



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2106B-001
The Internet and Society
Winter 2019
Monday, 10:30-12:20, SSC-SSC-2032

Instructor:

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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.

Prerequisite(s):

None.

Learning Outcomes:

Students completing this course will:

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.

Required Text(s):

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.

Method of Evaluation:

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Course Weight</i>
Test 1	February 4	30%
Test 2	TBA	30%
Final Exam	Final Exam Period	40%
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 two weeks from the exam online (OWL).

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.

How to Contact Me:

Please email me at aquan@uwo.ca if you need to get ahold of me.

How to get important information:

Please visit Western's OWL site for all important information regarding this course. If you can't find the information you are looking for, please email me.

Important Policies

Policies for Tests:

I will not give extensions except under special circumstances. Please see the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. If you cannot make the test, notify the instructor as soon as possible, preferably before the scheduled date and present adequate documentation.

Medical documentation will be required to reschedule a test. Please send an email to your professor as soon as possible to make arrangements and submit documentation to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office (Social Science). No electronic devices are allowed during the mid-term tests or other aids.

Policies on Examinations

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only.

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 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 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an

accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:
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:
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://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

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.	Jan. 14	Introduction to the Course: The Technological Society	Chapter 1
2.	Jan. 21	Technology in Society: A Historical Overview	Chapter 2
3.	Jan. 28	Theoretical Perspectives on Technology CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 1 to 3 + NOTES)	Chapter 3
4.	Feb. 4	Test 1 (30%)	Test covers materials from Class and Chapters 1 to 3
5.	Feb. 11	Gender	Chapter 4
6.	Feb. 18	Spring Reading Week/No Classes	
7.	Feb. 25	Techno-Social Designing	Chapter 5
8.	March 4	The Adoption and Diffusion of Technological Innovations CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 4 to 6 + NOTES)	Chapter 6
9.	March 11	Test 2 (30%)	Test covers material from Class and Chapters 4 to 6
10.	March 18	Community in the Network Society	Chapter 9
11.	March 25	Technology-Mediated Social Relationships	Chapter 10
12.	April 2	The Surveillance Society	Chapter 11

13.	April 11	Ethical Dimensions of Technology CLASS REVIEW (CHAPTERS 9 to 12 + NOTES)	Chapter 12
Examination Period		Final Exam (40%)	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 website (<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.