



The University of Western Ontario

SOCIOLOGY 3301F-650

The Internet and Society

Summer 2023

Online (Asynchronous)

Instructor: Dr. Molly-Gloria Harper

Office Hours: By appointment on Zoom

Department of Sociology

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

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 socio-digital.

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. Critically examine the role of the Internet on society, particularly identifying both benefits and challenges associated with the Internet.
2. Become familiar with different theoretical approaches and their application for examining the effects of the Internet on society.
3. Begin to understand 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):** None. All required course readings are available electronically through Western Libraries. If not available via Western Libraries, readings will be posted on OWL in the Resources folder. 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). 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 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.

Delivery format & Technical Support:

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format (not in “real time”). Lectures will be recorded and posted on the course page on OWL every Monday by 1:00pm (EST). To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- High speed Internet access with a standard, up-to-date browser (e.g., Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari)
- Constant and reliable access to their Western University email and OWL site as these are the official methods of communication for this course

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.

Evaluation Breakdown:

Description	Weight	Due Date
Weekly Reflections	10% x 5 = 50%	Ongoing, due weekly
Proposal	10%	May 23rd
Final Paper	40%	June 16th
	<hr/> 100%	

Expectations:

Students are expected to keep updated on the course material. Because we do not have a “fixed” meeting day, each of our weeks will start on Mondays. Students must actively check the course site and their university emails for communications from the instructor. Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include reading and viewing of all course material as well as completing course discussion questions and activities (both graded and ungraded). Remember, this course is not self-paced — there are specific deadlines and due dates listed in the “Class Schedule” section of the syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, participation, activities, and midterms/examinations.

Evaluation Details:

Weekly Reflections (10% each; 50% of total grade): To help ensure students are understanding the course material, each week students will submit a written reflection to express their thoughts, integrate their knowledge of the readings, and provide examples that relate to that week's topics of focus. To do this, students are expected to respond to the *two questions* from the provided list of discussion questions for each week (e.g., one question per course topic). In the write-up of their reflections, students will not summarize the course readings, but instead engage with concepts and arguments discussed in the readings/lecture to address their chosen question. Responses should be well thought out and thoroughly developed. Each reflection should be approximately 3-4 pages (e.g., 1.5-2 pages per question) (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, one-inch margins). Students are required to integrate the course reading materials into their responses — these sources should be cited using APA (7th Ed.); however, no reference page is needed. It is not expected that students integrate additional readings, research, or resources outside the course content for their assignments; however, if outside sources are used, then students must cite these sources and include a reference page (use APA (7th Ed.) format — this reference page is *not* included in the page limit). Write-ups are due weekly, submitted online via OWL in PDF format saved as your First Name_Last Name (e.g., Molly_Patel.pdf). See the course schedule and/or the evaluation breakdown sections of the syllabus for due dates. More details on the weekly writing assignments will be provided on OWL. A digital copy of each reflection will be submitted online to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. Each late weekly reflection will be docked at 1% per day (not including weekends) and will not be accepted after 5 days late.

Proposal (10% of your final grade): Students will work independently and write a 1-2 page proposal (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, one-inch margins). The proposal will include a discussion of the student's chosen topic, the research problem, and an annotated bibliography of three sources that informs the topic/argument(s) the student intends to make (use APA (7th Ed.) format — reference page is *not* included in the page limit). For this assignment, these sources must be external to class material. The proposal will be submitted online via OWL in PDF format saved as your First Name_Last Name (e.g., Molly_Patel.pdf). More details on the proposal, expectations, and grading breakdown will be provided on OWL. A digital copy of the proposal will be submitted online to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. Late proposal assignments will be docked at 2% per day (not including weekends) and will not be accepted after 5 days late.

Final Paper (40% of your final grade): The final paper for this course is a comprehensive research paper. Using the feedback obtained from the proposal, students will work independently and write a 10-12 page research paper (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font, one-inch margins). The research paper should be critical, analytical, and explore a topic of the student's choice discussed in class or related more broadly to the topic of the Internet and Society. All topics should be approved by the course instructor, if different from that in which they wrote about in their proposal, to ensure they relate to course material and are appropriate for the final assignment. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor if they are having difficulty formulating a topic. In their final assignments, students should engage with course readings as well as additional sources they find relating to their chosen topic. It is expected that students include *at least* 7-10 references in their final assignment (use APA (7th Ed.) format — reference page is *not* included in the page limit). As part of their reference list, students are expected to integrate course readings when appropriate. The final paper will be submitted online via OWL in PDF format saved as your First Name_Last Name (e.g., Molly_Patel.pdf). More details on the final assignment, expectations, and grading breakdown will be provided on OWL. A digital copy of the final paper will be submitted online to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. Late final assignments will be docked at 5% per day (not including weekends) and 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 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.

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 for additional information regarding important policies.

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

2023