

COURSE NUMBER: VR253		COURSE TITLE: Culture, Technology and Silicon Valley	
TERMS OFFERED: Spring 2016 CREDIT: 3		PREREQUISITES: VY100, VY200	
TEXTBOOKS/REQUIRED MATERIAL: <i>The Question concerning technology and other essays</i> (Martin Heidegger) Excerpts from: <i>You are not a Gadget</i> (Jaron Lanier); <i>Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other</i> (Sherry Turkle); <i>Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology</i> (Neil Postman); <i>The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains</i> (Nicholas Carr).		PREPARED BY: Irene Wei DATE OF PREPARATION: November 19, 2015 DATE OF UC APPROVAL:	
INSTRUCTOR(S): Irene Wei		Social Sciences/Humanities: Humanities	
CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This course examines writings by selected Western critics of a society that no longer merely uses technology as a support system but instead is shaped by it--with consequences for how people redefine sociability, art, education, intelligence, and truth. Lectures and discussions will focus on understanding the basic terms of ongoing debates about technology rather than on taking sides. Course materials also include short films.		COURSE TOPICS: 1. What is "technology"? 2. What is "technique"? 3. What is "culture"? 4. Is technology neutral? 5. Technophiles vs. Technocritics 6. Technology affects thought 7. A prescribed sense of self 8. Outside thought 9. What is the function of art and literature in the digital age?	
COURSE STRUCTURE/SCHEDULE: Lecture: two 90 minutes every week plus one 45 minutes lecture every other week;			
COURSE OBJECTIVES [Course Outcomes in brackets]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the basic terms of ongoing debates about technology in the West. [1,2,3,4,5] To reflect on the validity of these terms and their social implications (5,6,7) To consider the possibility of raising similar questions in the context of China. [4,5,6,7,8,9] To develop active reading, listening, and interpretative skills [5] To improve self-reflective and critical thinking skills [8,9.] To learn from peer input [7,8,9.] 		
COURSE OUTCOMES [Student Outcomes in brackets]	After completing VR242, students should have: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to understand discussions about technology from multiple perspectives [1.2.3.4.] Ability to follow and analyze arguments made based on philosophical reflection as well as empirical research [1.2.3.4.] Ability to develop one's own opinions on discussions about technology [2.3.] Ability to articulate and engage with such discussions from an informed point of view [2.3.4.] Ability to present orally and in writing one's point of view [4.5.] Ability to reconsider blind spots and revise one's point of view following peer feedback [4.5.6.] 		
ASSESSMENT TOOLS [Course Outcomes in brackets]	Homework [1,2,3,4,5,6] Midterm [1,2,3] Class discussion [1.2.3.4.5.6] Writing assignments [1.2.3.4.5.6]		