Course Description: This course will investigate various internet platforms and the social implications these have for our understanding of social phenomena, such as friendship, work, and privacy. The aim is to not only have a good understanding of Internet theories, but also of the methodological challenges inherent in studies of the sociodigital.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third year or above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Anti-requisite(s): None

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:
1. Contextualize the role of the Internet on society and its impacts.
2. Examine different theoretical approaches for understanding the effects of the Internet on society.
3. Assess methodological challenges inherent to studies of the socio-digital.
4. Apply key concepts, ideas, and theoretical approaches to the study of the Internet and social life.

Course Material:
- **Required Text(s):** “Digital Media and Society” by Simon Lindgren (1st or 2nd edition). SAGE Publications LTD.
  - Print and digital text available through Campus Bookstore at Western. [https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2022B&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/SOC3301G](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2022B&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/SOC3301G)
**Additional:** Weekly readings and video/audio materials will be posted on OWL in the corresponding “Lessons” tab

*Note: Students are expected to do the weekly readings as these will be the basis for class discussions, assignments, and evaluations. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to engage with any additional/suggested material as these will help to contextualize class discussions and provide further examples.*

**Communication:**

- **How to contact me:** The best way to reach me is through email: lhoang3@uwo.ca. Emails will be monitored daily; students will typically receive a response in 24 – 72 hours. Please note: Messages to me sent via OWL “messages” tool or discussion forum may not receive timely responses.
- **Before contacting me:** Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site on a regular basis for announcements pertaining to the course or other updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the course. Make sure to check announcements or syllabus before emailing me a question.

**Technical Support:**

- 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/.
- 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. The use of ChatGPT, OpenAI or any other AI software is **NOT PERMITTED** within this course. Assignments and/or exams with suspected use of AI software will result in an automatic failure.

**Evaluation Breakdown:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture Attendance + Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>March 11 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Feb 12, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper (social media content/netnography)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Mar 25, 2024</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

100%
**Evaluation Details:**

**Lecture Attendance + Class participation (20% of total grade):** Attendance is expected. Students may miss one lecture without valid medical or other documentation. If you cannot attend a class due to illness or other reasons, please inform Dr. Hoang ahead of time. For any additional missed lectures, students will need to receive accommodation from academic counselling. Students are expected to proactively participate in class discussions. Class participation will be measured through an assessment of the quality of your contribution in addition to your preparedness based on reading course material, raising interesting questions, applying key concepts, engaging with your peers. Class participation is NOT solely based on a quantitative measurement of your contributions (e.g., how much or often you talk).

Note: An alternative participation method will be available for students uncomfortable speaking publicly in class. Students MUST reach out to Dr. Hoang by the end of the second week of the term to request information and approval for this alternative method.

**Midterm (35% of your final grade):** There will be one written examination for this course – a midterm. The midterm will be written in class. The midterm will be multiple choice and long/short answer format. Students will have 3 hours to complete the examination. 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.

**Paper Proposal (10% of your final grade):** Students will work individually to provide a proposal for their final paper content analysis/netography of their social media account. The proposal will provide a brief synopsis of the research problem, outline their research question and methodological strategy. Students will write a 2 – 3 page paper (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins). More instructions will be distributed on OWL.

Late assignments will be docked at 5% per day (not including weekends). Assignments will not be accepted after 5 days late.

**Final Paper (35% of your final grade):** Students will work individually to conduct a content analysis or netnography analysis of their social media account. Students will design a research question, engage the methodological strategy to collect their virtual qualitative data, and then apply relevant sociological concepts/theories pertaining to internet and digital society to address their research questions. Students will write a 9 – 12 page paper (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins). More instructions will be distributed on OWL.

A digital copy of the paper will be submitted online to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism.

Late assignments will be docked at 5% per day (not including weekends). Assignments will not be accepted after 5 days late.
**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 less than 10% of the overall course grade:**

For missed class attendance or participation, the instructor will allow **one** absence without documentation or referral to academic counselling (e.g., students **must** attend at least ten of eleven lectures). Students who miss more than one lecture must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Those who receive accommodation for additional missed lectures/participation will have their attendance/participation grade reweighted. Note that for assignments that are worth 10% and more, documentation (medical or otherwise) is required, it can **only** be collected by the student’s Dean’s Office Academic Counselling unit.

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

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.

**Academic Policies:**

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

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings and Resources</th>
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| 1 – Jan 8  | What is digital sociology and the digital society | Chapter 1 – Digital Society  
| 2 – Jan 15 | Socio-digital theories                       | Chapter 3 – Beyond Optimism and Pessimism  
| 3 – Jan 22 | Digital divide and inequalities online       | Chapter 5 – Community and Networks  
| 4 – Jan 29 | Digital research methods                     | Chapters 13 -Researching Digital Society                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 5 – Feb 5  | Digital culture, social media, and online interactions | Chapter 2 – Social Media Platforms  
Chapter 6 – Visuality and Visibility  
| 6 - Feb 12 | Digital identity, body, and emotion          | Chapter 4 – Interaction and Identity  
Chapter 7 – Emotions and Affect  
| 7 - Feb 19 | NO CLASS – READING WEEK                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
Hoang et al., 2020. The winners and the losers of the platform economy: who participates?  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 - Mar 11</td>
<td>MIDTERM</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 11 - Mar 18| Digital power, exploitation, and cancel culture | Chapter 9 – Power and Exploitation  
| 12 - Mar 25| Digital activism, slacktivism  | Chapter 10 – Activism and Mobilization  
| 13 - Apr 1 | Fake news and Mis(Dis)information | Dale, T. “Chapter 8 – the fundamental roles of technology in the spread of fake news”.  
| 14 – Apr 8 | No Class                      | No Class                                                                         |

END OF TERM