

Internet and Society
COMM 5310
Summer II 2015

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Office Hours: 9:00 – 11:00 Daily

This is a web-based course. Answers to discussion questions should be posted on the discussion board under the appropriate discussion question. In order to facilitate discussion among the class members it is necessary for everyone to contribute to the discussion during the time frame of the discussion. Additionally posting to the discussion board is considered evidence of attendance and participation, so posts should be made in a timely fashion.

Course Description

The development of the personal computer and the advent of the Internet as a new means of communication can be seen as salient examples of the complex, dialectical relationship between communication and technological development. Recognizing and understanding the role of human communication in the development and spread of the internet and related technologies is a vital component of the larger goal of developing critical consumers of communication media. This course is designed to provide students with a greater historical, theoretical and practical understanding of the social and cultural foundation and implications of the Internet and related technological systems as shaped by human communication. This course will focus on the social context within which the key communicative/technological developments, that have made the present Internet what it is, are taking place.

Objectives:

- Increase practical understanding of social uses of the internet
- Provide a theoretical basis for understanding communication processes online
- Develop an understanding of the relationship between human communication and communication technologies.
- Be able to critically evaluate the role of the internet in social processes such as business, education, health care and government.

Course Requirements:

Successful completion of this course requires that you log onto blackboard a minimum of twice each week to post responses to the questions and assignments. You should plan on posting at least two responses to each of the questions posed in the assignments. The first response will be your answer to the question, the second response should consider the

responses posted by your classmates. Keep in mind that two responses to each question is a minimum (and will result in a minimum type grade). Ideally you will post more frequently to generate a true discussion among the class members.

It is also critical that you complete the assignments within the specified timeline. It is not possible for your classmates to respond to you or for you to engage in a meaningful discussion if you are not on the same time line as the rest of the class. In calculating the grade I will be considering both the quality of your posts and the extent to which you contribute to the class discussions.

Grading:

The grade in the course will be based on completion of the five units:

20% Course Introduction You will answer three discussion board questions based on your own experience, a survey of webpages and the assigned reading. July 9 – July 15

20% Education and the Internet Project. You will research one aspect of education and the internet and write a five page report incorporating scholarly publications, popular publications and web sources in your report. You will post your report on the discussion board. Finally, you will respond to the discussion board question referencing your own research as well as the reports filed by your classmates. Specific instructions and guidelines are posted in assignments. July 16 – July 22

20% Health and the Internet Project. You will research one aspect of health and the internet and write a five page report incorporating scholarly publications, popular publications and web sources in your report. You post your report on the discussion board. Finally, you will respond to the discussion board question referencing your own research as well as the reports filed by your classmates. Specific instructions and guidelines are posted in assignments. July 23 – July 29

20% Government and the Internet Project. You will research one aspect of government and the internet and write a five page report incorporating scholarly publications, popular publications and web sources in your report. You post your report on the discussion board. Finally, you will respond to the discussion board question referencing your own research as well as the reports filed by your classmates. Specific instructions and guidelines are posted in assignments. July 30 – August 6

20% Business and the Internet Project You will research one aspect of business and the internet and write a five page report incorporating scholarly publications, popular publications and web sources in your report. Post your report on the discussion board. Finally, you will respond to the discussion board question referencing your own research as well as the reports filed by your classmates. Specific instructions and guidelines are posted in assignments. August 7 - 13