

SCIE300 Overview of Science and Society Paper assignment (SSP)

The goal of this assignment is to write a substantial paper on a topic relating to Science and Society. The final paper will be 2500-3500 words in length. Each student will have the freedom to select their own topic. The topic may be closely related to the assigned books for the course or it may be completely unrelated to those books. The choice of topic must be approved by the instructor, but every effort will be made to accommodate individual student interests. It is recommended that you discuss possibilities for your choice of topic with the instructor early in the semester. There is one additional restriction on the choice of topic: it should not have substantial overlap with a paper you have written or are writing in any other college level course.

The intended audience of the paper will be a general scientifically literate audience, such as US college graduates who majored in one of the sciences. The paper should combine technical and factual content with societal or policy implications. It may argue a particular point of view (like Bostrom) or attempt to lay out a range of options while explaining their advantages and disadvantages (like MacKay). The structure and style of Bostrom and Mackay are a good guide for the structure and style of the paper.

The assignment consists of two milestones: SSP1, which is a proposal and annotated bibliography; and SSP2, which is the paper itself. Details of each of these milestones are provided separately.