The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2106A-001
Technology and Society
Fall 2022

Monday 10:30am – 12:30pm

Location: SSC-3022

In-person

Instructor: Prof. Quan-Haase

Office Hours: TBA
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5413
Email: aquan@uwo.ca

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

Anti-requisite(s): None

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. (2020). *Technology and Society: Inequality, Power, and Social Networks* (**3rd Ed**.). Don Mills: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199032259.

You can purchase a copy of the textbook at the UWO bookstore (eBooks are also available) or online at http://www.bookstore.uwo.ca.

On Amazon: https://www.amazon.ca/Technology-Society-Social-Networks-Inequality/dp/0199032254/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=quan-haase&qid=1594143942&sr=8-1

On OUP: https://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199032259.html

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (http://owl.uwo.ca) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Requirement	Date	Course Weight
Mid-Term	October 24	45%
Final Exam	Final Exam Period	55%
Total		100%

Department of Sociology Grading Guidelines

Sociology courses at the 2100 are expected to have means in the range of 70-75% (As not to exceed Bs).

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.

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Absences from Final Examinations:

Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Academic Counselling will determine eligibility to write a Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

Department Makeup exams:

- Midterm; Friday November 11 12:00-3:00pm Location TBA
- Final: Friday January 13th 12:00-3:00pm Location TBA

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Schedule Overview

Week	Date	Topic/Assignment	Readings
1.	Sept. 12	Introduction to the Course: The Technological Society	Chapter 1
2.	Sept. 19	Technology in Society: A Historical Overview	Chapter 2
3.	Sept. 26	Theoretical Perspectives on Technology	Chapter 3
4.	October 3	Techno-Social Designing	Chapter 4
5.	**Oct. 10**	**Thanksgiving/No Classes**	
6.	Oct. 17	The Adoption and Diffusion of Technological Innovations **CLASS REVIEW (CH 1 to 5)**	Chapter 5
7.	**October 24** **9-10:30 am**	**Mid-Term**	**Mid-term covers materials from Chapters 1 to 5**
8.	**Oct. 31**	**Fall Reading Week/No classes.**	
9.	Nov. 7	Genders and Technology	Chapter 8
10.	Nov. 14	Community in the Network Society	Chapter 9
11.	Nov. 21	Technology-Mediated Social Relationships	Chapter 10
12.	Nov. 28	The Surveillance Society	Chapter 11
13.	Dec. 5	Ethical Dimensions of Technology **CLASS REVIEW (CH 8 to 12)**	Chapter 12
Examination Period		**Final Exam**	**Exam covers materials from Lectures 8 to 12**

NOTE: Because of the study break, we can't cover chapters 6 and 7! 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**.**

Important Policies

Academic Consideration for Missed Work: Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. The student medical certificate is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Accessibility Options: Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.

Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:
www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/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:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

A Note on Plagiarism: Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (https://www.turnitin.com/).

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

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: Academic Counselling - Western University (uwo.ca).

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html .To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.