



HPSC0073

Introduction to Science and Technology Studies

1. Module Syllabus

2023-24 session.

version: 22 September 2023

Convenor: Dr Noémi Tousignant

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2. Description

Science and Technology Studies (STS) is an interdisciplinary field in which science and technology is examined from different perspectives. ("Science" here is broadly understood to include science, technology, medicine, and mathematics.) Broadly, the perspectives are divided into History and Philosophy of Science (HPS) and Social Studies of Science (SSS). HPS includes history of science and philosophy of science, as well as integrated approaches to both. SSS includes sociology of science, science policy studies, and studies of science communication, engagement, and evaluation. This module introduces students to some of the key ideas, arguments, and readings in HPS and SSS, collectively STS. It acts as a bridge to the specialized option modules in the department's taught postgraduate offer.

3. Key Information

3.1 Digital resources

Type	Location
Moodle	https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=37545
Timetable	Mondays 11am-1pm Birkbeck, Malet Street, Room 252-253-254 (check timetable.ucl.ac.uk)

ReadingLists@UCL	ucl.ac.uk/library/teaching-learning-services-tls/readinglistsucl or 0073 reading list
Required texts	No single required text. Essential (required) readings for each session are listed on the schedule and available via the reading list. Additional (recommended) readings are listed on Moodle.

3.2 Convenor

The Convenor serves as the module organiser. They have overall responsibility for the smooth operation of the module, including delivery, student support, marking, and engagement. The convenor is the first point of contact on module-related matters that involve administrative matters. They also are a last resort in matters related to academic and personal tuition.

Information	Specifics
Convenor	Dr Noémi Tousignant
Contact	n.tousignant@ucl.ac.uk
Telephone	--
Web	--
Office location	22 Gordon Square, room 2.1
Office hours	Thursdays 12-1pm Fridays 1-2pm These are in-person (on campus) drop-in, <u>except</u> : 19-20 Oct, 26 Oct, 2-3 Nov, 8-9 Nov, 16-17 Nov On those dates, of if you cannot make it to an in-person slot, meetings will be online by appointment

This module features 9 tutors associated with the sessions and assessment. One of the objectives of this module is to introduce students in our degrees to the wide range of expertise present in STS. Please feel encouraged to engage staff in areas of your own interest.

Students with **content-related questions** should approach the relevant academic staff for assistance. Students with **personal and career questions** should approach their personal tutor in the first instance. Direct questions about **course mechanics and administration** to the module Convenor.

4. Aims and objectives

4.1 Aims

The module has two specific aims. First, it introduces students to key ideas, arguments, and readings across the full range of subjects associated with Science and Technology Studies. Second, the module prepares students, in terms of key ideas, arguments and readings, to be

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able to accelerate in specialist STS MSc option courses. STS is defined broadly to include history of science, philosophy of science, integrated history and philosophy of science, science policy, sociology of science and technology, and science communication and evaluation.

4.2 Objectives

By the end of this module students should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of key ideas, arguments and readings in STS
2. critically analyse key ideas, arguments and readings in STS

5. Schedule

UCL Week	Date	Tutors	Session Topic	Essential Reading
6	02 Oct	Tousignant	1. Introduction: What is <i>good</i> science and technology?	Subramaniam et al. (2016) Dawson et al. (2022) De Laet and Mol (2000)
7	9 Oct	Lock	2. Does the public need to understand science?	Wynne 1995 Stilgoe, Lock and Wilsdon (2016)
8	16 Oct	Wahome	3. Science and Policy(making)	Edler <i>et al</i> 2022 Halfman 2019
9	23 Oct	Ambrosio	4. Normal Science and its Critics	Masterman 1970 Chalmers 1976
10	30 Oct	Agar	5. Do artifacts have politics?	Winner 1985 MacKenzie and Wacjman 1999 Edgerton 1999
11	06 Nov		6. Reading Week	
12	13 Nov	Balmer	7. Can science be separated from its social context?	Sismondo 2010
13	20 Nov	Sozudogru	8. What is the role of values in science?	Longino 1996
14	27 Nov	Gregory	9. The Changing Relations of Science and Religion	Dixon 2009 Ferngren 2002 Booke 1990
15	04 Dec	Werrett	10. Is the history of science global yet?	Raj (2013) Drayton (1999)
16	11 Dec	Tousignant	11. Do science and technology (re)produce inequality? Review and wrap-up session	Hess et al. (2016)

6. Plan for each week

Moodle is the central organising tool for learning in this module.

Students are expected to undertake several activities each week for this module, focusing on the theme identified as the session topic:

1. **full class session** (2-hour per week) - The purpose of this class time is for the tutor to

present content associated with the week's theme and, for students, to discuss the essential readings, in groups, with the assistance of module tutors. These hours also are settings for students to ask questions to tutors and to learn from peers.

Check Moodle each week for instructions about this session. Expectations for student participation will be posted in Moodle and in announcements posted through Moodle.

Prior to the scheduled session, students are expected to:

- (1) complete essential readings, and
 - (2) complete any learning activities prescribed by the tutor (see Moodle).
- and**
- (b) prepare questions from their learning to clarify, challenge, and compare this material
 - (c) prepare to relate the material from this week to other material developed in this module and elsewhere in their knowledge
 - (d) consider the relevance of this content for essay titles in this and other modules
2. **independent reading** (4 hours per week) - students are expected to undertake independent reading in subjects associated with this module. Tutors will offer suggestions for additional reading, and peers can offer supplements. Finding relevant material is an essential professional skill and should not be taken lightly. Students are encouraged to share their growing understanding via forums on Moodle.
 3. **research and reflection supporting writing of essays plus drafting and revision of essays** (4 hours per week) - students are expected to make time to read and reflect upon relevant material supporting their essay writing. This means going beyond simple regurgitation of information or trite analysis. Also, time for revision is essential for producing polished, readable, and insightful writing.

Essential readings are available through the ReadingLists@UCL service for this module:

<<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/teaching-learning-services-tls/readinglistsucl>>

Links to this service also are available through the Moodle site for this module.

Additional readings are listed on Moodle, but normally are not provided via the ReadingLists@UCL system, with the exception of a short list of **highly recommended introductory readings**. Use library services to locate electronic and paper copies of additional readings.

Reading Week is scheduled for UCL Week 11, which is the sixth week of formal teaching sessions for this module. During this week, no tutor-led activities are scheduled. Instead, students are given time to catch-up where needed and to read more widely in their subject, using the wide variety of resources available to them as members of the UCL community. Students are expected to be pursuing their studies during this week.

7. Assessment: two essays

Assessment in this module consists of two 2000-word essays, each contributing 50% in the final grade for the module. You must submit both essays to complete the module.

The aim of these essays is to assess your critical engagement with the literature and key concepts in STS. The essays will also provide you with the opportunity to develop your academic writing in a gradual manner, receiving feedback throughout the module. The feedback will help you improve in the next piece of coursework and longer assessments in other modules.

The precise deadline for each assignment is set as 12:00 noon London time on the deadline date. Items may be submitted earlier, though feedback will not be available until after the deadline. Essays submitted late will be subject to standard late penalties as prescribed by UCL and described in the *STS Student Handbook*.

If you encounter a technical problem submitting your coursework, such as a fault in the Moodle system, please email your essay to the Convenor, Dr Noémi Tousignant: n.tousignant@ucl.ac.uk

The date and time the document is sent will be considered the submission time.

For each essay, select one option from the available titles in that assignment. The following table summarises the essays timetable and subject range for each assignment:

Essays	Subject range	Deadline (noon)	Students can expect feedback on or before
Essay 1	Choose between essay title 1 (Lock); 2 (Wahome); 3 (Ambrosio) and 4 (Agar)	20 th November	18 th December
Essay 2	Choose between essay title 5 (Balmer); 6 (Sozudogru); 7 (Gregory); and 8 (Werrett)	15 th January	12 th February

This module follows UCL rules on word counts, as described in the [STS Student Handbook](#). Department policy is to count all words in the main body of a text, including footnotes or endnotes. Word counts exclude bibliography, titles, tables, captions, appendices, and other peripheral elements of a submission. Students often choose a citation style, such as Chicago, to maximise the number of words available for the substantive elements of their essay (see section on References below).

7.1 Policy on use of AI in assessments for this module

AI tools **cannot** be used in assessments for this module (UCL Category 1)

The purpose of these assessments – to develop skills in research, analysis and argumentation – makes it inappropriate for AI tools to be used.

As per UCL's Manual (9.2.2.b), it is permissible for a third party to “*check areas of academic writing such as structure, fluency, presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language translation.*” However, “*this may be considered Academic Misconduct if substantive changes to content have been made by the reviewer or software or at their recommendation.*”

Further exceptions may apply to the use of assistive technologies by students with a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments (SORA).

Please speak to the module convenor (n.tousignant@ucl.ac.uk) if you have doubts about what constitutes permissible use of software in assessment.

7.2 Essay titles

Essay titles are available online on Moodle. Specific tutors are listed as responsible for advice on specific essay titles. You can expect them to provide instructions during module sessions. You also can find additional advice on the Moodle site. If you still require assistance, please consult module tutors via the online forums on Moodle or email.

The Convenor will provide general advice on essays as well as general information about format and referencing.

7.3 Essay extensions and mitigations

Information about extensions and mitigations is provided in the [STS Student Handbook](#). Individual tutors cannot grant extensions on their own initiative, so please do not ask.

7.4 Essay feedback

Your feedback and first marks on each essay will be accessible via Moodle, normally four weeks after the submission of your essay. Please note that first marks are provisional and might change after second marking and moderation by external examiners. Marks are confirmed and fixed in June.

Please focus on the feedback provided by the first marker, which is what will allow you to improve in the next piece of coursework.

You should discuss all your feedback with your personal tutor with the aim of identifying weaknesses and possible routes for improvement. If you have any questions about the specific feedback for an essay, please discuss it with the tutor for the relevant session or essay.

7.5 Specific criteria for assessment of your essays

The assessment provided for this module is designed to help students develop their essay-writing skills and demonstrate critical knowledge across the syllabus.

The essays will also help you develop your academic writing style, including:

- organization of argument (how a case is built in the essay)
- structure (e.g. clear introduction, arguments, and conclusion; clear links between sections and paragraphs)
- focus and clarity
- appropriate use of evidence and quotations
- grammar and spelling
- consistent referencing

General marking guidelines can be found in the [STS Student Handbook](#).

7.6 References

Referencing is essential for scholarly writing. Different referencing styles have evolved in different disciplines. As STS is an interdisciplinary field, we commonly move across many referencing styles in our learning and research. The specific choice for a referencing system in this module is less important than the consistent use of whichever system you chose. For this reason, in your essays, you are free to choose one of the styles used in a major journal in our field. Use that system consistently throughout your essay. Your choices are:

- *Science and Public Policy*
- *Social Studies of Science*
- *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*
- *Isis*

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The style for each journal is shown in articles published in those journals. Detailed explanation on referencing style is provided in “Instructions for Authors” guidance offered on journal websites.

If you are undecided on referencing styles, we recommend the Chicago style, see:

[Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide](#)

Author-Date: Sample Citations

Whichever referencing style you use, and in cases when a rule cannot be located, the key standard to apply is that of recovery: can a reader locate the specific source you wish to identify? If the answer is “yes,” then the referencing is sufficient. If the answer is “no,” then it is not. When in doubt, ask your personal tutor or the tutor responsible for the essay title. Also, ask in the Moodle chatroom.

8. Important policy information

Refer to the [STS Student Handbook](#) on matters of policy regarding this module. If you have any questions, please ask the Convenor.