We invite applications from students in the sciences, engineering, social sciences, and humanities for a five-day summer school that will provide training in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS). This seminar is an excellent opportunity for graduate students who are interested in incorporating social and humanistic perspectives on science and technology into their research, and require an advanced level introduction to the field.

Description: A curious feature of knowledge societies is that producing more data does not always result in less uncertainty, and the circulation of information may obscure some facts even as it reveals and amplifies others. Scientists, policy-makers, ethicists, laypersons, and advocacy groups alike attempt to manage the flow of facts, techniques, and materials by sequestering, containing, or merely highlighting certain facets. Yet despite their best efforts at controlling the distribution of knowledge, there are also unanticipated leaks, diversions, and revelations. Imperatives for transparency and the ‘right to know’ may also come into direct conflict with intended ‘protections,’ as demonstrated by controversies over the sequestering of knowledge through intellectual property regimes or governmental suppression of data for political purposes. We will use examples and case studies from research on the paradoxes of information flow in the life sciences to introduce and illustrate some of the key approaches in STS. These examples cases will span genetics, synthetic biology, newborn screening, bioinformatics, regenerative medicine and precision medicine. The Summer School is supported by the Holtz Center for Science and Technology Studies and its Disclosing/Enclosing knowledge research cluster. For more information about the cluster, see www.sts.wisc.edu/discosingenclosing.

Program and faculty
Through a mix of lectures, group workshops and discussions of individual projects, participants will be exposed to core concepts and methodologies in STS. The workshop faculty will illustrate core concepts or methods with examples from their own research. These will be accompanied by in-depth discussion sessions, case study exercises, short presentations on student research projects, and a field trip. There will be plenty of opportunities for interaction and participation, as well as enjoying artisanal beer and cheese on UW Madison’s lakefront.

Organizing UW Madison faculty:
Linda Hogle, Medical History and Bioethics
Nicole Nelson, History of Science
Pilar Ossorio, Morgridge Institute for Research
Krishanu Saha, Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery
Guest faculty:
Stephen Hilgartner, Cornell University
Sheila Jasanoff, Harvard University
Sergio Sismondo, Queen’s University
Stefan Timmermans, UCLA

Selection criteria
We will recruit outstanding young scholars from UW Madison and across the United States. Applications are open to all graduate students, including disciplines other than STS or History and Philosophy of Science. The summer school will offer a rich educational experience for those new to the field, and scientists who are interested in gaining skills to address social or policy questions related to their research are especially encouraged to apply.

Key dates
Deadline for applications: Monday, January 11th, 2016
Notification of acceptance: Monday, February 1st, 2016
Registration and financial aid form: Monday, February 8th, 2016

Financial aid
Accommodations for out of town students and some meals will be covered by a grant from the Holtz Center for Science and Technology Studies. A limited amount of funds are available for travel grants ($150-$400, depending on the distance traveled). More information about travel grant allocation will be provided in the acceptance letters.

Application process
Applications should include the following, sent as a single PDF file:

1. Statement of interest (maximum 300 words). The statement of interest should describe the applicant’s background and qualifications and describe their current research and its relevance to the aims of the summer school
2. Brief Curriculum Vitae (maximum 2 pages)
3. One signed letter of recommendation from a supervisor, director of graduate studies, or other faculty member familiar with applicant’s research interests.

Application materials should be sent to Lyn Macgregor at lyn.macgregor@wisc.edu.