



The University of Western Ontario

## SOCIOLOGY 2106A-001

Technology and Society

Fall 2023

**Delivery method:** In-person

**Instructor:** Dr. Molly-Gloria Patel

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Department of Sociology**

**Email:** [mharpe22@uwo.ca](mailto:mharpe22@uwo.ca)

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*This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.*

**Course Description:** 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

### Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

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

### Course Material:

#### 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](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>

Any additional weekly suggested readings and materials will also be posted on OWL, also in the Resources folder. Students are expected to do the weekly readings as these will be the basis for discussions, assignments, and evaluations. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to engage with any additional/suggested material as these will help to contextualize the lecture material and provide further examples.

**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.

- **How to contact me:** The best way to contact me is via email ([mharpe22@uwo.ca](mailto:mharpe22@uwo.ca)). Please put the course code as your subject line. From Monday to Friday, I will usually respond within 24 hours. Emails received over the weekend will be promptly responded to the following Monday. Alternatively, students can also email me to arrange a time to meet in-person before or after class or via Zoom.
- **How to Get Important Information:** Visit the course OWL site, see the course outline, and key dates and class materials. It is strongly encouraged for students to check the course OWL site regularly to properly engage with course material, to not miss any important announcements, and to receive any course-related updates. If you are experiencing problems with OWL, please contact the WTS Help Desk at (519) 661-3800. For hours and additional contact information please visit [www.uwo.ca/wts/helpdesk/](http://www.uwo.ca/wts/helpdesk/). Troubleshooting and help information is available for students: <https://owlhelp.uwo.ca/>

### Method of Evaluation:

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

### Evaluation Breakdown:

Description	Weight	Due Date
Midterm	45%	October 23rd, 2023
Final Exam	55%	TBA, during examination period
	100%	

### Department Grading Guidelines:

Sociology courses at the 2100 level 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.

### Expectations:

Students are expected to attend class as well as actively check the course site and their university emails for communications from the instructor. Students are expected to actively engage in all course readings and activities throughout the semester, which include reading and viewing of all course material as well as participating in course discussion questions and activities (both graded and ungraded). It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, and midterms/examinations.

### ***Evaluation Details:***

- 1. Course Midterm (45% of your final grade):** The midterm will consist of a series of multiple-choice questions. Students will have 90 minutes to complete the midterm during class time — *there will be no lecture on the day the midterm is scheduled*. The midterm is not cumulative and will only cover materials discussed in the first half of the course (e.g., chapters 1 through 5). Students are not able to retake the midterm if they are not satisfied with their grade.
- 2. Final Exam (55% of your final grade):** The final exam will consist of a series of multiple-choice questions. Students will have 120 minutes to complete the final exam. The final exam is not cumulative and will only cover materials discussed in the second half of the course (e.g., chapters 8 through 12). Students are not able to retake the final exam if they are not satisfied with their grade.

### **Student Absences:**

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

### ***Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:***

For work totalling 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.

## **Important Policies**

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf)” document [https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic\\_Policies.pdf](https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf) for additional information regarding important policies.

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health