Science and Technology Studies

The Designated Emphasis (DE) in Science and Technology Studies (STS) is a program of training in the social studies of science, technology, and medicine for Berkeley and UCSF PhD students from any home department. Students who are accepted into the program and complete its requirements will be in a strong position to excel within STS-related fields.

Students in this program receive a rigorous grounding in the studies of knowledge production and technological change. The program also facilitates a deeper involvement with the lively interdisciplinary research community at Berkeley dedicated to understanding the dynamic relations among science, technology, and social and political formations.

For current DE students, small grants are available for STS-related conferences and fieldwork.

To be admitted to the Designated Emphasis in Science and Technology Studies, an applicant must already be accepted into a PhD program at the University of California, Berkeley. For further information regarding admission to graduate programs at UC Berkeley, please see the Graduate Division's admissions website (http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/).

How to apply for the DE:

1. One-page letter of intent summarizing research interests, educational or employment background, and any related coursework in areas related to Science and Technology Studies;
2. A list of courses the student would use to satisfy the elective requirement (optional but encouraged);
3. A writing sample (e.g., a paper you have written for a UC graduate course) that is indicative of your research interests; and
4. Letter of recommendation from a member of the Science and Technology Studies Affiliated Faculty group.

Coursework/Curriculum

STS C200	Topics in Science and Technology Studies	3
STS C250	Science and Technology Studies Research Seminar	3

Select three electives that place a critical engagement with science, technology and/or medicine at their core (see sample electives below)

Electives

Students are also required to take three elective courses that place a critical engagement with science, technology and/or medicine at their core. To foster interdisciplinarity, no more than two of these electives can be taken from the student's home department. As a package, the three elective courses are expected to enhance the student's capacity to understand and analyze how science and technology operate through and within ethical, historical, social, or cultural formations. **Courses listed on the DE website (http://cstms.berkeley.edu/teaching/de-in-sts/) are acceptable**. If the student wishes to have a course not listed count, he or she should send an email to the head graduate adviser, including the syllabus for the course and a justification for why it should be acceptable.

Below is a partial list of approved electives:

ANTHRO 210	Special Topics in Biological Anthropology	4
ANTHRO 219	Topics in Medical Anthropology	4
ANTHRO 250G	Seminars in Social and Cultural Anthropology: Anthropology of Ethics	4
ANTHRO 250X	Seminars in Social and Cultural Anthropology: Special Topics	4
ANTHRO 280C	Seminars in Area Studies: South Asia ("Hope and Futurity")	4
CY PLAN 254	Sustainable Communities	3
ENGLISH 203	Graduate Readings (On Life)	4
ESPM 256	Science, Technology, and the Politics of Nature	3
ESPM 260	Governance of Global Production	3
ESPM 261	Sustainability and Society	3
GEOG 203	Nature and Culture: Social Theory, Social Practice, and the Environment	4
GWS 232	Transnational Feminist Approaches to Knowledge Production	4
GWS 237	Transnational Science, Technology, and New Media	4
HISTORY 275S	Core Courses in the Literature of the Several Fields of History: History of Science	4
HISTORY 280S	Advanced Studies: Sources/General Literature of the Several Fields: History of Science	4
HISTORY 290	Historical Colloquium	1
INFO 203	Social Issues of Information	3
INFO 205	Information Law and Policy	3
PB HLTH 213A	Family Planning, Population Change, and Health	3
PB HLTH 222A	Biomedical Innovation Policy	3
PUB POL 282	Environment and Technology from the Policy and Business Perspective	4

Qualifying Examination

Your PhD qualifying exam committee must include at least one member of the DE affiliated faculty (https://cstms.berkeley.edu/all-people/faculty-fellows/) who will evaluate your knowledge related to the designated emphasis.

Dissertation

Your PhD dissertation topic must be related to Science and Technology Studies, and your PhD dissertation committee must include at least one member of the DE affiliated faculty who can evaluate it from that perspective.

Students may be asked to be a GSI (graduate student instructor) for STS C100 or other courses that the center might develop.

The Center for Science, Technology, Medicine, & Society provides many opportunities for professional development. The STS Working Group meets regularly to discuss STS texts and provide feedback on presentations, job talks, and other aspects of an academic career. Students are welcome to partake in masterclasses with visiting speakers in our colloquium series. Students are also invited to organize a conference on their general topic, with the assistance of the center.

Science and Technology Studies

STS C200 Topics in Science and Technology Studies 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2014, Fall 2013

This course provides a strong foundation for graduate work in STS, a multidisciplinary field with a signature capacity to rethink the relationship among science, technology, and political and social life. From climate change to population genomics, access to medicines and the impact of new media, the problems of our time are simultaneously scientific and social, technological and political, ethical and economic.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Science and Technology Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C254/ESPM C252/HISTORY C250

STS C204 Human Contexts and Ethics of Data 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

This course teaches you to use approaches from the across the humanities and interpretive social sciences and tools of Science, Technology, and Society (STS) to recognize, analyze, and shape the human contexts, social implications, and ethics of data and data technologies, including data analytics, algorithmic decision systems, machine learning (ML), and artificial intelligence (AI).

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or permission of the instructor. Graduate students without previous (undergraduate or graduate-level) preparation in the interpretive social sciences or humanities are encouraged to confer with the instructor before enrolling

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Science and Technology Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Carson

Also listed as: DATA C204/HISTORY C254

STS C250 Science and Technology Studies Research Seminar 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2017, Spring 2016, Spring 2015

This course will cover methods and approaches for students considering professionalizing in the field of STS, including a chance for students to workshop written work.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Science and Technology Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C273/ESPM C273/HISTORY C251