



## COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Course Unit Title	Code
<b>HUMANS, SOCIETY AND TECHNOLOGY</b>	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s)
<b>Coordinator:</b> j. assist. Augustė Dementavičienė <b>Other(s):</b> prof. dr. Rolandas Meškys, assist. dr. Linas Jokubaitis, j. assist. Aivaras Žukauskas	Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius university, Vokiečių str. 10, LT-01130, Vilnius, tel. +370 52514130, e-mail: tspimi@tspmi.vu.lt

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	Course unit delivery period	Language (s) of instruction
Face-to-face	5 (autumn) semester	English

Requirements for students	
<b>Pre-requisites:</b> -	<b>Co-requisites (if any):</b> -

Number of credits allocated	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	130	48	82

Purpose of the course unit: programme competences to be developed		
This course encourages students' critical reflection on technology, its impact, and the relationship ethics has to technology and society. Upon the completion of the course students will: (1) gain a philosophical understanding of the role of technology in human life; (2) relate their own particular lived experiences to universal philosophical concepts that illuminate the human relationship to technology; (3) acquire skills of critical reading and evaluation of challenging philosophical texts; (4) gain abilities in nuancing and articulating justifications for their own views.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be able to explain major philosophical theories of technology, to identify their premises/assumptions and develop critical responses to them.	Problem oriented lectures, seminars (group discussions, critical analysis of texts, comparative assessment and systematic analysis of practical issues, practical exercises), individual studies (search for information, critical literature studies and the analysis of theoretical and practical problems), preparation and delivery of a diary/reflection essay, participating in the workshop.	Seminar discussions, media case study, diary/self-reflection essay, imagination laboratory, final project (critical article review), workshop.
Students will gain a critical perspective on the nature and significance of technology in human life.		
Students will be able to apply the artistic approach to their thinking, which will enable different sense-making and new connections otherwise not articulated.	Seminars, workshop, and imagination laboratory task.	
Students will be able to debate the prospect of limits on technology and discuss considerations surrounding technological	Problem oriented lectures, seminars (group discussions, critical analysis of texts, comparative assessment and	

innovation in a global society based on contemporary scholarly analyses.	systematic analysis of practical issues, practical exercises), individual studies (search for information, critical literature studies and the analysis of theoretical and practical problems), preparation and delivery of a diary/reflection essay, participating in the workshop.	
Students will be equipped to examine the proposition of looking at technology through ethical lenses and ontological impacts of technology on human existence.		
Students will be able to conduct evidence-based assessments and provide policy recommendations of the impact of technological innovation on society and politics.		
Students will be able to communicate orally and in written by unambiguously and reasonably conveying owns well-grounded ideas, arguments and conclusions in an international context.	Seminars (group discussions, critical analysis of texts, comparative assessment and systematic analysis of practical issues, practical exercises), individual studies (search for information, critical literature studies and the analysis of theoretical and practical problems), preparation and delivery of different assignments through the semester.	
Students will be able to actively and productively participate and collaborate in cross-cultural team activities.	Seminars (group discussions, practical exercises), workshop activities.	Seminar discussions, workshop.
Students will be able to critically reflect and evaluate the experience of using different technological instruments, as well as impact of this usage in different situations.	Practical workshop	Workshop

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study: hours and assignments	
	Lectures	Consultations	Seminars	Practical sessions	Laboratory activities	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
<b>I part. Foundations of Contemporary Thinking on Technology</b> Introductory lecture: Introducing the course requirements and the course programme; What is technology? Artificial/natural distinction. What does it mean to think about tools? How are we influenced by technology? How does ethics relate to technology? Basic theoretical foundations of technology ethics.	2		2				4	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion based on:</b> What is technology? why technology raises the question of ethics? Reading and reflecting given texts, preparation for participating in the discussion, brainstorming practical cases and rising questions. - Kaplan, D.M. (2004). Introduction. In D.M. Kaplan (Ed.), Readings in the philosophy of technology (xiii-xv). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

									- Budinger, T.F., & Budinger, M.D. (2006). Ethics of emerging technologies: Scientific facts and moral challenges. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons. L. Floriddi Why Information Matters?
Question of Technology: M. Heidegger: technology as a tool, „enframing“; Ernst Junger - The Worker: Dominion and Form; str. Total Mobilization Friedrich Georg Jünger - kn. The Failure of Technology: Perfection Without Purpose	2		2				4	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion based on:</b> - Martin Heidegger - The Question Concerning Technology
Society, Politics and Technology. Question of responsibility. Do we control technology or does it control us? Is technology part of nature or an instrument to human ends? How can we respond critically to the use and development of technology?	2		2				4	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion based on:</b> - Hans Jonas - Technology and Responsibility, Reflections on the New Task of Ethic. Jonas, Hans. <i>The imperative of responsibility: In search of an ethics for the technological age.</i> University of Chicago press, 1985. - Ellul, Jacques, John Wilkinson, and Robert King Merton. <i>The technological society.</i> Vol. 303. New York: Vintage books, 1964.
Technology and depoliticizations. Is our technologically enhanced environment an expression of something fundamentally human, or is it changing who and what we are? Are the effects of technology good, bad, or neutral? and to what extent can we control our technological world?	2		2				4	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion based on:</b> - Carl Schmitt - str. The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations; The Leviathan in the state theory of Thomas Hobbes: meaning and failure of a political symbol
<b>II Part. Contemporary Philosophy of Technology</b> W. Benjamin: New training of the senses, technical production, loss of aura “. McLuhan: direct interface with a human body, „extension“ of its senses	2		2				4	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion based on:</b> - Neil Postman - Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology
Critical reflections on modern philosophy of technology. Feenberg: mutual influence of society versus technology	2						2	5	<b>Media case analysis assignment:</b> Students must choose one media object: film, TV series, advertisement i.e. "Black Mirror". Analyse it and deconstruct the understanding of



VR workshops – is VR truly the „ultimate empathy machine“?			4				4	3	<b>Preparation for practical workshop:</b> „Being together“ in virtuality – can the social/political sphere be virtual? (Home After War ( <a href="https://www.homeafterwar.net/">https://www.homeafterwar.net/</a> ) Virtually attending a protest, solving problems embodied in the situation of war and else demanding situations.
„Being together“ in virtuality – can the social/political sphere be virtual? The Problem of Public Space in the Cyberspace			2				2	3	<b>Diary/reflection essay task:</b> using the phenomenological approach students must write the everyday reflections of being/living in the digitalized, technological world. We are encouraging students to see the technological surroundings and try to reflect what kind of the influence does it have.
Digital citizenship: how we act in the cyberspace			2				2	5	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion:</b> - Ribble, MS., & Bailey, G.D. (2005). Developing ethical direction. Learning & Leading with Technology, 32(7), 36-39. - Villano, M. (2008). Digital citizenship: Text unto others as you would have them text unto you. T.H.E. Journal, 35(9), 47-51. - Winner (2005). Technological euphoria and contemporary citizenship. - Isin, Engin, and Evelyn Ruppert (2020). Being digital citizens. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
The New „Luddites“ – protesting the techno transformation of society			2				2	3	<b>Preparation for seminar discussion:</b> the Antivaccination movement and how it is mediated through Facebook.
Final Project								14	
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>32</b>				<b>48</b>	<b>82</b>	

Assessment strategy	Weight, percentage	Assessment period	Assessment criteria
Seminar discussions	30	During semester	0 p. - student did not participated, or did not reached the minimal requirements, showed zero efforts to participate in the seminars. 1,5 p. - all seminars attended, minimal interaction, all seminar tasks are done quite poorly. 2 p. - all or mostly all seminars attended, student participates actively in the seminars, but not all of them or not very actively but often.

			<p>Tasks are done quite analytically; student shows quite good critical thinking skills.</p> <p>3 p. - student attended all seminars, very actively participates in the discussions, shared thoughts and tasks are done in very analytical manner. Student skills of critical thinking are demonstrated in the discussions.</p>
Media case study	10	During semester	<p>0 p. - Case study is not done or was done very poorly and did not reached the minimal requirements, showed zero efforts to understand the different approach.</p> <p>0,5 p. - student done the task but quite poorly, do not show deep understanding of philosophical ideas, the case analyses is shallow, not very critically approached. There almost no independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>0,75 p. - student done the task quite good, case study let as see the understanding of philosophical ideas, the case analysis might be not shallow, but not very critically approached. There are some independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>1 p. - student done the task very good, case study let as see the understanding of philosophical ideas, the case analysis is deep and critically approached. There are a lot of independent, original interpretations.</p>
Diary/self-reflection essay	10	During semester	<p>0 p. - Essay is not written or written very poorly and do not reach any minimal requirements.</p> <p>0,5 p. - student done the task but quite poorly, do not show the efforts and skills for reflexive approach, the methodology is used but not very critically approached. There almost no independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>0,75 p. - student done the task but quite good, demonstrates efforts and skills for reflexive approach, the methodology is used but not very critically approached. There are some independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>1 p. - student done the task well, shows a lot of efforts and skills for reflexive approach, the methodology is used and critically approached. There are a lot of independent, original interpretations.</p>
Imagination laboratory	10	During semester	<p>0 p. - student did not participated, or did not reached the minimal requirements, showed zero efforts to understand the different approach.</p> <p>0,5 p. - student done the task but quite poorly, do not show the efforts to think differently, from more artistic perspective, the methodology is used but not very critically approached. There almost no independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>0,75 p. - student done the task but quite good, demonstrates efforts to think differently, from more artistic perspective, the methodology is used but not very critically approached. There are some independent, original interpretations.</p> <p>1 p. - student done the task well, shows a lot of efforts to think differently, from more artistic perspective, the methodology is used and critically approached. There are a lot of independent, original interpretations.</p>
Workshop	20	During semester	<p>0 p. - students did not participate or participated without preparation and almost did not shared any ideas during the workshop.</p> <p>1 p. - student participated in the workshop, but preparation was not highly active and there was not a lot of ideas shared during the workshop. Might not all the tasks be done during the practical event. There were almost no independent, original interpretations shared in the final part of the workshop.</p>

			<p>1,5 p. - student participated in the workshop, preparation was highly active and there were quite some ideas shared during the workshop All the tasks was done during the practical event. There were a little bit independent, original interpretations shared in the final part of the workshop.</p> <p>2 p. - student participated in the workshop, preparation was highly active and there were a lot of ideas shared during the workshop All the tasks was done during the practical event. There were a lot of independent, original interpretations shared in the final part of the workshop.</p>
Final Project (critical article review)	20	At the end of the semester	<p>0 p. - the review is not written or is written very poorly, no understanding of the main ideas is shown.</p> <p>1 p. - student review demonstrates that the article was read and understood but the is a lack of critical and original approach. The style is poor. Student more sum ups the ideas but do not show the capability to analyze critically.</p> <p>1,5 p. - student review demonstrates that the article was read and understood, student demonstrates critical but not very original approach. The style is normal. Student sum ups the ideas well and shows the capability to analyze critically.</p> <p>2 p. - student review demonstrates that the article was read and very well understood, student demonstrates critical and original approach. The style is good. Student sum ups the ideas well and shows the capability to analyze critically.</p>

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of periodical or volume of publication	Publishing place and house or web link
<b>Compulsory reading</b>				
Jacques Ellul	1964	The Technological Society		New York: Alfred Knopf
Martin Heidegger	1977	"The Question Concerning Technology," in Basic Writings		New York: Harper & Row,
Isin, Engin, and Evelyn Ruppert	2020	Being digital citizens		Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
Ribble, MS., & Bailey, G.D.	2005	Developing ethical direction.	Learning & Leading with Technology, 32(7)	
Villano, M.	2008	Digital citizenship: Text unto others as you would have them text unto you	T.H.E. Journal, 35(9)	
Winner	2005	Technological euphoria and contemporary citizenship		
Jonas, Hans	1973	Technology and responsibility: Reflections on the new tasks of ethics	<i>Social Research</i>	
Jonas, Hans	1985	<i>The imperative of responsibility: In search of an ethics for the technological age.</i>		University of Chicago press
Kaplan, David M., ed.	2009	<i>Readings in the Philosophy of Technology</i>		Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
Budinger, T.F., & Budinger, M.D.	2006	Ethics of emerging technologies: Scientific facts and moral challenges		Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons.

Postman, Neil	2011	<i>Technopoly: The surrender of culture to technology</i>		Vintage,
Verbeek, Peter-Paul	2011	<i>Moralizing technology: Understanding and designing the morality of things</i>		University of Chicago Press
Tora Holmberg Malin Ideland, June	2016	Imagination laboratory: making sense of bio-objects in contemporary genetic art: Imagination laboratory	Sociological Review 64(3)	
Haraway, Donna.		“A Cyborg Manifesto” <i>Cultural Theory: An Anthology</i>		
Latour, Bruno	2004	<i>Politics of nature</i>		Harvard University Press
Braidotti, Rosi	2019	<i>Posthuman knowledge.</i>		Cambridge: Polity Press
Barad, Karen	2003	Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter	<i>Signs: Journal of women in culture and society</i> 28.3	
Dupré, John	2012	Processes of life: Essays in the philosophy of biology		Oxford University Press
<b>Recommended reading</b>				
Ide, Don	1990	Technology and the Lifeworld: From Garden to Earth		Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
Sarah Franklin	2005	Stem Cells R Us: Emerging Forms of Life and the Global Biological n Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems		Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell
James Hughes	2010	Contradictions from the Enlightenment Roots of Transhumanism	Journal of Medicine & Philosophy 35	
Jussi Parikka	2012	Media Theory and the New Materialism,” in What is Media Archaeology?		Cambridge: Polity
Bernard Stiegler	1998	Technics and Time 1		Stanford, Stanford University Press
Ellen Ullman	2012	Close to the Machine: On Technophilia and its Discontents		New York: Farar, Strauss & Giroux
Slavoj Zizek	2009	Of Cells and Selves,” in The Zizek Reader		Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell
Jürgen Habermas	2001	“An Argument against Human Cloning,” in The Post National Constellation: Political Essays		Cambridge, MA: MIT Press