium,” appendix *Principia Mathematica*, 1713/1726. 3pp.²

¹ Two translations available online:
   Vetch: [http://www.wright.edu/cola/descartes](http://www.wright.edu/cola/descartes)
   Bennett: [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/de.html](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/de.html)
² [http://www.isaacnewton.ca/gen_scholium](http://www.isaacnewton.ca/gen_scholium)
2. Secondary
   a. Robert Boyle, *The Origin of forms and Qualities (according to the corpuscular philosophy) illustrated by (1) considerations and (2) experiments i: The Theoretical Part*, 1666.\(^3\)
   b. Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, 1717

B. Week 2
   1. Required
   2. Secondary

II • Logic and Symbols (2 weeks)

--- In which we complement the study of mechanism with a parallel introduction to the emergence of our contemporary understanding of logic, rationality, and reason—from its emergence as an explicitly theorized subject matter in the mid-19th century (with Peirce and Boole) up to the development of computation. As we will see, information and computational technologies are deeply based on this tradition, including contemporary understanding of symbols, meaning, communication, etc.

A. Required
   2. Lecture notes on Frege, logic, and the foundations of mathematics
   3. Icons, indices, and signs—Charles Saunders Pierce
      b. Wikipedia: “Semiotic elements and classes of signs”\(^5\)

B. Secondary
   2. George Boole and the Laws of Thought

---

\(^3\) [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfbits/boylefq1.pdf](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfbits/boylefq1.pdf)

\(^4\) [http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/peirce-semiotics](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/peirce-semiotics)

III • Sociology of Knowledge, and Science & Technology Studies (4 weeks)

— In which we move forward to the middle of the 20th century, to the rise of Science and Technology Studies (STS), which emerged in turn out of the sociology of knowledge. STS came into existence as an interdisciplinary blend of sociology, anthropology, history, and (some) philosophy—though it has increasingly coalesced into disciplinary form in its own right, with its own departments and degrees (e.g., at MIT, Cornell, and Simon Fraser). Even a full course introducing STS would inevitably cover only highlights; to include it in a section of this course will inevitably convey merely a taste of its concerns. Note: only required readings are listed here; guides to additional literature can be found in many places, including a syllabus developed by Michael Lynch at Cornell, which will be provided as a resource for additional reading.

A. Background

3. Arendt: “The ‘Vita Activa’ and the Modern Age

B. Classics

2. Ihde: “A Phenomenology of Technics”

C. STS


IV • Computing and Information (3–5 weeks)

— In which, using the 3 very different perspectives and approaches surveyed in Parts I–III, we turn to the development of the computer and contemporary theories of information and communication. We will trace their intellectual heritage in both mechanistic and rationalistic forms of explanation stemming from the 17th century and onwards, examine their presence in current conceptions of digital, computational, and information technologies.
A. History

B. Cog sci and semantics—an application to the human condition

C. Philosophy
1. Floridi, “The Philosophy of Information” (choose which version)

D. Contemporary Discussion
4. Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*,
5. Bill Joy "Why the Future Doesn’t Need Us"

V • Rethinking the world (2 weeks)
— If time permits, we may conclude the exploration by looking forward—towards new conceptions of the world itself, borne out of strenuous critiques of the classical epistemological and ontological models on which traditional conceptions of science and technology were based. A growing number of writers are proposing to move past critique in order to sketch alternative conceptions of the world and our place within it. The following reading list enumerates a few of the most prominent recent books. Rather than expect any given student to read more than one of the following, it is expected instead that students will be divided into small groups, each of which is assigned to read one of the following books, and to present a synopsis and critique to the rest of the class, as part of a general discussion.


http://codev2.cc/


3. Brian Cantwell Smith, The Origin of Objects, MIT Press, 1996. The following critique and response address the book; they may be found to be a simpler introduction to its main themes:


7. Depending on student interest and further investigation, some of the literature in the so-called “speculative realism” tradition may also be explored.