Science, Technology and Society

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Science, technology and society (STS) is an internationally recognized field of cross disciplinary study that integrates philosophical, social scientific and humanistic studies to better understand the natural and human-built world. The minor offers students the opportunity to critically examine science, technology and medicine as methods for reasoning about and acting upon the natural world and as expressions of human cultures, past and present. Students learn to scrutinize the ideas, reasoning, values, practices and artifacts embedded in the world they inhabit today. They explore how choices made within various historical, social, economic and political contexts sometimes influence the development of science, technology and medicine. They also see how the adoption and diffusion of ideas, artifacts and techniques can then influence individuals, society, politics and culture. Courses in this minor draw students together from diverse majors across the campus and encourage open inquiry into the role of science and technology in society.

The minor in STS is open to all undergraduate students at JMU. Courses taken to complete the STS minor can also be used to satisfy the student’s major, as well as General Education requirements. The STS minor requires 18 credit hours with at least one course each from the history, sociology and ISAT courses listed.

Required Courses

Choose one:
- ISAT 131. Technology, Science, and Society
- HIST 327. Technology in America
- SOCI 315. Science, Technology, and Society

Elective courses

Choose five from at least four different programs/majors
- ANTH 340. The Invention of Race
- HIST 305. History of Science and Christianity
- HIST 306. A History of the Body in the West
- HIST 327. Technology in America
- HIST 404. Science and Society in Early Modern Europe
- HIST 405. Travel and Exploration
- HIST 427. U.S. Environmental History
- HIST 443. Modern American Technology and Culture
- ISAT 231. Political Economy of Technology and Science
- ISAT 311. Role of Energy in Modern Society
- ISAT 411. Energy Economics and Policy
- ISAT 421. Environmental Policy and Regulation
- ISAT 456. Ethical, Legal and Social Implications of Biotechnology
- ISAT 464. Telecommunications in the Public Interest
- ISAT 471. Transportation: Energy, Environment and Society
- ISAT 477. Complex Systems and How They Fail
- PHIL 396. Philosophy of Physics
- PHIL 397. Philosophy of Space and Time
- PHIL 398. Philosophy of Quantum Theory
- PHIL 410. Philosophy of Science
- SOCI 311. Sociology of the Environment
- SOCI 316. Space, Time and the Human Social Environment
- SOCI 366. Sociology of Knowledge
- SOCI 375. Medical Sociology
- WMST/ISAT 485. Gender Studies in Science
- WRTC 358. Writing About Science and Technology
- WRTC 416/SCOM 465. Rhetoric of Environmental Science and Technology
- WRTC 458. Scientific and Medical Communication

Special topics courses not listed can be applied to the minor with prior approval of the program coordinator.