Description

This course is about the emerging knowledge economy. For many years, analysts have speculated on the nature of a post-industrial, post-Fordist, or post-mass production economy. Some prognosticators predicted a service economy would replace our production economy. Others suggested that mass production would be overtaken by a system of flexible production more readily adaptable to rapidly changing economy conditions. Still others viewed “knowledge intensive” economic sectors as central sources of economic growth. Of these aspects of our new economy, our attention this semester will be trained on two knowledge intensive sectors: biotechnology and information technology. We will be interested in how these sectors are organized and what impacts their products are having or are likely to have on society. In addition, the university is a central institution in the new knowledge economy, and we will consider its place in our economy. Finally, questions of intellectual property protection are important matters in high technology fields. Thus, we will also be concerned with ongoing changes in intellectual property protection.

My view is that learning is a collaborative activity between students themselves and between teachers and students. This view is reflected in the way I organize this course. Students must actively participate in classroom activities and will play a role in determining the activities in which we engage and in deciding the topics explored during the last part of the course.

Requirements

1) Attendance. Because this is a discussion class, attendance is imperative. You are entitled to four absences throughout the semester. Each absence beyond the limit of four will result in lowering your grade by one full grade (i.e. 5 absences turns an A into a B; 6 absences turns an A into a C). Since I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences, I suggest you keep at least two of your absences on hold for illness or other unanticipated events that might interfere with your attendance. In short, I will not be sympathetic if you blow off four class sessions early in the semester and then come to me in April saying you need to miss a class for a job interview. Save the absences for when you really need them.

2) Active class participation (15%). Though attendance in class is imperative, it is by no means sufficient. What you learn and the success of the course depends on your active engagement. Your participation grade will be based on the quality and consistency of your
contributions to course discussions. I define participation as expressing your own arguments about our readings as well as constructive responses to the arguments of classmates.

3) Two short papers (30%). Each student will be required to write two short papers (2-3 double spaced pages), each focusing on readings from different course units. You will sign up for the topics on which you will write on the second day of class, and each paper will be due at the end of the class period where we discuss the reading that is the focus of your paper. Each short paper should summarize either some part of the relevant reading or the reading as a whole. In addition, in these papers, you should evaluate the argument and the evidence provided in the reading.

4) Presentation and Related Paper (15%). At the beginning of the semester, each student will sign up to initiate class discussion during one course session. Your presentation will discuss at least one non-required reading, and you should discuss the relevance of this reading to the issues raised and the arguments and evidence provided in the required reading. Your presentation should be approximately ten minutes long, and you should submit a 2-4 page double spaced paper to me in which you discuss the non-required reading and compare it to the required reading. You needn’t cover every aspect of each reading in either your presentation or your paper. Indeed, focusing on one or two issues may very well serve to provide appropriate focus. I will evaluate your presentation and paper according to the criteria I outline below.

5) Final Paper (40%). This paper should explore one of the topics covered in class and should be written in the form of an argumentative essay that uses appropriate evidence and argument to defend a basic thesis. This paper should be between 7 and 10 pages long. In writing it, you should draw on no fewer than four sources. You are not restricted to readings that appear on the syllabus. Again, I will assess your submission based on the criteria outlined below. This paper is due on May 4th in class. I will happily provide students comments on drafts of these papers, if the drafts are provided to me before April 20th. If you would like comments on this paper, you must provide me with a stamped self-addressed envelope on the last day of class. The envelope should have sufficient postage to allow me to return your paper to you.

Grading Criteria for Papers (borrowed and adapted from the syllabi of Professor Aili Mari Tripp):

1. Well defined statement of problem. Does the paper start out with a clear question or a clear statement of the problem to be addressed?

2. Originality of Ideas. As appropriate, do your own views and voice come through clearly?

3. Serious Engagement of Alternative Arguments. As appropriate, do you seriously consider arguments other than those you make?
4. Use of Evidence. Are you clear about what the evidence is in the case you consider? Are you clear about the breadth of applicability of the evidence you cite? In other words, do you understand the extent to which it is appropriate to generalize from the evidence you draw on? Some evidence is better than other evidence. Do you provide an assessment of evidence quality, as appropriate?

5. Clarity of Presentation. Are your ideas clearly expressed? Is your paper focused or does it wander? Can a reader easily identify your main points? Are the ideas presented elaborated sufficiently? Are there sign-posts to guide the reader? Are terms defined?

6. Grammar, Spelling, Citations, Format. Have you footnoted or cited ideas and facts that are not your own? Of course, all quoted material should appear in quotation marks. All pages should be numbered. Your paper should have a title, and your name should appear on the paper. You should have margins of one inch all the way around. Your paper should be double spaced, and your paper should be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. There should be few spelling and/ or grammatical errors, and there should be clear transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Papers should be submitted to me in both hard copy and electronically.

7. Organization. Is the paper organized effectively? Is the sequence of points made logical and clear? Does each paragraph have a central idea that a reader can easily identify?

Improving Your Writing.
Writing is one of the most important skills with which you will leave the University. You should take your writing seriously and work hard to improve it. The University has a Writing Center where trained graduate students and professionals will work with you on your papers and help you to make them better. I urge you to take advantage of this resource. The Writing Center is at 6171 Helen C. White (263-9305). You are advised to make an appointment in advance of your desire to meet with a member of the Writing Center. This is especially important at the end of the semester.

Academic Honesty
You are responsible for understanding the University's standards for academic honesty. These are described in a pamphlet published by the Dean of Students' Office entitled Academic Misconduct: Rules and Procedures.

Grading
Sometimes the end of the semester comes and students indicate to me that they are not clear about how each course requirement figures into their final grade and/or how I grade individual assignments. I believe that the description above is exceedingly clear. Indeed, drawing on what I say above, you should be able to determine your grade at any point during the semester. If there is something you are unsure about, it is your responsibility to talk to me. I am always available.
I will not accept late assignments without prior permission. I am, however, open to have students *rewrite* papers. If you would like to rewrite a paper, please speak to me before proceeding. You may submit rewritten work at any time until May 2nd.

**Reading material**

The books listed on the course schedule from which we will read substantial portions are available for purchase at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative (426 W. Gilman, 257-6050). These books are marked with an asterisk (*). I have placed the shorter readings for the course on electronic reserve. The entire packet of readings is also available for purchase at the Social Sciences Copy Center. Finally, copies of the required books plus some related texts should be available in the College Library reserve room.

**Course organization**

Students will be actively involved in and responsible for what they learn in this course. I will rarely, if ever, lecture, although at student request I will be happy to provide explanations of, or context for, readings. A common form of course organization will be “break-out” groups. The class will be divided into four or five groups, and each will discuss the assigned reading separately. I hope we will also have debates and student panel discussions.

There are three ways I hope to promote active student participation in the operation of the class. First, by requiring students to make presentations that will provide a lead into our discussions, I hope to prompt students to shape the contours of class time. Second, by using smaller discussion groups, I hope to encourage otherwise reticent students to speak up. Finally, although I could easily pack the syllabus with topics and readings for the entire semester, I have left the final portion of the course open. I have ideas about what kinds of things we might do, but I would like us to determine the final part of the course collectively. We might do readings I suggest, do readings suggested by students, students might report on their research, or organize a class period in some other way.

**Schedule**

**January 17—Introduction**

**January 19—From the Old to the New Economy I**


**Required.**


**January 24 --From the Old to the New Economy II**


**January 26--From the Old to the New Economy III**


**January 31--From the Old to the New Economy IV**


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**February 2—The Old Economy in the New Economy**


**February 7—Biotechnology in/and the New Knowledge Economy I**


**February 9—No Class**

**February 14—Biotechnology in/and the New Knowledge Economy II**


**February 16—Biotechnology in/and the New Economy: Gender Equality**


February 21–The Information Technology Industry in/ and the New Economy


February 23–The Information Technology Industry in/ and the New Economy

February 28–The Information Technology Industry in/ and the New Economy
Video: “Startup.Com.” In class.

March 2–Biotechnology on the Ground I
**Required.**


**March 7–Biotechnology on the Ground II**

**Required.**

**Required.**

Illinois Press.


March 9—Information Technology on the Ground I


Spring Break—March 11-19

March 21—Information Technology on the Ground II


March 23—Information Technology on the Ground III


March 28—Information Technology on the Ground IV


**March 30—Information Technology on the Ground V**

**April 4—Information Technology on the Ground VI**

**April 6—The University in the New Knowledge Economy**
*Daniel Lee Kleinman. 2003. *Impure Cultures: University Biology and the World of Commerce.* University of Wisconsin Press. pages 3-18 (18-32, if you have time), 33-44, 65-89. **Required.**


the Entrepreneurial University. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.


April 11–The University in the New Knowledge Economy

April 13–The Politics of Intellectual Property

April 18–The Politics of Intellectual Property


April 20–To be Determined

April 25–To be Determined

April 27–To be Determined

May 2–To be Determined

May 4–To be Determined

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Possible Topics and Readings for the final 5 meetings of the semester:

1) Student Presentations/ Debate Panels

2) View and critique representations of science and technology in film. Possible Films: “Gattica” and “Metropolis.”

3) Experts and the Citizenry in the New Knowledge Economy

4) Biotechnology and Public Controversy

5) Politics of/and the Internet

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6) Biotechnology and the State


7) Information Technology and the State

Thomas Hughes, et al. 1999. *Funding a Revolution: Government Support for Computing*  
*Research.* National Academy Press.

8) Southern Hemisphere Genetic Resources and Multinational Corporations


