

PHIL 307i
Philosophy of Science, Nature, and Technology
MWF 12 – 12:50, ASA 0118C
Instructor: John Hartmann
Fall 2005

Course Webpage:

<http://mypage.siu.edu/hartmajr> -- click on link to PHIL 307i

John's Contact Information:

e-mail: hartmajr@siu.edu

office: Faner 3024

office hours: M 1 – 3pm; W 3 – 4:30pm, and by appointment

SIU's bland course description:

To provide an understanding of the major humanistic critiques of science, technology, and nature.

<http://www.siu.edu/~corecurr/phil307i.html>

Detailed Course Description for this Class:

This course will examine certain major issues and themes in contemporary approaches to philosophy of science and philosophy of technology, and the course will be divided into two parts. The first part of the course is devoted to contemporary trends in philosophy of science as exemplified by the work of Thomas Kuhn and Bruno Latour. In this part of the course, we will see how contemporary philosophy of science integrates certain 'post-modern' motifs in pursuing what one might call a constructivist approach to understanding science and scientific practice. The second, and longer, part of the course is devoted to recent works in philosophy of technology. In this part of the course, we will examine several key ideas regarding the nature of technology and the possibilities for an ethical relationship to technology. We will also examine certain emerging technologies in light of these approaches.

Course texts:

Hickman, Larry. *Philosophical Tools for Technological Culture: Putting Pragmatism to Work.*

[Indiana UP, 2001. ISBN 0253214440. PB \$19.95]

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.*

[U Chicago Press, 1996. ISBN 0226458083. PB \$13.00]

Latour, Bruno. *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society.*

[Harvard UP, 1990. ISBN 0674792912. PB \$21.95]

Verbeek, Peter-Paul. *What Things Do.* (available at Kopies & More)

There will also be a set of required readings (including Heidegger) handed out in class.

Supplementary materials, including additional articles by assigned authors and links to useful secondary material, will be made available at the course website.

You are expected to come to class each day with the assigned materials we are discussing.

Grading Information:

Grading breakdown:

Random Attendance / Quizzes – 20%

Two shorter papers (5-6 pp) – 1st paper is worth 20%, 2nd is worth 25%

Final paper (8-10 pages) – 35%

There will be three papers assigned for this class.

The first paper (5-6 pp) will be an exegetical paper on an assigned topic. It will count for 20% of the final grade for the class, and is due Friday, October 7th at the beginning of class.

The second paper (5-6 pp) will involve exegesis and evaluation, and will also be on an assigned topic. It will count for 25% of the final grade for the class, and is due Friday, November 4th at the beginning of class.

There is also a final paper. The paper will be 8-10 pages in length, will deal in some way with the texts assigned during the semester, and will be on a topic of the student's choosing. The student will have to make use of secondary sources, such as refereed articles or books, as well as the primary texts in writing the paper. The final paper will count for 35% of the final grade, and it is due *Wednesday, December 14th by 3pm* in the Philosophy Department Main Office (Faner 3065). No late papers will be accepted for the final.

- If you feel uncomfortable with your writing abilities, or if you want some help in the construction of your papers, please consider contacting the Writing Center or going to their website [<http://www.siu.edu/~write>]. They have a slew of handouts available on-line to aid you in the writing process.
- Late papers will be assessed half a letter grade (A → A-, B- → C+) penalty for each day that they are late, not including weekends. (This does not include the final – again, no late final papers will be accepted.) Credible excuses for late papers include documented medical issues and emergency situations. *Talk to me immediately if something happens that prevents you from completing your work in a timely manner, or from attending class for an extended period of time.* I understand that real life sometimes gets in the way – don't hesitate to talk to me if something comes up.
- Also, *I do not accept papers via e-mail submission.* You must give me a cleanly printed (double spaced, 12 point font, etc.) copy of your paper if you wish to receive credit.

The final 20% of your grade comes from random reading quizzes.

See the section on attendance for more details regarding the mechanism for these reading quizzes.

Attendance Policy

I will take random attendance during the semester via reading quizzes. These quizzes will ask a very basic question regarding the assigned reading for the day. If you get the question right, you get full credit for the quiz. If you don't get the question right, but you are still present in class, you get 2/3 credit.

Beyond the existence of these quizzes, and because of the conceptual difficulty of some of the ideas presented in this course, it should go without saying that consistent attendance will dramatically increase your chances of success in this class.

Plagiarism

I will not tolerate plagiarism in any form. This includes 'borrowing' from websites, neglecting to cite sources, having others write your paper for you, and so forth. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail for the semester, and you may be referred to the College for further sanctions. This is a non-negotiable policy.

See the section on Academic Honesty in the Student Conduct Code for more details regarding plagiarism.

Classroom Disruptions

I expect all students to come to class prepared to think and work. Ringing cell phones and other disturbances do not aid in the cultivation of a thoughtful classroom. Thus, you must turn off your cell phone when you come to class.

Other behaviors such as having conversations during class, or reading the newspaper, are disrespectful to me and to your fellow classmates. I will ask you to leave the classroom if I feel your disruptiveness is a detriment to the learning process.

Students with Special Needs / ADA Accommodation

Students who are part of DSS or Achieve are encouraged to tell me (privately or via e-mail) *as soon as possible* of their status and particular situation. I will handle each case individually and in light of the guidance from DSS or Achieve. However, I will not accept non-documented claims, nor will I consider claims that suddenly emerge 'right when assignments are due.' It is incumbent upon the student to inform me of any special needs at the beginning of the semester.

Detailed Reading Schedule for PHIL 307i (subject to revision – check website regularly)

Texts:

QCT, MA	Heidegger, Martin. "The Question Concerning Technology," "Memorial Address," (handed out)
PTTC	Hickman, Larry. <i>Philosophical Tools for Technological Culture: Putting Pragmatism to Work</i> . [Indiana UP, 2001. ISBN 0253214440. PB \$19.95]
SSR	Kuhn, Thomas. <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i> . [U Chicago Press, 1996. ISBN 0226458083. PB \$13.00]
SIA	Latour, Bruno. <i>Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society</i> . [Harvard UP, 1990. ISBN 0674792912. PB \$21.95]
Verbeek	Verbeek, Peter-Paul. <i>What Things Do</i> . (available at Kopies & More)

Reading Schedule:

Week 1 (8/22 – 8/26) – Intro to course (M); Popper & Kuhn intro (1-9) (W); SSR ch 2 (10-22) (F)

Week 2 (8/29 – 9/2) – SSR, ch 4 (35-42) (M); ch 5 (43-51) (W); ch 6 (52-65) (F)

Week 3 (9/5 – 9/9) – no class Monday (Labor Day); SSR, ch 9 (92-110) (W); ch 10 (111-135) (F)

Week 4 (9/12 – 9/16) – SSR, ch 12 (144-159) (M); SIA, intro (1-21) (W); begin ch 1 (21-63) (F)

Week 5 (9/19 – 9/23) – SIA, finish ch 1 (21-63) (M); ch 2 (63-103) (WF)

Week 6 (9/23 – 9/30) – SIA, ch 3 (103-145) (MW); Latour, "Why has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern." (handout) (F)

Week 7 (10/3 – 10/7) – intro to phenomenology and Heidegger – no reading (M); begin QCT (WF) and also read Verbeek ch 2 for reference; **first paper due 10/7 in class**

Week 8 (10/10 – 10/17) – finish QCT (MW); discussion of Verbeek, ch 2 (on Heidegger) (F)

Week 9 (10/24 – 10/28) – MA (M); Borgmann's neo-Heideggerianism [Verbeek, ch 6 (173-199)] (WF)

Week 10 (10/31 – 11/4) – Ihde's postphenomenology: read Verbeek, ch 3 (MW) and ch 4 (WF); **second paper due 11/4 in class**

Week 11 (11/7 – 11/11) – Ihde, "Prognostic Predicaments" (handout) (M); return to Latour [Verbeek, ch 5 (147-172)], (WF)

Week 12 (11/14 – 11/18) – Verbeek's 'material aesthetics' [Verbeek, ch 7 (203-236)], (MW); introduction to John Dewey (readings TBA) (F)

[Week 13 (11/21 – 11/25) – Thanksgiving Break; no classes]

Week 14 (11/28 – 12/2) – Hickman's pragmatism: PTTC, ch 1 (8-44) (MW); ch 2 (44-64) (F)

Week 15 (12/5 – 12/9) – PTTC, ch 5 (100-115) (M); ch 8 (147-156) (W); visit from Hickman (F)?

Week 16 (12/12 – 12/16) – Finals Week; **final paper due 12/14 by 3pm in Faner 3065**