



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2106A
Technology and Society
Fall 2024
In-person

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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:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Participate knowledgeably in constructive discussion about the study of technology and society;
2. Describe the historical development of technology and its impacts on social change;
3. Recognize how theoretical perspectives such as technological determinism, social determinism, and the social construction of technology can be used to analyze contemporary technological issues;
4. Define key concepts related to the study of technology and society; and,
5. Explain relevant topics such as the digital divide, online relationships, mediated communication, surveillance, and ethical considerations.

Course Material:

1. Quan-Haase, Anabel. 2020. *Technology & Society: Social Networks, Power, and Inequality*. Third Edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford.
2. Additional readings and resources available on our OWL Brightspace course site.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course [OWL Brightspace site](#) 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. Please respect your classmates, teaching assistant (TA), and instructor in all communications. Your TA and I constitute the teaching team for this course. TA contact information and office hours will be posted on our OWL site.

E-mail. You can reach your TA and me outside of class through e-mail. If you have a more complicated question (e.g., differences between theories), it is best to meet to discuss. E-mail can also be used for addressing administrative issues about the course and arranging to meet. We will do our best to respond to e-mail messages within 24 hours. Please use “Sociology 2106A” as the subject line. Use your Western e-mail account.

Office Hours. Do not hesitate to visit your TA and me during our office hours. We are here to help with any questions you might have. This time not only serves as a great way to clarify understanding of the course material, but we also enjoy talking with students about sociology in general, educational pursuits, and career aspirations. If you cannot make it to my office hours I will usually be around after class, or you can make an appointment to meet with me in person or online over Zoom.

Zoom is a webconferencing app that is free to Western students. Instructions for downloading and running Zoom can be found at: <https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/>. **IMPORTANT:** When logging in to Zoom, select *Sign In with SSO*. On the Sign In with SSO screen, enter *westernuniversity*, then click Continue. You will log in to Zoom using your Western user ID and password.

Classroom Etiquette:

We only have a short amount of time in each class to cover a lot of material. To help everyone stay focused keep phones turned off and put away, avoid whispering with your neighbours, and use computers only for class-related activities. If there is a problem with classroom conduct you may be asked to leave for the duration of the lecture.

Learning Resources:

Taking a vested interest in learning is the key to academic success. Some of the specific things you can do to help with learning in this course (and others) include: (1) Regularly attending class; (2) Staying on top of your readings; (3) Keeping good lecture and reading notes; (4) Meeting with your TA or professor when you need extra help or would like to discuss the course material on a more sustained basis; (5) Participating in the applied learning exercises; and, (6) Staying organized and developing and maintaining good study habits (e.g., reviewing your material regularly).

Copyright and Intellectual Property:

PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines, and other components of the course materials are typically the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, video-recording, photographing, sharing on social media, or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited. Such action may be considered a Code of Conduct violation and lead to sanctions.

Method of Evaluation:

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

Applied Learning Exercises

- You will carry out brief in-class, group exercises designed to extend your knowledge of course material through direct application of sociological ideas.
- **Missed exercises:** You are allowed 2 missed exercises without penalty. It is not necessary to complete the missed exercise or notify me about your absence. Given this flexibility, I reserve the right to deny academic consideration for missing more than 2 exercises.
- Counts for **10%** of your final mark.

Test #1

- Multiple choice questions.
- Duration: 1.5 hours.
- Written in class **Thursday, October 3rd**. Covers course material up to and including September 26th.
- Electronic devices, books, notes, or other study aids are not permitted during the test.
- **Missed test:** If you miss this test for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances, you can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Supporting documentation is NOT required. If your absence is approved, you must write a makeup test.
- Counts for **27.5%** of your final mark.

Test #2

- Multiple choice questions.
- Duration: 1.5 hours.
- Written in class **Thursday, November 7th**. Covers course material from October 10th to 31st.
- Electronic devices, books, notes, or other study aids are not permitted during the test.
- **Missed test:** If you miss this test for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances, you can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Supporting documentation IS required. If your absence is approved, you must write a makeup test.
- Counts for **27.5%** of your final mark.

Final Exam

- Multiple choice and short answer questions.
- Duration: 2 hours.
- Written during the December final exam period.
- Multiple choice questions cover material from November 14th up to and including December 5th.
- Short answer questions cover material from September 5th up to and including October 31st.
- Electronic devices, books, notes, or other study aids are not permitted during the exam.
- **Missed exam:** If you miss this exam for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances, you can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Supporting documentation IS required. If your absence is approved, you must write a makeup exam.
- Counts for **35%** of your final mark.

Course Schedule and Readings:

A finalized version of this outline will be provided on our OWL site. It will include a table detailing topics, assessments, and readings by date.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures described here. Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing any assessments in this course for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. In this course, there is flexibility for completion of the Applied Learning Exercises (2 missed exercises without penalty). For students whose situation warrants additional consideration for the exercises (e.g., extensive absence due to illness), supporting documentation is required for academic consideration requests. Students are permitted to make an academic consideration request for Test #1 *without* supporting documentation. *Supporting documentation is required* for academic consideration requests for Test #2 and the Final Exam. Any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your [Faculty of Registration](#), in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Students whose absences are due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students with an approved absence from an 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 exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Artificial Intelligence:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs, and any other study aids, electronic devices, books, or notes, are not permitted during the writing of your tests and final exam. For the course's applied learning exercises, the use of AI is not permitted unless stated otherwise by your instructor or detailed in the exercise instructions.

Academic Policies:

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

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Course Selection
- Absence from Course Commitments
- Missed Tests and Exams
- Religious Accommodations
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health
- Gender-Based and Sexual Violence statement