

SSNet CURRICULUM INITIATIVES – TOWN HALL MEETING

April 7, 2008

12:00-1:30 - Simpson Center for the Humanities (CMU 202)

RSVP: <http://depts.washington.edu/ssnet/>

The goal of this meeting of the Science Studies Network is to take stock of what SSNet might contribute to the existing range of programs and course offerings in the three thematic areas of SSNet interest:

- history and philosophy of science;
- cultural studies of science;
- research ethics, equity issues in the sciences, science policy.

This was one key area we identified as a focus for SSNet activities in our 2007-2008 proposal. We have done some preliminary work collecting information about existing curricular resources and soliciting suggestions about interdisciplinary courses, tracks, and programs we might usefully develop. We would now like to establish a small working group to take the lead in the SSNet curriculum initiatives.

The suggestions we've received range from modest to highly ambitious and include the following:

SSNet to serve a navigating role:

- expand the existing SSNet and FOSEP on-line listings of (undergraduate and graduate) courses, to serve a guide for interested students in existing programs:

fosep@u.washington.edu

http://depts.washington.edu/ssnet/ssn_courses.htm

Undergraduate course and program development:

- if there is a sufficient range of undergraduate STS courses, develop an undergraduate minor;
- pilot interdisciplinary STS courses that could serve as the core of such a minor, or of a more ambitious STS major, and/or that complement courses offered through existing/proposed programs;
- explore the potential for developing a major that complements existing programs: most likely a major that serves students from the humanities and social sciences who have an interest in social and cultural studies of science, given the existing HPS program and proposed Integrated Sciences major at UW-Seattle, and the STS program taking shape at UW-Bothell.

Graduate course and program development:

- build a catalog of graduate STS courses that could constitute a graduate certificate program;
- develop a suite of interdisciplinary core seminars that could serve as the core for such a program;
- draft an IGERT proposal for an interdisciplinary graduate program in STS;
- and/or secure internal support for a graduate program in STS, most likely a consortium program designed to establish a standard of scholarship in the area, and to serve as a recruiting tool for graduate students with interests in science studies who seek admission through affiliated graduate programs (e.g., in Anthropology, Communication, History, Philosophy, among others).

Questions for discussion:

- what role can SSNet usefully play in developing STS courses and curriculum at UW?
 - is there a particular need, or niche, or integrating role we should focus on, by area and level?
 - how might we most effectively support or collaborate with existing and proposed programs?
- what resources are there that could support curriculum development at the undergraduate and graduate level and/or to support development of an NSF grant proposal for an IGERT?
- how should we proceed?
 - a working group or project-specific task force(s)?
 - timetable?
 - a curriculum development retreat or summit?

EXISTING PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

This is a schematic listing that is no doubt incomplete. Do please send us additions, updates, corrections. A call for input on curriculum resources was circulated through the SSNet e-list in mid-February; it's attached.

Major in History and Philosophy of Science: College of Arts and Sciences, UW-Seattle
an established interdisciplinary BA supported by History and Philosophy

- 5 core courses in history and philosophy of science, including a capstone seminar (25 credits), chosen from a roster of courses such as "Science in Civilization" (two part history series), "Philosophy of Science," "Logic," "Science Reason and Reality";
- 25 credits of electives in Philosophy and History;
- 30 credits of science coursework

Science, Technology and Society*: a proposed option in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, UW-Bothell
an undergraduate program designed to "engage students in the study of mathematics, science, and technology as socially created knowledge and practice, and as forces of change," that is broadly interdisciplinary, integrating approaches and perspectives drawn from the sciences, humanities, arts and social sciences; to start in Fall 2008

- lower division prerequisites and suggested options: 2 quarters of a 100 or 200-level science sequence, or the first quarter from two different science sequences + a course in "Functions, Models, and Quantitative Reasoning";
- three core courses (15 credits): "Science, Technology and Society," "Science Methods and Practice," "Understanding Statistics";
- 25 credits in option courses in four thematic areas: mathematical sciences; natural sciences; science communications; culture, politics, and society
- 50 additional credits: a senior seminar and program core course, distribution courses and electives

[* **The Science, Technology, and Society program is now underway at UW Bothell, as of Fall 2008.**
See <http://www.bothell.washington.edu/IAS/ba/options/sts.shtml> for details]

Major in Integrated Sciences: under development for the College of Arts and Sciences, UW-Seattle
an interdisciplinary undergraduate major (BSc), proposed by Michael Brown (Earth & Space Sciences)

- 65 credits of science courses in mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, earth and space sciences;
- 15 credits in one of five upper-division science specializations: physics, earth and space sciences, biology, chemistry or atmospheric science;
- 20 credits in four core courses:
 - two core courses that focus on how science is done; what constitutes acceptable scientific methodology; how sciences fits in society, the ethical ramifications of science, the communication of science: "Nature of Science," "Case Studies Integrated Sciences";
 - a one-credit seminar/clinic;
 - a capstone course that offers hands-on experience with a scientific investigation.

Minor in Medical History and Ethics: School of Medicine, UW-Seattle

an undergraduate minor supported by the Department of Medical History and Ethics

- 25 credits in Medical History and Ethics and related courses;
- to include 2 core courses: one in ethics ("Bioethics," "Medical Ethics," "Justice in Health Care"), and one in history ("History of Modern Medicine"; "Disease in History"; "Pursuit of Health").

Undergraduate courses: a great many STS courses are offered across the College of Arts and Sciences in programs such as CHID, the Program on Values, and the Honors Program; through the Simpson Center (the Danz courses in the Humanities); and in departments such as Anthropology, Communication, Geography, the Jackson School of International Studies, Physics and Astronomy, to name a few.

Graduate courses: a number of STS seminars and courses are offered at the graduate level dispersed across programs, departments, and colleges. Members of FOSEP have compiled a list of courses that their members have found useful, in the area of science ethics and science policy, available on-line at:

fosep@u.washington.edu

From: ssnet@u.washington.edu
Subject: [Ssnet_list] Science Studies Curriculum Information
Date: February 25, 2008 10:50:29 AM PST
To: ssnet_list@u.washington.edu

Hello All,

As you may know, one of the goals of the Science Studies Network is to gather information regarding Science Studies courses taught on campus, with an eye towards the possibility of developing curriculum initiatives (both graduate and undergraduate) and/or certificate programs in the future. We have contacted a few individuals who we thought might have insight in to what relevant courses are currently offered, and you may remember that we solicited information about Winter 2008 courses using this list last quarter.

To move on to the next step in this process, we would once again like to ask for information from members of the network. Specifically, we are wondering:

- (1) What classes, if any, are you participating in or offering in Spring Quarter that are relevant to science studies?
- (2) What science studies classes, if any, do you have information about that are taught periodically at UW?
- (3) What graduate/undergraduate curriculum initiatives would you recommend implementing in the future? (This question will likely be taken up in some detail during our curriculum-focused colloquium at the beginning of Spring Quarter.)

Some of these questions ask for information this is similar to that gathered from the e-mail sent in the fall. If you have already sent in curriculum information, please feel no need to submit the information again.

Thanks much,

Brandon Olsen
SSNet Graduate Research Asst.