

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

HIST*1250 Science and Technology in a Global Context

Fall 2026

Department of History

Credit Weight: 0.5

1. Course Description

1.1 Calendar Description

This course is an introduction to the culturally specific ways in which science and technology have developed historically from the ancient period through the twenty-first century. Emphasis will be placed on the patterns in which scientific knowledge and practices have traveled and been constructed across cultures and the interconnected but distinct histories of science and technology.

Restrictions: ASCI*1000

1.2 Course Description

Science and technology are two of the most powerful cultural forces in human history. This course introduces students to the historical development of science and technology in a global context, from the late ancient period to the late 20th century. Our focus will be on the purposes, patterns, and problems of science and technology, and the ways in which knowledge, practices, and objects have been used to understand, control, and exploit nature. We will also explore how scientific and technological developments are contingent upon diverse social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts, as well as how they circulate within and between societies over time.

2. Instructional Support

2.1 Course Instructor

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Available at the University of Guelph bookstore and the University of Guelph Campus Co-Op. There is also a Kindle Edition.
Price: \$46.99

4. Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Appreciate the contributions of science and technology to world history.
2. Recognize that specific sciences and technologies are dependent on their social, cultural, and historical context and cannot be understood outside of them.
3. Recognize the ways in which knowledge and skills have travelled and been constructed across cultures.
4. Engage with the central issues, research approaches, and practices of history as a discipline.
5. Develop skills in critical reading, writing, and thinking.
6. Develop skills in library research and critical evaluation of information.

4.2 B.Eng. Graduate Attribute Learning Outcomes

If you are taking this course as a part of your requirements for the B.Eng. program, the outcomes above support and are consistent with the following Graduate Attributes (GA) as outlined by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB).

Graduate Attributes (GA):

GA 7: Communication skills: An ability to communicate complex engineering concepts within the profession and with society at large. Such ability includes reading, writing, speaking and listening, and the ability to comprehend and write effective reports and design documentation, and to give and effectively respond to clear instructions.

GA 9: Impact of engineering on society and the environment: An ability to analyze social and environmental aspects of engineering activities. Such ability includes an understanding of the interactions that engineering has with the economic, social, health, safety, legal, and cultural aspects of society, the uncertainties in the prediction of such interactions; and the concepts of sustainable design and development and environmental stewardship.

5. Method of Evaluation:

5.1 Assignment due dates and values

Assessment	Value	Date Due
Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	20%	October 9, 2026, by 5:00pm
Research Essay	30%	November 20, 2026, by 11:59pm
Quizzes	20% (Best 6 grades count)	Quiz #1 – Sep 19 Quiz #2 – Sep 26 Quiz #3 – Oct 3 Quiz #4 – Oct 17 Quiz #5 – Oct 24 Quiz #6 – Oct 31 Quiz #7 – Nov 7 Quiz #8 – Nov 14
Final Exam	30%	December exam period

5.2 Assignment Descriptions

Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (20%):

The Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography should **outline the essay topic** chosen from a list provided in the assignment instructions. It should discuss your starting thesis, the structure of your argument, and research process. The Annotated Bibliography should include **6 (six) scholarly sources (no websites)**, with a short description of the source and its importance to your argument. The Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography must be submitted in a **Microsoft Word document**. The Research Essay will not be graded without prior submission of the Proposal and Annotated Bibliography. See the assignment instructions for more details.

Research Essay (30%):

The Research Essay **must be 1800-2000 words** in length, double spaced, 12pt font, and be based on your Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography. The

word count does not include the footnotes and bibliography. The Essay must be submitted in a **Microsoft Word document**. The Essay must follow the **Chicago style citation method**. See the assignment instructions for more details.

Quizzes (20%):

Quizzes will be done online, through the Quiz tab on CourseLink. **You will be given 8 online multiple-choice quizzes of 10 questions each. Quizzes will test your knowledge and understanding of lectures and readings.** You will be given a time limit of 30 minutes to do each quiz, which will go live on Thursday nights at 9pm. You will have 48 hours to complete the quiz (each quiz closes Saturdays at 9pm). The **best 6 quiz grades** will be used to calculate your final grade. **Because of this built-in flexibility (students have 2 “throwaway” quizzes), academic accommodation will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.**

Final Exam (30%):

The Final Exam will be **cumulative** and take place **in person** during the December exam period. More details will be announced in class.

5.3 Late Assignments

Assignments must be submitted by their due dates. Students in need of accommodation must contact the professor before the deadline. **Any late assignments that have not received prior accommodation will lose 2% per day (including weekends).** Assignments over 1 week (7 days) late will not be accepted.

5.4 Turnitin

Turnitin will be used and integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool. It will detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

6. Teaching and Learning Activities

6.1 Class Preparation

Our class time will be devoted to lectures, class discussions, and occasionally, films. The readings are designed to complement the lectures. Keeping up with assigned readings will be important to your success in this course, but it will not

replace the lecture content. **The exam will be predominantly based on lecture content, so I strongly encourage you to attend lectures, take detailed notes, and ask questions for clarification.**

6.2 Course Schedule and Lecture Topics

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1		
Sep 10	Introduction and Importance of History	Read: Course Outline and Assignment Instructions
Week 2		
Sep 15	Early Civilizations to Ancient Greece	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Introduction & Chap. 4
Sep 17	Ancient Greece and Rome	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 5
Due	Quiz #1 (on Weeks 1 & 2) due by September 19 at 9:00pm	
Week 3		
Sep 22	The Islamic Renaissance	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 6
Sep 24	Science and Culture in Song Dynasty China	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap 7
Due	Quiz #2 (on Week 3) due by September 26 at 9:00pm	

Week 4		
Sep 29	Library Research Workshop	Read: See CourseLink for materials
Oct 1	The “New” World	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap 9
Due	Quiz #3 (on Week 4) due by October 3 at 9:00pm	
Week 5		
Oct 6	The European Renaissance	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 11
Oct 8	A Revolution in Science?	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 13
Due	Essay Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, due October 9, 2026, by 5:00 pm.	
Week 6		
Oct 13	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	No readings
Oct 15	Military Revolution	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 10
Due	Quiz #4 (on Week 5) due by October 17 at 9:00pm	

Week 7		
Oct 20	Science and Empire	No readings
Oct 22	Industrialization, Science, and the State	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 14 & 15
Due	Quiz #5 (on Weeks 6 & 7) due by October 24 at 9:00pm	
Week 8		

Oct 27	Resisting AI: Essay Writing Workshop	No readings
Oct 29	From Darwin to Hitler: Science, Race, and Ideology	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 16
Due	Quiz #6 (on Week 8) due by October 31 at 9:00pm	
Week 9		
Nov 3	Science and Technology in Total War	No readings
Nov 5	Science and Technology in Total War	No readings
Due	Quiz #7 (on Week 9) due by November 7 at 9:00pm	

Week 10		
Nov 10	Weapons of Mass Destruction	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 19
Nov 12	Mass Consumption	Read: McClellan & Dorn, Chap. 17
Due	Quiz #8 (on Week 10) due by November 14 at 9:00pm	
Week 11		
Nov 17	Cities, Infrastructure, and Pollution	No readings
Nov 19	Wrap Up	No readings
Due	Research Essay due November 20, 2026, by 11:59pm	
Week 12		
Nov 24	Wrap Up	No readings
Nov 26	Wrap Up	No readings
Week 13		

Dec 1	Exam Review	No readings
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7. University Statements

Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Artificial Intelligence Systems and ChatGPT

Artificial intelligence (AI) systems are powerful tools that promise to revolutionize research, teaching and learning. In all three areas and in the future of work, there exist creative and forward-thinking opportunities for the use of AI. Many University of Guelph faculty, instructors, staff and students are currently looking at ethical uses of AI, including research through U of G's [Centre for Advancing Responsible and Ethical Artificial Intelligence \(CARE-AI\)](#).

At the same time, the development of increasingly sophisticated AI systems such as ChatGPT poses potential threats to academic integrity. Unauthorized student use of AI systems undermines student learning, the achievement of learning outcomes and violates the University's academic misconduct policies.

The University is committed to ensuring that the use of AI in teaching and learning complies with existing policies and regulations that govern academic and scholarly integrity. We continue to engage the University community, including students, as we work to refine academic integrity policies and their intersection with AI tools. We affirm the following:

1. Students' work must reflect their unique intellectual capacity and demonstrate the application of critical thinking and problem solving. Unauthorized use of AI to complete assessments violates the fundamental intellectual purposes of the University and does not demonstrate student achievement of course learning outcomes.
2. Submission of materials completed by AI, without permission of the instructor, constitutes an offence under the University's academic misconduct policies, either as a form of plagiarism or the use of unauthorized aids.
3. Acceptable use of AI should be determined by the course instructor and may vary across disciplines, programs and types of assessments. In setting out course requirements and assessment criteria, the instructor should specify allowable uses of AI, if any, through the course outline and/or the learning management system (e.g., CourseLink). Clarity about the acceptable use of AI is critical for students and instructors. Students are responsible for appropriately referencing how and to what extent they have used AI in assessments in keeping with University and course requirements.

Instructions about the acceptable use of AI are provided in the assignment details available on CourseLink.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in

November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the [Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses](#).

Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](#). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](#) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](#). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).