



Western University
Department of Sociology

Fall 2016
Sociology 2106a-001
Digital Humanities 2921F
Technology and Society

Classes

Mondays 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm
NCB 113

Instructor

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TBD
Office: SSC TBD
Email:
Office Hours: TBD pm or by appointment.

1. Course Description

This course provides a critical examination of the complex interrelationship between society and technology. The course makes students aware of the pervasiveness of technology in our everyday lives, creating and encouraging an understanding of how technology interacts with and is embodied in society. Technology is both the driving force behind societal change as well as the output of our technological imagination. It is this dichotomy that will be examined in this course. Students will learn about how digital tools have led to the development of a high-tech society characterized by customization, individualism, and privatization. The course covers topics such as innovation in the technology sector, Facebook, online surveillance, digital inequality, and immaterial labour.

2. Learning Outcomes and Specific Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge of social processes, social relations, and various dimensions of social experience, and assess them from a critical sociological perspective.
2. Understand the implications of theory and sociological research for interpreting social events and practices.
3. Read, synthesize and evaluate theoretical arguments and published research from a critical perspective.

Students Completing this Course will:

1. Compare and critically examine a wide range of theories on the complex interrelationship between society and technology.
2. Learn about how digital tools have led to the development of a high-tech society characterized by customization, individualism, and privatization.
3. Obtain an overview of the key approaches that are being developed to understand the complexities of digital labour.
4. Define surveillance as a multi-faceted term with great relevance to the Information Society.

3. Prerequisites

None.

4. Required Text

Quan-Haase, A. (2016). *Technology and Society: Inequality, Power, and Social Networks* (2nd Ed.). Don Mills: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199014712.

You can purchase a copy of the textbook at the UWO bookstore or online at <http://www.bookstore.uwo.ca>. There are also copies available at the UWO library.

If you misplace this course outline, you can download another copy from the course website.

5. Course Requirements and Grading

Requirements	Date	Proportion of Test Grade
Test 1 (multiple choice)	Sept. 29	30%
Test 2 (multiple choice)	Nov. 3	35%
Final Exam (multiple choice)	Examination Period	35%
Total		100%

There are two mid-term tests and a final exam. The tests consist of multiple-choice questions. The mid-term tests will take 1 hour and 30 minutes and there will be no class on that day. The final exam will last 2 hours. A zero mark will be given to students who miss a test or the final exam without documentation. Please follow the steps outlined by the Office of the Registrar. Grades from in-class tests will be posted within a week from the exam online.

The mid-term tests and final exam are based on the covered book chapters, lecture slides, and lecture notes. Lecture notes are the responsibility of students. If, for any reason, you cannot attend class, YOU are responsible for obtaining lecture notes from your classmates. The instructor will not provide lecture notes.

No electronic devices, including cell phones, will be allowed during exams.

Policy Regarding Missed Exams

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the **Academic Counseling office** at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam. If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor's documentation, you will be allowed to write a makeup exam at a later date.

Compassionate Grounds

Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member's physician to your home faculty's Academic Counseling office. **In Case of a Death:** Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty's Academic Counseling office.

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit: http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for more information on these resources and on mental health.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2111 ext 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

6. Grade Guidelines

Department of Sociology guidelines require a particular course grade distribution, which may require curving or otherwise adjusting your course grade in order to meet this requirement. As much as possible, your earned course grade will be the grade you receive.

For 2200-level courses, the course mean is to be between a 66-70%, and there are to be more Bs than As.

The Sociology Department follows the University of Western Ontario grading guidelines, which are as follows (see http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/grades_undergrad.pdf):

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

7. Plagiarism

Students are responsible for understanding the nature and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other scholastic offenses. Plagiarism and cheating are considered very serious offenses because they undermine the integrity of research and education. Actions constituting a scholastic offense are described at the following link:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Students are expected to work alone during tests and the final exam. The UWO regulations state that: "Computer-marked multiple choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Regulations).

Possible penalties for a scholastic offense include failure of the assignment, failure of the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

8. Additional Resources

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. **Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.**

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

Accessibility Options:

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

9. Course Schedule

It is your responsibility to consult the course schedule below in order to keep up with the course readings and ensure you do not miss the tests. Sleeping in or misreading the schedule are not accepted excuses for missing a test. You can always consult the course web site for updates. The course schedule outlines the topics to be discussed each week, the readings corresponding to the lectures, and test dates. Assigned readings should be completed before attending the class.

Being on Time and Texting/Social Media

Students are expected to be on time for class. Any missed material is your responsibility.

Please read the “Principles in the Use of Information Technology” outlined in the current Student Calendar and adhere to these guidelines.

Texting and checking social media sites during Class is NOT permitted (unless you have permission from the instructor).

Schedule Overview

Week	Date	Topic/Assignment	Readings
1.	Sept. 8	Introduction to the Course: The Technological Society	Chapter 1
2.	Sept. 15	Technology in Society: A Historical Overview	Chapter 2
3.	Sept. 22	Theoretical Perspectives on Technology CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 1 to 3 + NOTES)	Chapter 3
4.	Sept. 29	Test 1 (30%)	Test covers materials from Class and Chapters 1 to 3
5.	Oct. 6	Gender	Chapter 4
6.	Oct. 13	Techno-Social Designing	Chapter 5
7.	Oct. 20	The Adoption and Diffusion of Technological Innovations CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 4 to 6 + NOTES)	Chapter 6
8.	Oct. 27-28	Fall break (study time) NO CLASSES!	
9.	Nov. 3	Test 2 (35%)	Test covers material from Class and Chapters 4 to 6
10.	Nov. 10	Community in the Network Society	Chapter 9
11.	Nov. 17	Technology-Mediated Social Relationships	Chapter 10
12.	Nov. 24	The Surveillance Society	Chapter 11
13.	Dec. 1	Ethical Dimensions of Technology CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 9 to 12 + NOTES)	Chapter 12
Examination Period		Final Exam (35%)	Exam covers materials from Class and Chapters 9 to 12

NOTE: Because of the study break, we can't cover chapters 7 and 8! Content from these chapters will not be on any of the tests.

Please check Department of Sociology web site (<http://sociology.uwo.ca/>) for class cancellations or changes.

SDC's Learning Skills Services, Rm 4100 WSS, www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning

LS counsellors are ready to help you improve your learning skills. We offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling