POIR8050

Technology, Power and Uneven Development

Session 1, Online-flexible 2025

School of International Studies

Contents

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Govand Azeez
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Credit points
10

Prerequisites
Admission to MIntRel or MPPP or MPASR or GradCertPPP or PGDipIntRel or GradDipIntRel or MIntPubDip

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
From the steam engine and Maxim gun, to electricity, computers, and Artificial Intelligence, technology has played a foundational role in global transformations. This unit explores how these technological tools, devices and systems have historically mediated power and are emblematic of socio-political and economic divisions. It further considers how contemporary advances in communications, science and artificial intelligence are generating a new era of rapid change, often termed a 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' (4IR), raising major questions around neo-colonialism, democracy, economic and social inequality, sustainability, security, warfare and the relationship between digitalisation and popularism/fascism. Drawing on theoretical approaches and real world examples, students will gain a critical and in-depth understanding of the relationship between technology, power and uneven development and critically assess the uneven nature of technological advancement and revolution in global politics.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Identify and analyse the diverse epistemological and methodological approaches underpinning the relationship between technology and uneven development

ULO2: Critically analyse historical and contemporary patterns of technological

production, advancement and application in global life

ULO3: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the political economy of technology and its relation to life, labour and social interactions

ULO4: Critically evaluate the correlation between the techno-scientific continuum and the history of the world system

General Assessment Information

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Mid semester test	50%	No	2025-04-07
Major research essay	50%	No	2025-06-11

Mid semester test

Assessment Type [1]: Quiz/Test
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 22 hours
Due: **2025-04-07**
Weighting: **50%**

Mid semester test on unit content

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify and analyse the diverse epistemological and methodological approaches underpinning the relationship between technology and uneven development
- Critically analyse historical and contemporary patterns of technological production, advancement and application in global life

Major research essay

Assessment Type [1]: Essay

Indicative Time on Task [2]: 70 hours
Due: **2025-06-11**
Weighting: **50%**

Research essay critically interrogating the relationships between technology, power and uneven development

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify and analyse the diverse epistemological and methodological approaches underpinning the relationship between technology and uneven development
- Critically analyse historical and contemporary patterns of technological production, advancement and application in global life
- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the political economy of technology and its relation to life, labour and social interactions
- Critically evaluate the correlation between the techno-scientific continuum and the history of the world system

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[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

PLEASE NOTE:

This course combines **theoretical foundations with historical perspectives** on technological development.

The weekly structure consists of a **two-hour lecture** and a **general forum for the online students**. Regular lecture attendance and active participation in the forum are essential for mastering the course content. Do not miss the lectures. In the lectures and tutorials we will explore both the philosophical underpinnings of technology - examining how we understand and think about technological systems - and trace the evolution of technological artifacts and tools throughout human history.

This dual approach will help you develop a rich understanding of how technology shapes and is shaped by society.

The text for this unit is:

Andrew Ede, *Technology and Society* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Please make sure you have access to the text before the semester begins. There are copies available in library.

Unit Schedule

Technology, Power and Uneven Development	Lecture_1	Monday	13:00	2h	9-15, 18-22	25WW A207 Tutorial Room
Technology, Power and Uneven Development	Tutorial_1	Monday	15:00	1h	9-15, 18-22	25WW A207 Tutorial Room

Online students will be given a weekly question every Mondays after the Lecture.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the Service Connect Portal, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2025.02 of the Handbook