DSC 101–15 Fall 2020

Intersection of Science and Society

Instructor: Dr. Simba Nkomo
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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2:00 –3:30 pm, and by appointment
For Group Questions: Monday 3:30–4:00 pm
Appointment Bookings: http://oxford.emory.edu/DrNkomo/
Class Schedule: Section 3: Monday and Wednesday 11:20 am –12:35 pm
Zoom link: https://emory.zoom.us/j/95031689041
(for online activities)
Method of Instruction: In person. Sessions will be recorded and posted on Canvas.
Some activities will be done via zoom.

Emory University legal statement: Lectures and other classroom presentations presented
through video conferencing and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole
purpose of educating the students enrolled in the course. The release of such
information (including but not limited to directly sharing, screen capturing, or
recording content) is strictly prohibited, unless the instructor states otherwise.
Doing so without the permission of the instructor will be considered an Honor Code
violation and may also be a violation of other state and federal laws, such as the
Copyright Act. Students may not record the class without the instructor’s
permission.

Oxford College and Liberal Arts. Oxford College is dedicated to a liberal arts education,
and science is an integral part of the liberal arts.
Course Description

Why is there conflict on some topics between science and society? Our view of the world is largely influenced by our culture and the environment around us. In contrast, the scientific view stems from evidence-based knowledge we gain from various academic training. The interaction between these two views is central to this course. We will start by exploring the scientific process through hands-on activities, then discuss and debate issues at the intersection of science and society through the lenses of our diverse cultural experiences and scientific knowledge. Discussion topics include the use of traditional medicine and synthetic drugs, genetic engineering, environmental pollution and climate change. Finally, we will read and discuss ways individuals manage perceived conflicts between their world and scientific views.

Learning goals

The primary goals of this class are

• Utilize critical thought and reasoning to understand issues at the intersection of science and society.
• Develop communication and presentation skills for different audiences.
• Apply interdisciplinary tools to addressing current challenges in our everyday lives.

Recommended Textbooks

1. Chemistry in Context, 10th Edition By American Chemical Society

Course Outline

The course is divided into 5 modules
1. The Nature of Science and Ethno Practices
2. Communication, Information and Scientific literacy
3. Food Security and Bioengineering
4. Science, Drugs, and Diseases
Course Grading

Grading scale
Grades are normally assigned as follows:
- 93.00 and up A
- 92.99-90.99 A-
- 89.99 B+
- 86.99-88.99 B
- 82.99 B-
- 79.99 C+
- 76.99-78.99 C
- 72.99 C-
- 69.99 D+
- 66.99 D
- 60.00 and below F

Grades are assigned based on your performance in the course and are not open for discussion after being assigned. If your final grade is at the border of 2 grades, consideration will be given to items such as improvement over the semester, and class participation.

Grading errors:
If there are any errors or you have questions, submit a request in writing for a re-grade in writing no later than 3 days after the exam was returned. Please note that, if you request a regrade, I will check the whole assignment or exam paper. You may lose or gain points in the process.

Course Details

Quizzes, Pre-Lecture Assignments, and Participation
Quizzes will be administered as a form of formative assessment via canvas. Quiz details will be posted on Canvas. The nature of questions will vary from conceptual to application-type questions. You are expected to work independently.

Pre-Lecture Assignments. These will be short assignments to help you prepare for class. The assignments include, but not limited to, watching videos, answering a few questions and reading assigned articles.

Participation, which is major component of this class, includes contributing to class discussion, posting and answering questions on the discussion board, and completing assigned reading assignments. Participation makes up 20% of your final grade.
Reflections and Surveys
Reflections questions will be posted on canvas with some prompts. I hope the exercises will help you reflect on your learning process. Surveys will give you opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions for the course. Thank you in advance for your contribution to the development of this course.

Assignments
You will have one assignment per module. The nature of the assignments will depend on the nature of the content covered in the module. Assignments will act as ‘stepping stones’ to your projects.

Projects
You are expected to complete two projects. The first project will be conducted in groups and the second one will be done independently. Take the first project as an opportunity to learn to learn and acquire skill for your independent project. The independent project will be your final for the class: No final exam!

Policies
Attendance
This semester due to the pandemic, some students might be sick or will need to go into isolation or quarantine. If you are sick, understand that I will be flexible about attendance. Please make sure to email me so that we can discuss your individual circumstances. For students in quarantine who are well, we have provided ways that you can keep up with your schoolwork, whether our class is delivered online or in person. Please also contact me via email if you are in quarantine.

Accommodations
If you have a documented disability and have anticipated barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, or presume having a disability (e.g. mental health, attention, learning, vision, hearing, physical or systemic), and are in need of accommodations for this semester, we encourage you to contact the Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) to learn more about the registration process and steps for requesting accommodations at oas_oxford@emory.edu.

If you are a student that is currently registered with DAS and have not requested or received a copy of your accommodation notification letter, please notify DAS immediately.
Students who have accommodations in place are encouraged to coordinate with their me during the first week of the semester, to communicate specific needs for the course as it relates to approved accommodations. Accommodations may not be implemented until the instructor is provided an accommodation letter and discusses the accommodation plan for this course directly with the DAS student. Accommodations may not be implemented retroactively. For additional information regarding DAS, please visit the website: http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access

**Honor Code**

The Honor Code applies to all assignments, in and out of the classroom. All work in this course must be entirely your own and entirely original to the requirements of this course in this semester. For more info, visit: http://oxford.emory.edu/catalog/regulations/honor-code.html

**Religious Holidays Arrangements**

Instructors are encouraged, not required, to accommodate students' academic needs related to religious holidays. Students are expected to inform professors by the end of the second week of class each semester of any planned religious observances that conflict with class attendance, and make mutually agreeable arrangements to complete any work missed. If you need guidance negotiating your needs related to a religious holiday, the College Chaplain, Rev. Lyn Pace, ppace@emory.edu, is willing and available to help. **Please be aware that Rev. Pace is not tasked with excusing students from classes or writing excuses for students to take to their professors. Emory’s official list of religious holidays may be found at http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/faith_traditions/holidays.html. A more comprehensive multifaith calendar is available here: https://hds.harvard.edu/life-at-hds/religious-and-spiritual-life/multifaith-calendar.**

**Electronic devices**

Use of cell phones will not be allowed during class discussions. iPads and laptops may be used for notetaking. Please be mindful of other students around you when you are using a laptop.

**Additional information and handouts**

Additional helpful handouts and resources will be posted on Canvas.
Proper Behavior in Class

Class is an inclusive learning environment; respect one another. You may be asked to leave class for exhibiting rude, immature, or disruptive behavior during a specific class session.