



The University of Western Ontario  
SOCIOLOGY 3301G-650

The Internet and Society

Summer, 2024

Online

Instructor: Dr. Lyn Hoang ([lhoang3@uwo.ca](mailto:lhoang3@uwo.ca))

Office Hours: Wednesdays by appointment via Zoom  
Department of Sociology

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This is a DRAFT only. Please see your course BRIGHTSPACE 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 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 (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). SAGE Publications LTD.
- **NOTE:** reading list will be using chapter/page numbers corresponding to edition 2. If you purchase edition 1 – page numbers or chapter names may be different however, content will mostly be the same.

- 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)
- Another resource for digital text: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/digital-media-and-society-simon-lindgren-v9781529787078>
- **Additional:** Weekly readings will be posted on Brightspace in the corresponding Lecture

*Students are expected to do the lesson 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.*

*Technical Requirements:* Access to stable internet connection, computer with working microphone and/or webcam.

### Communication:

- **Before contacting me:** Students are responsible for checking the course 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. Make sure to check announcements or syllabus before emailing me a question.
- **How to contact me:** The best way to reach me is through email: [lhoang3@uwo.ca](mailto:lhoang3@uwo.ca). Emails will be monitored daily; students will typically receive a response within 48 – 72 hours (there may be delays in response times during long weekend holidays). Messages to me sent via Brightspace “messages” tool or discussion forum may not receive timely responses as they are not monitored daily.

### Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described below are essential requirements for the course. The use of ChatGPT, OpenAI or any other AI software is **NOT PERMITTED** within this course. Any discussion submission, assignment, and/or exam submission with suspected use of AI software will result in an **automatic failure** and will be escalated to the Department Chair for further investigation of possible academic offense. **Do NOT use AI in this course, it is NOT worth it.**

### Evaluation Breakdown:

Description	Weight	Due Date
Discussion Participation	20%	Twice per week
TEST	35%	June 15, 2024

Paper Proposal	10%	May 22, 2024 (11:59pm EDT)
Final Paper (social media content/netnography)	35%	June 5, 2024 (11:59pm EDT)
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100%		

**Discussion Participation (20% of total grade):** Students are expected to participate in the discussion of class materials. Students will offer responses to at least one discussion question posed during the lecture videos. Students may also respond to their peers' responses in meaningful ways. Participation will occur in the *discussion* section under the communication tab in Brightspace. Only the best ten of twelve lesson discussions will count towards your participation grade.

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. Participation is **NOT** solely based on a quantitative measurement of your contributions (e.g., how much you post).

**Test (35% of your final grade):** There will be one written examination for this course that is cumulative of all lecture materials and course readings. The test will be written asynchronously online and will be available for a period of 24 hours. Students will have **3 hours** to complete the examination once it is opened and started. The exam is open book and will consist of multiple choice and long/short answer questions.

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 or AI-assistance.

**Paper Proposal (10% of your final grade):** Students will work individually to provide a proposal for their final paper content analysis/netnography 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 Brightspace.

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 Brightspace. 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 discussion participation* - students must contribute to at least ten lecture discussions. Students who miss more than two lecture discussions 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 participation will have their 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 accommodation for final 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. Students with an approved accommodation for written assignments (e.g., proposal and/or final assignment) will be provided an extended deadline.

### **Academic 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:

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