Our contemporary industrial and informational society is a highly technological construct. One in which much of what we understand about our surroundings, and how we understand it, is couched in technological terms. Technics thus becomes an overarching trope – a commonly used theme -- through which much of what we experience is filtered. In this seminar we will explore various understandings of technics as a way of knowing through a close reading and discussion of key works on the subject. We will look for sub-tropes that develop from technics, among these: efficiency, speed, convenience, mobility, and connection, and there association to the built at various scales.

The first half of the semester will entail a planned set of readings, while the second will be divided into two parts; readings developed in concert with participants and student presentations.

This is an advanced level graduate seminar. You will be expected to read and be prepared to discuss not less than 100 – 150 pages a week. This is not a lecture recitation format nor is it a workshop or mini studio. A final research paper and presentation will be required. Depending on the number of participants small groups will be expected to begin the discussion one or two times during the semester.

Grades will be earned based on your engagement with the course material, active participation in the weekly discussion, the final paper and presentation.

**Readings for the first half of the semester will selections from, but may not be limited to the following:**

The Question Concerning Technology, M. Heidegger

The Human Built World, T. Hughes

Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Prometheus, B. Steigler

The Technological Society, J. Ellul

Autonomous Technology, L. Winner

Technics and Civilization, L. Mumford

The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical, M. Guillen

The Digital Sublime, V. Mosco

Technoromanticism, R. Coyne