



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

Science Studies Program

Graduate Student Handbook

Science Studies Program
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2008-2009

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Program Overview

The Science Studies Program (SSP) at UCSD was established in 1989. At present, the Program has twenty-one core faculty members and forty-seven graduate students from the Program's 'home' departments of communication, history, philosophy, and sociology. Students and faculty in the Program are seeking a deeper understanding of scientific knowledge and engineering technique, by means of studies - theoretically structured and empirically based - of the practice of science and engineering, past and present. The Program offers students an opportunity to incorporate perspectives developed within the communication, history, sociology, and philosophy of science and technology, while receiving a thorough training at the professional level in one of the home disciplines.

The heart of the program lies in its interdisciplinary seminars, both the Introduction to Science Studies and the Core (topical) seminars. Students also attend a lively weekly colloquium series, and participate in a field internship during their first or second year in the program.

Students wishing to enter the Program must apply to one of the four participating departments --Communication, History, Philosophy, or Sociology, but they follow a distinctive course of study in each. The required seminars for incoming SSP students from all the fields are often co-taught, and present readings from the different disciplines.

Science Studies students spend much of their time in the first two years of graduate study taking the required courses for SSP. But after this point, they spend more time in their home departments developing expertise in their disciplines to prepare for their qualifying exams. SSP students are nonetheless encouraged to select dissertation topics that reflect the program's cross-disciplinary approach. The Ph.D. degree is awarded in "Communication (Science Studies)", "History (Science Studies)", "Philosophy (Science Studies)", or "Sociology (Science Studies)".

Affiliated departments

Communication Department

At UCSD, the SSP-Communication specialty emphasizes the role of various communication technologies - from language to maps to television to computer networks - in mediating human experience and shaping the social and material environment. The curriculum in Communication is organized into three fields: Communication as a Social Force, Communication and Culture, and Communication and Human Information Processing. Science and Technology Studies in Communication considers how human beings, individually or institutionally, use communication systems to make sense of the world, define and design material artifacts (or the environment itself), or respond to the imposition of categories or discourse on people and things.

History Department

The Department of History offers graduate work leading to both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees with a concentration Science Studies. The faculty in History associated with the Science Studies Program has expertise in physical science, earth science, social science, and medicine in a variety of historical periods and places. The curriculum in History is divided into different fields. These include ancient history, East Asian history, European history, history of science, Judaic Studies, Latin American history, Middle Eastern history, and United States history. SSP-History students are expected to specialize in one or more of these areas of historical research as a minor field.

Philosophy Department

The Department of Philosophy offers programs leading to a Ph.D. The graduate program is designed to enable the student to obtain an understanding of divergent philosophical traditions and to develop as a philosopher in his or her own right. To this end, the department offers courses and seminars in the history of philosophy and in traditional and contemporary philosophical issues. The faculty in Philosophy affiliated with the Science Studies Program is particularly strong in the philosophy of physics, philosophy of cognition, and ethics of science and technology.

Sociology Department

The graduate program in Sociology offers a Ph.D. in Sociology with a specialization in Science Studies. The general curriculum in Sociology is organized around a set of four specializations: comparative and historical sociology, the sociology of culture, sociology of inequalities, and the sociology of science, technology, and medicine (STM). The students in SSP-Sociology must take classes outside the STM specialty but take a majority of their courses in STM and SSP. The Science Studies faculty in Sociology is particularly interested in the sociology of scientific knowledge, sociology of medicine, sociology of the social sciences, sociology of mental health, and politics and social policy in science, technology, and medicine

coursework & degree requirements

The academic year at UCSD runs from mid-September to mid-June. Formal teaching is given in three “quarters,” each ten weeks in length. The majority of the required classes run for only one quarter, but research seminars can be scheduled for two quarters, and the Science Studies Colloquium Series (given for credit as one class each year) runs through the academic calendar year.

Most graduate courses in Science Studies take the form of small group seminars or independent study courses under the guidance of a faculty member. Students read extensively and prepare for discussion with the faculty. Most courses require term papers or essays, which may entail substantial reading and research. Not uncommonly, such papers become the basis for chapters of the student’s dissertation or for qualifying exam or field papers. Many are turned into articles that are later submitted for publication.

Required courses in Science Studies (just like required departmental classes) must be taken for a letter grade (except the Colloquium Series, which is taken for a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade.) Students are normally expected to take three courses per quarter. In addition to those taken for credit, students may audit further courses (i.e. participate without being examined or graded).

Each department affiliated with the Science Studies Program has a graduate advisor to aid the student in designing a plan of study to meet requirements for the degree. Before the beginning of each quarter, and especially before the fall quarter, a student is required to have all course choices approved by their home department faculty advisor.

The requirements for Science Studies students from each department are detailed on the following pages.

Required Courses for the Science Studies Program

INTRODUCTION TO SCIENCE STUDIES: PART I

COGR 225A, HIGR 238, PHIL 209A, SOC 255A

Fall 2008

Instructor: Robert Westman

Tuesday, 9:30am-12:20pm, HSS 3027

Study and discussion of classic themes and texts in history of science, sociology of science, and philosophy of science, and of work that attempts to develop an interdisciplinary science studies approach.

Prerequisite: Enrollment in Science Studies Program or consent of instructor.

INTRODUCTION TO SCIENCE STUDIES: PART II

(formerly Advanced Approaches to Science Studies)

COGR 225D, HIGR 241, PHIL 209D, SOCG 255D

Winter 2009

Instructor: Nancy Cartwright

Tuesday, 9:30am-12:20pm, HSS 3027

Continuing the introduction developed in Part I, this course examines recent key topics and problem situations in Science Studies. Emphasis is on recent theoretical perspectives and empirical studies in Communication, History, Philosophy, and Sociology of science and technology, and the interplay between them. *Prerequisites: completion of COGR 225A, HIGR 238, PHIL 209A, or SOCG 255A; or instructor's permission.*

SEMINAR IN SCIENCE STUDIES

COGR 225B, HIST 239, PHIL 209B, SOC 255B

Spring 2009

Instructors: Tal Golan and Charles Thorpe

Tuesday, 9:30am-12:20pm, HSS 3027

Study and discussion of a selected topic in the science studies field, with an emphasis on the development of research and writing skills. The topic varies from year to year. The topic in SP09 is "Science and the Public Sphere."

SCIENCE STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

COGR 225C, HIGR 240, PHIL 209C, SOC 255C

Fall 2008, Winter 2009, Spring 2009

Monday, 4:00pm-6:00pm, HSS 3027

A forum for the presentation and discussion of research in progress in science studies, by graduate students, faculty, and visitors. Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year. This course should be taken for a "S/U" grade option only. Students are required to make a colloquium presentation prior to their final defense.

Communication & Science Studies

Faculty Advisor: David Serlin dserlin@ucsd.edu

course work

Course Work required before the qualifying exam (taken before the end of the fourth year in Communication):

First Year:

- During the first year, students take the COGR 200 series, as well as COGR 294 and COGRS 296. All incoming graduate students in Communication must pass a first year exam, based on the coursework from these classes, to continue in the program.
- Students also must take COGR 225A: Introduction to Science Studies: Part I, COGR 225D: Introduction to Science Studies: Part II, and COGR 225C: Science Studies Colloquium (S/U grade only). They are encouraged to take COGR 225B (the Core Seminar), but this is not required in the first year.

Additional coursework required for the orals exam:

- Two methodology courses (one of which can be in another SSP department)
- Four history/theory /seminar courses (two from Communication and two from SSP member departments)
- COGR 225B: Core seminar in Science Studies (taken twice)
- COGR 225C: Science Studies Colloquium (Two years of attendance is required). Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year. This course should be taken for a “S/U” grade option only. Students are required to make a colloquium presentation prior to their final defense.

qualifying exam

- The examining committee will be made up of at least five members, three of whom must be faculty members in the Communication Department. At least one outside member must be senior faculty. At least two internal members and at least one external member should be faculty of the Science Studies Program. Exceptions to this policy require permission from the director of the science studies program. Students should refer to departmental and university policies for additional rules concerning the composition of committees.
- Students must write two qualifying papers and a dissertation prospectus for their qualifying exam.
- One of their papers for the exam needs to be on a topic in Science or Technology Studies. In it, students are expected to demonstrate a proficiency in both the basic literature in science and technology studies, and more specialized literature related to the topic. The paper can be a literature review, per se, or an empirical study that displays the student’s knowledge of the literature.

History & Science Studies

Faculty Advisor: pending

course work

Course Work (before their qualifying exams, students must complete the following):

- HIGR 238: Introduction to Science Studies: Part I
- HIGR 241: Introduction to Science Studies: Part II
- HIGR 239: Core seminar in Science Studies (taken twice)
- HIGR 240: Science Studies Colloquium (Two years of attendance is required). Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year. This course should be taken for a “S/U” grade option only. Students are required to make a colloquium presentation prior to their final defense.
- Two seminars from SSP member departments other than History
- Five courses in History
- Two two-quarter research seminars
- The major field for SSP-History students should be one of the following: Science in the early Modern Europe, Science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Science in the twentieth century, or another field of comparable breadth, defined in consultation with the major field advisor
- SSP-History students also must prepare two minor fields, one being Science Studies and the other selected from the other fields offered by the department: a field of history of science not chosen as the major field; a second field of history, provided that it is concentrated on a period or region other than that chosen for the first minor field; or a related discipline, offered through another department (may be in the physical or life sciences).

qualifying exam

- The examining committee will be made up of at least five members, three of whom must be faculty members in the History Department. At least one outside member must be senior faculty. At least two internal members and at least one external member should be faculty of the Science Studies Program. Exceptions to this policy require permission from the director of the science studies program. Students should refer to departmental and university policies for additional rules concerning the composition of committees.
- Students take their oral qualifying exam after they have passed their minor field exams, and once they have prepared a bibliography and prospectus for their major field.

Philosophy & Science Studies

Faculty Advisor: Christian Wuthrich cwuthrich@ucsd.edu

course work

Course Work (before defending their prospectus, students must complete the following):

- SSP-Philosophy students are required to take nine courses in philosophy or philosophy-SSP (see below). Four courses must be from either history or philosophy of science, and two from one of the other groups listed under the subheading “Distribution Requirement” for the Ph.D. in philosophy. The remainder can be drawn across the Departments affiliated with the Science Studies program and from the sciences.
- Students are expected to follow this timetable: Five Philosophy seminars by the end of the fifth quarter of residence (distributed across at least two areas of the Philosophy Distribution Requirements). Ten seminars must be taken by the end of the seventh quarter of residence, at least six in philosophy.
- PHIL 209A: Introduction to Science Studies: Part I
- PHIL 209D: Introduction to Science Studies: Part II
- PHIL 209B: Core seminar in Science Studies (taken twice.) This seminar contributes toward the Science Studies distribution requirements, counting as one seminar in history of science, one seminar in sociology of science, and one seminar in philosophy.
- Two courses chosen from History of Science, Sociology of Science or a science-oriented course in Communication.
- PHIL 209C: Science Studies Colloquium (Two years of attendance is required). Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year. This course should be taken for a “S/U” grade option only. Students are required to make a colloquium presentation prior to their final defense.
- Courses sufficient to satisfy the standard Philosophy Department Logic Requirement. (These can count among the 18 courses required overall)

qualifying exam

- The examining committee will be made up of at least five members, three of whom must be faculty members in the Philosophy Department. At least one outside member must be senior faculty. At least two internal members and at least one external member should be faculty of the Science Studies Program. Exceptions to this policy require permission from the director of the science studies program. Students should refer to departmental and university policies for additional rules concerning the composition of committees.
- In this exam, the student will present and defend the prospectus to both the committee and visitors.

Sociology & Science Studies

Faculty Advisor: pending

course work

Course Work (before their qualifying exam, students must take the following):

- Three courses of sociological theory, at least two of which must be chosen from SOC 201A, 201B, and 201C
- Two quarters of sociological methods (The second quarter of the two-quarter research seminar in history of science also counts toward this requirement)
- SOC 208: Faculty Seminar
- Two seminars in the sociology of science, technology, or medicine, one of which must be SOC 234 (Intellectual Foundations in the Study of Science, Technology, and Medicine)
- One course in the history of science, philosophy of science, or communication of science (“science” here includes “technology” and “medicine” as well)
- Two electives in sociology (not on science, technology, or medicine) at least one of which should be selected from the following: economic sociology, sociology of race and ethnicity, political sociology, sociology of culture, social stratification, sociology of gender, and social movements.
- SOC 255A: Introduction to Science Studies: Part I
- SOC 255D: Introduction to Science Studies: Part II
- SOC 255B : Core Seminar
- SOC 255C: Science Studies Colloquium (Two years of attendance is required). Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year. This course should be taken for a “S/U” grade option only. Students are required to make a colloquium presentation prior to their final defense.
- One additional course: Either another seminar in the sociology of science, technology, or medicine; or another course in the history, philosophy, or communication of science; or SOC 255B for a second time.

qualifying exam

- The examining committee will be made up of at least five members, three of whom must be faculty members in the Sociology Department. At least one outside member must be senior faculty. At least two internal members and at least one external member should be faculty of the Science Studies Program. Exceptions to this policy require permission from the director of the science studies program. Students should refer to departmental and university policies for additional rules concerning the composition of committees.

Evaluation of Academic Work

The Science Studies program expects all graduate students to perform at an “A” level and requires that they receive a B+ or better to meet requirements. All required courses must be taken for a letter grade. Students must maintain a GPA of a 3.5 or higher.

Language requirements

Home departments determine language requirements, but the Science Studies Program strongly endorses the principle of language proficiency. SSP students with a departmental language requirement generally must demonstrate reading competency, meeting the MLA exam requirements or equivalent.

Communication: The student can take the COMGR280 sequence, or show proficiency either in a natural language or a technical language useful for studying science or engineering. The choice must be approved by the advisor.

History: Language choice must be approved by advisor

Philosophy: German, French, Latin, Classical Greek

Sociology: currently no language requirement

Examination/dissertation

Qualifying exams are determined by home departments. Generally, this means two oral examinations: the qualifying exams and a dissertation defense. These examinations must be taken within the time limits set by the department and the Office of Graduate Studies. Students must take the qualifying exams to advance to candidacy before the end of their fourth year. After passing the exam, the student can then work full-time on dissertation research (insofar as other commitments allow). Students cannot receive funding after their sixth year, in Communication and Sociology, or after their seventh year in History and Philosophy, and can only be registered for a total of eight years. When the dissertation is completed, it is examined by the doctoral committee. There is a dissertation defense, and the committee recommends whether the Ph.D. degree should be awarded. Students are required to have two SSP faculty from their department and one SSP faculty member from another department on both of their examining committees.

internship requirement

Internship Advisor: Martha Lampland

SSP students are required to do at least one month of an internship before they take their qualifying exams. With the help of the SSP faculty, they find placement in labs, research institutions, policy groups, museums, archives, environmental organizations, and science classes where they can follow the development and use of science or technology. Students are encouraged to complete their internship in the summer after their first year in the program. These placements are meant to give students first-hand experience of scientific or engineering practice as part of their graduate studies.

Internships might include bench work in a scientific laboratory, curatorial experience in a science museum or archive, participation in field experimentations on a scientific expedition, working at a preservation laboratory, following public health workers at a hospital, making observations at an ICU, working on policy papers at a regulatory agency, etc.

The science studies faculty internship coordinator will meet with students to discuss a plan for their projects. Students should sign up for an independent study class with the advisor of their choice and do the internship under this rubric. Students need to submit a 1 page abstract and a brief report about their internship. This can be a journal written during the internship or a paper based on the internship experience. The internship advisor will read the journal or report, and a copy of the abstract must be submitted to the science studies program coordinator. It is the student's responsibility to find a suitable advisor, and the advisor's responsibility to see that the student submits the internship report. Students should sign up for course credit in the quarter during or immediately following the internship (during if the internship is done during term, after if done during the summer).

for students who entered the program prior to 2004-05 Academic year

Students will receive \$500 toward their internship. Students must apply for these funds in the quarter prior to the internship. In rare instances, students may be eligible to use internship funds for a scholarly activity such as a conference, workshop, or archival research in lieu of the internship. This is an exception to the requirement and therefore must be approved by the director of the science studies program prior to the proposed activity. Students who, before enrolling in the Program, have had substantial practical experience in some aspect of scientific work may be excused from doing an internship on judgment of the program director.

for students who entered the program 2004-05 Academic year or later

For students whose internship is unpaid, the program will provide a \$500 honorarium. Students must apply for these funds in the quarter prior to the internship. Students will not be able to participate in academic conferences, workshops, archival work, etc., in lieu of the internship. Students who, before enrolling in the Program, have had substantial practical experience in some aspect of scientific work may be excused from doing an internship on judgment of the program director.

Colloquium series

2008-09 Colloquium Coordinators: Kelly Gates and Charles Thorpe

The Colloquium in Science Studies is built around a program of special lectures given by historians, sociologists and philosophers of science from other universities. Along with guest speakers, there are talks by students in the program and faculty from UCSD (both in SSP and from departments in science and engineering). These discussions give students an opportunity to hear some leading scholars in the science studies field talk about their current research, learn from local scientists about their research and fields, and to meet informally with visitors. The colloquia take place every Monday of each quarter. Attendance is required during your first two years of residency. SSP students are required to present a colloquium talk prior to their final defense (typically after they advance to candidacy). This course should be taken for a S/U grade option only. This fulfills the colloquium course requirement.

Financial support

Various forms of financial assistance are offered to graduate students in the Science Studies Program. Students in History and Communication are required to teach, and are given TAships for this. Many incoming students are offered multi-year funding packages that include some teaching as well as fellowship money. Students may also receive research assistantships from particular faculty, or traineeships and readerships. The program has limited funds for travel grants, internships, fellowships, and full or partial remission of fees and tuition.

Conference participation

Students in the science studies program are strongly encouraged to participate in professional conferences and workshops, and to give talks as soon as their work is sufficiently advanced to merit it. The Program will attempt to defray costs for students attending science studies meetings, (4S, HSS, PSA, or other relevant meetings, as judged by the director), as funds permit. As a general guideline, we will try to cover 50% of the cheapest available airfare, up to a maximum cost of \$500. Although we strive to help students as much as possible, funds are extremely limited and there is no guarantee that funding requests will be fulfilled. Students should note that although in some cases attending scientific conferences may be appropriate as part of an internship experience, attending conferences per se does not qualify to fulfill the internship requirement.

Students should send a request for conference funding via email to the program coordinator by the fall deadline of Oct. 15 or the spring deadline of April 15.

science studies program faculty

Science Studies Program Director: Steven Epstein

Science Studies Program 2008-09 Interim Director: Robert Westman

Communication Department

Morana Alac, alac@ucsd.edu

Lisa Cartwright, lisac@ucsd.edu

Kelly Gates, kagates@ucsd.edu

Chandra Mukerji, cmukerji@ucsd.edu

David Serlin, dserlin@ucsd.edu

History Department

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Philosophy Department

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Affiliated Faculty

Olga Kuchinskaya, UCSD Faculty Fellow, okuchins@ucsd.edu

Roddey Reid, Literature, rreid@ucsd.edu

Linda Strauss, Core Sequence Director, Sixth College, lstrauss@ucsd.edu

Affiliated Researcher

Karen Baker, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, kbaker@ucsd.edu

Science Studies Program Coordinator

Carol Larkin, ssadmin@ucsd.edu, (858) 534-0491

science studies program committee Assignments 2008-2009

Faculty Assignments

Director: Steven Epstein (on leave, 2008-09)
Interim Director, 2008-09: Robert Westman

Colloquium Coordinators:

Kelly Gates
Charles Thorpe

Faculty Advisors:

Communication: David Serlin
History: pending
Philosophy: Christian Wuthrich
Sociology: pending

Internship Coordinator: Martha Lampland

Admissions Committee:

Communication: pending
History: pending
Philosophy: Nancy Cartwright
Sociology: pending

Science Studies Lecture in Science & Society Committee:

Faculty: Naomi Oreskes
Tal Golan
David Serlin
Students: Katrina Boulding
Marisa Brandt
Kin DeWolff
Eric Martin

Student Assignments

Student Choice Speaker Colloquium: pending

History:
Philosophy:
Sociology:
Communication:

Department Contacts (for prospective students):

Communication: Kim DeWolff
History: Liz Petrick
Philosophy: Marta Halina
Sociology: Katie Kenny

science studies Courses

The following is a list of Science Studies courses from the UCSD General Catalog. Students should review the quarterly schedule of classes to find out which courses will be offered during a particular quarter.

SCIENCE STUDIES CORE COURSES

COGR 225A, HIGR 238, PHIL 209A, SOCG 255A. Introduction to Science Studies: Part I
Study and discussion of classic themes and texts in history of science, sociology of science, and philosophy of science, and of work that attempts to develop an interdisciplinary science studies approach.
Prerequisite: Enrollment in Science Studies Program or consent of instructor.

COGR 225D, HIGR 241, PHIL 209D, SOCG 255D. Introduction to Science Studies: Part II
Continuing the introduction developed in Part I, this course examines recent key topics and problem situations in Science Studies. Emphasis is on recent theoretical perspectives and empirical studies in Communication, History, Philosophy, and Sociology of science and technology, and the interplay between them. Prerequisites: completion of COGR 225A, HIGR 238, PHIL 209A, or SOCG 255A; or instructor's permission. Formerly "Advanced Approaches to Science Studies."

COGR 225B, HIGR 239, PHIL 209B, SOCG 255B. Seminar in Science Studies
Study and discussion of a selected topic in the science studies field, with an emphasis on the development of research and writing skills. The topic varies from year to year.
Prerequisite: enrollment in Science Studies Program or permission of instructor.

COGR 225C, HIGR 240, PHIL 209C, SOCG 255C. Colloquium in Science Studies
A forum for the presentation and discussion of research in progress in science studies, by graduate students, faculty, and visitors. Students must attend the colloquium series for their entire first and second years. They receive course credit in one quarter each year.
Prerequisite: enrollment in Science Studies Program

COMMUNICATION

COGR 201(I). Ethnography of Information Systems.
This course will survey the rapidly growing body of ethnographic analyses of information systems, to extend the basic principles of ethnographic research and to lead students in the development of projects modifying these principles for the emerging electronic environment. Students may approach the course in one (or both) of two ways – either preparing for and carrying out a pilot ethnographic study or studying the theoretical literature in depth.

HISTORY

HIGR 235. Science, Empire and Exploration
Examines links between scientific work, particularly expeditions and exploration, and political programs of empire in the 17-20th centuries. Topics: collecting expeditions as expressions of empire; role of colonial administrative networks in facilitating field-based investigations; relation between European and non-European knowledge systems.

science studies Courses

HIGR 236A-B. Seminar in History of Science

A two-quarter research seminar, comprising intensive study of a specific topic in the history of science. The first quarter will be devoted to readings and discussions; the second chiefly to the writing of individual research papers. The topic varies from year to year.

HIGR 242. Topics in the History of Earth and Life Sciences

Intensive study of specific problems in the history of the life sciences and earth sciences, ranging in period from the Renaissance to the 21st century. Topics vary from year to year.

HIGR 243. Historical Scholarship in Technology

An introduction to the historiography of technology. This reading seminar provides an overview of scholarly approaches to the history of technology by critically examining classic and contemporary works in the field.

HIGR 244. Introduction to Sound Studies

Study and discussion of classic and recent scholarship on sound production and cultures of listening. Emphasizes historical literature but also includes works in literary studies, art history, music, and other fields.

HISC 260. Historical Approaches to the Study of Science

Major recent publications in the history of science will be discussed and analyzed; the topics will range in period from the seventeenth century to the twentieth, and will deal with all major branches of natural science. Special topics. Topics will vary from year to year.

HISC 262. Problems in the History of Science and Religion

Intensive study of specific problems in the relation between science and religion. The problems may range in period from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. Topics vary from year to year.

HISC 263. History, Science, and Politics of Climate Change

The complex historical development of human understanding of global climate change, including key scientific work, and the cultural dimensions of proof and persuasion. Special emphasis on the differential political acceptance of the scientific evidence in the U.S. and the world.

HISC 264. Topics in the History of the Physical Sciences

Intensive study of specific problems in the physical (including chemical and mathematical) sciences, ranging in period from the Renaissance to the twentieth century. Topics vary from year to year.

HISC 265. Topics in 20th Century Science and Culture

This is a seminar open to advanced undergraduates and graduate students, which explores topics at the interface of science, technology, and culture, from the late nineteenth century to the present. Topics change yearly

HISC 266. The Galileo Affair

Galileo's condemnation by the Catholic Church in 1633 is a well-known but misunderstood episode. Was Galileo punished for holding dangerous scientific views? Personal arrogance? Disobedience? Religious transgressions? Readings in original sources, recent historical interpretations.

science studies Courses

HISC 267. Gender and Science

Why have women been traditionally excluded from science? How has this affected scientific knowledge? How have scientists constructed gendered representations not only of women, but also of science and nature? We will address these questions from perspectives including history, philosophy, and psychoanalytic theory.

HISC 268. The Extraterrestrial Life Question

The changing fortunes of the belief in the existence of life beyond the Earth (pluralism) from 1750–present as it evolved from a marginal speculation to a central scientific question with wide-ranging consequences for traditional religious belief-systems.

HISC 270. Topics in the History of Science and Technology

This seminar explores topics at the interface of science, technology, and society, ranging from the seventeenth century to the twentieth.

HISC 272. Building America: Technology, Culture, and the Built Environment in the United States

The history of the built environment in the United States, from skyscrapers to suburbs, canals and railroads to factories and department stores. The technological history of structures and infrastructures, and the social and cultural values that have been “built into” our material environment.

PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 204A. Core Course in Philosophy of Science

An introduction to one or more central problems in the philosophy of science, or in the philosophy of one of the particular sciences, such as the nature of confirmation and explanation, the nature of scientific knowledge, reductionism, the unity of science, or realism and antirealism. May be taken for credit three times with changed content.

PHIL 245. Philosophy of Science

This seminar will cover current books and theoretical issues in the philosophy of science. May be taken for credit seven times with changed content.

PHIL 247. Philosophy of Biology

Historical and contemporary perspectives on foundational issues about biology. May include questions about the nature of biological explanation, the relation of biology to chemistry and physics, the status of attributions of function, and the relation of biology to the social sciences. May be taken for credit six times with changed content.

PHIL 250A. Philosophy of the Cognitive Sciences

Contemporary debates about the study of the mind-brain as studied in one or more of the empirical cognitive sciences. May include questions about the different strategies of explanation invoked, the conceptions of representation employed, the connections between theoretical models developed. May be taken for credit six times with changed content.

280. Philosophy of Science Topics and Methods

This course meets weekly to discuss recent books or articles in philosophy of science. The reading is designed both for students doing active research in the field and for those seeking to gain some familiarity with it. Can be taken nine times for credit with changed content.

science studies Courses

SOCIOLOGY

SOCG 234. Intellectual Foundation of the Study of Science, Technology, and Medicine.

This course focuses on some classic methodological and theoretical resources upon which the sociology of science, technology, and medicine all draw. It gives special attention to relationships between knowledge and social order, and between knowledge and practice, that are common to science, technology, and medicine.

SOCG 247. Madness and Society

An examination of the historical and sociological literatures on the relationship between madness and society, focusing primarily on the United States and Great Britain but with some comparative reference to western Europe.

SOCG 249. Technology and the Human

This course explores the ethical and political implications of technological interventions into human life. Approaches from science studies, the sociology of the body, and philosophy. Topics include transformations in domains of life such as work, health, childhood, and death.

SOCG 283. The Making of Modern Medicine

An examination of the intellectual, social, cultural, and political dimensions of the Transformation of Western medicine from 1750 to 1900, with a primary focus on Anglo-American developments.

SOCG 284. Contemporary Biomedicine

Develops central themes in medical sociology in order to understand twentieth- and twenty-first-century medical practice and research. Topics include authority and expertise; health inequalities; managed care; health activism; biomedical knowledge production; and the construction of medical objects and subjects.

SOCG 288. Knowledge Capitalism

This seminar examines the place of scientific knowledge and information and communication technology in the transformation of capitalist economy and society. The class explores new interactions between science studies and the social theory of advanced capitalism.