**PHL 330 (H): Science, Democracy, and Citizenship**

**Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Prakash Chenjeri Dept. of Language, Literature, and Philosophy

Honors Program

Office: Central 253 Email: [chenjeri@sou.edu](mailto:chenjeri@sou.edu) Phone: 552-6034

**Required Textbooks\*:**

*Who Rules in Science*? *An Opinionated guide to the Wars*

James Brown (Harvard University Press, 2001)

*Science, Truth, and Democracy*

Philip Kitcher (Oxford University Press, 2001)

\*Additional readings, audio/visual material are posted on the course Blackboard. Check the library for Prof. Chenjeri’s anthology of essays.

**Course Description:**

Science is an integral part of modern everyday life. There is no question that our lives have been enriched by its achievements, yet at the same time it has exposed us to some serious challenges. This raises the question: What should be the proper role of science in society? By focusing on some of the critical issues (ex: global warming, stem cell research, and the teaching of intelligent design) that dominate both our cultural and political arenas, this course will examine the question of what it means to be scientifically literate citizen in the twenty-first century.

This course is designed as a seminar as such most sessions are student-led.

**Course Requirements and Grade:**

Final grade in the course will be based on the following:

Two essays (2 X 50) 100 30%

Class Participation 100 15%

Attendance 50 10%

Final Project/Presentation 150 45%

Total 400

**Week 1**

Course overview. Citizenship in modern democracy. American Constitution and its uniqueness. What is science? Role of science in modern society.

Reading:

*Democracy in America* (1840. (Author's Introduction: http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/detoc/preface.htm

Brown/Chapter 1, pp. 1-28

**Week 2**

Reading: Brown/Chapter 2: The Scientific Experience, pp. 29-48; Chapter 3: How We

Go To Where We Are, pp. 49-74

Case Study: Pharmaceutical industry and Medicine

Seminar 3/Our Medicated Society – Watch Bill Moyers interview

**Week 3**

Reading: Brown/Chapter 4: The Nihilist Wing of Social Constructivism, pp. 75-95

Democracy and the Idea of American Exceptionalism

Case Study: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiments

**Week 4**

Reading: Kitcher/Part I: 1-3/The Search for Truth, pp. 3-41; Kitcher/Part I: 4-6 The

Search for Truth, pp. 43-82

Case Study: Stem cell debate; Guest speaker: Dr. David Oline (SOU Biology Prof.)

**Week 5**

Reading: Reading: Brown/Chapter 5: Three Key Terms, pp. 96-114

Seminar: Stem cell debate

**Week 6**

Reading: Kitcher/Part II: 7-9/The Claims of Democracy, pp. 85-116; Brown/Chapter 7:

The Role of Reason, pp. 144-168

Case Study: Global warming (Guest speaker: Dr. Greg Jones/SOU Geography Prof.)

Seminar 2/Politics of Climate Change

**Week7**

Reading: Kitcher/Part II: 10-12/The Claims of Democracy, pp. 117-166; Brown/Chapter

8: The Democratization of Science, pp. 169-188

Case Study: ID and the science curriculum

**Week 8**

Reading: Kitcher/Part II: 13-14/The Claims of Democracy, pp. 167-201; Brown/Chapter

9: Science with a Social Agenda, pp. 189-206

Case Study: ID and the science curriculum; Scopes and Dover Trials and their impact

**Weeks 10 and 11 December 1 – 10**

Summing up roundtable:

Topic: Connecting the Dots: The Urgency for a Scientifically Literate Citizenry in

Modern Democracy

Final Project Presentations