

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTs) IN SOCIETY**  
Information Communication Technology (ICT) 600  
FALL 2022

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00-1:00 & by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines a wide variety of issues that relate to the roles of information communication technologies (ICTs) in political, social, psychological, and cultural processes in community contexts, both physical and virtual. In so doing, this course reviews such topics as information communication technologies (ICTs), including social media and mobile technologies, and their relation to governments, political parties, nonprofit/voluntary organizations, social movements, news media organizations, citizen journalism, public sphere, social capital, deliberation, and political/civic/community engagement. As such, this course sheds light on the democratic functioning of the information communication technologies (ICTs) for a healthy community to operate at local, regional, national, and global levels.

**PURPOSE OF THE COURSE**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with various theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches at multiple levels regarding information communication technologies (ICTs), communities, and democracy with special emphasis on social media. You will be able to critically discuss current issues and problems in connection with the diverse theoretical and methodological understandings. Then, you will conduct various research projects regarding information communication technologies (ICTs), communities, and democracy, paying particular attention to the roles of technology in democratic societies.

At the completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the way the relationship between technology and society has been studied in information science;
- Explain cross-disciplinary debates about the impact of technology on democracy;
- Critically analyze literature relating to the study of technology and communities;
- Apply concepts and critiques from information studies perspectives to contemporary debates about ICTs in society;
- Describe the interrelationships among key ICT issues such as the digital divide, community health, and civic participation;
- Evaluate both opportunities and risks inherent in new ICT deployment;
- Propose approaches to social challenges raised by the introduction of ICTs into communities.

This course is designed as a *primer*. Thus, students will be exposed to a number of issues and literature related to the interconnections between technology and society. Given the breadth and

depth of a number of these issue areas, it will not be possible to cover all aspects of the issues throughout the course.

## REQUIREMENTS

### Canvas Discussion – Due every week, except weeks marked with a “\*\*\*\*”

- Every week (with the exception of weeks marked with \*\*\*) I will provide you with discussion prompts that stem from the weekly readings.
- In order to earn full credit for your weekly discussion, you must do two things:
  1. Post an original response to one of the prompts (you will typically have three prompts to choose from) that it is at least 150 words in length.
  2. Respond substantively to another student’s post (must be at least 100 words in length).
- The discussion boards become active on Monday mornings for that week and close on Sunday night at 11:59 P.M.
- Discussion posts are conversational and do not have to follow the same rigor as other writing you will do for this course. However, you are still expected to proofread them and to be professional in your interactions with others.
- Discussion post grades are given four times throughout the semester (Weeks 1 – 4, 5 – 8, 9 – 12, 13 – 16).
- Discussion posts are graded using the following rubric:

Original posts for Weeks X - X engage the prompts thoughtfully.	1.25 pts
Original posts for Weeks X - X back ideas and conclusions with evidence.	1.25 pts
Original posts for Weeks X - X introduce the student’s own ideas.	1.25 pts
Response posts for Weeks X - X engage thoughtfully and with substance to others.	1.25 pts
Original and response posts for Weeks X - X use correct grammar and punctuation.	1.25 pts
Original and response posts for Weeks X - X are written in a clear and concise manner.	1.25 pts

### Conceptual Link Paper

The conceptual link paper is a 500-word (minimum) essay that relates one of the scholarly readings we’ve done so far in the class to a news article from the past year. (The news story you pick cannot be one we have read in class). The purpose of this assignment is to take ideas from the academic literature we are reading and use them to try to unpack, understand, and discuss current events. More details about this assignment will be given in class.

### Mid-Term Paper

The mid-term paper will be a 1,500 word (minimum) paper. In this paper, you will do an analysis of an academic study about the relationship between ICTs and society. You will identify a study published in a peer-reviewed academic journal, assess the research question the researchers studied, the methods used, the findings and conclusions of the paper. You will then relate the findings to concepts we have been discussing in class. More details about this assignment will be given in class.

## **Final Paper**

The final paper will be a 2,500 word (minimum) paper. In this paper you will write a research proposal for studying some aspect of the relationship between ICTs and society. Your research proposal will include: a problem statement that situates why a particular phenomenon needs to be studied; a thorough literature review in which you situate your research question against things we have read in class, recent events, and other relevant studies; your specific research question; and a proposal for how you would go about collecting data to answer your research question (methods).

### **Paper Format**

- All papers (response papers, prospectus, and term papers) should be double spaced and typed in Times New Roman with 12 point font size.
- In addition, all papers should have one inch margins on all four sides of the papers.
- Prior to paper submissions, it is **strongly recommended** for you to meet with writing instructors in the University of Kentucky Writing Center (<http://www.uky.edu/AS/English/wc/>).

Although there is no required academic writing style, it is **strongly recommended** for you to use the American Psychological Association (APA) (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.) style.

## **GRADING**

**Weekly Participation: 30%**

**Conceptual Link Paper: 15%**

**Mid-Term Paper: 20%**

**Final Paper: 35%**

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

### **Course Grading**

90 – 100% = A

80 – 89% = B

70 – 79% = C

Below 69%= E

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

All course materials will be made available on Canvas.

### **Data Sources**

For your papers, you may consider referring to secondary data sources as follows:

- Pew Center for People and the Press: <http://www.people-press.org>
- Social Science Data Analysis Network: <http://www.ssdan.net>
- General Social Survey: <http://webapp.icpsr.umich.edu/GSS/>
- National Election Studies: <http://www.umich.edu/~nes/>
- The Political Communication Lab at Stanford: <http://pcl.stanford.edu/>

- US Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/>
- United States of Department of Agriculture: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>
- Internet World Stats: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/>
- The Social N' Agricultural Resource Lab ("SNARL"): <http://www.ca.uky.edu/snarl/KentuckyByTheNumbers/KYBTNIndex.htm>
- Kentucky State Data Center: <http://ksdc.louisville.edu/>
- Social Sciences Teaching And Research Statistics, Center for Statistical Computing Support, University of Kentucky: <http://www.uky.edu/ComputingCenter/SSTARS/>
- Digital Media and Civic Engagement Project: Consult with your instructor

## Journals

- Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication (JCMC): <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/>
- Mass Communication and Society: <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/HMCS>
- New Media & Society: <http://newmediaandsociety.com/>
- The Information Society: <http://www.indiana.edu/~tisj/>
- Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology (JASIST): [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/\(ISSN\)2330-1643](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)2330-1643)
- Journal of Communication: <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0021-9916&site=1>
- International Journal of Communication: <http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc>
- Journal of Community Informatics: <http://ci-journal.net/index.php/ciej>
- Political Communication: <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10584609.asp>
- Journalism of Broadcasting and Electronic Media: <http://www.beaweb.org/jobem/info.html>
- First Monday: <http://www.firstmonday.org/>
- Electronic Journal of Communication: <http://www.cios.org/www/ejcmmain.htm>
- Global Media Journal: <http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/index.htm>
- Television and New Media: <http://tvn.sagepub.com/>
- Information, Communication and Society: <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/1369118x.html>
- Social Movement Studies: <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14742837.asp>
- International Journal of Public Opinion Research: <http://ijpor.oxfordjournals.org>
- International Journal of Press-Politics: <http://hij.sagepub.com>

## COURSE POLICIES

- You are required to read all of the readings listed.
- You will learn from various interactions between instructor and students. You are strongly suggested to work together with your instructor and peer groups in order to develop your research projects.
- Academic integrity is essential. Any kind of plagiarism or cheating will not be accepted and tolerated on your assignments. For more information, visit the Ombud Website, <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>

## Excused Absences

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2* defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a)

serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the professor.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable, but should not be given any later. Information regarding major religious holidays may be obtained through the Ombud (859-257-3737, [http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents\\_ExcusedAbsences.php](http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents_ExcusedAbsences.php)).

***For the withdrawal recommendation (students missing a majority of coursework, over one-fifth), there are three options for wording which meet the Senate rules:***

Option #1:

Students are strongly encouraged to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the scheduled classes for the semester are missed per university policy. Please reference the definition of excused absences in the current edition of *Student Rights and Responsibilities* or on the web at

[http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/rules\\_regulations/Rules%20Versions/MASTER%20RULES %20from%20February%202012\\_clean.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/rules_regulations/Rules%20Versions/MASTER%20RULES%20from%20February%202012_clean.pdf)

Option #2 (quoting the rule):

If a student has excused absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours for that course, a student shall have the right to petition for a "W", and the Instructor of Record may require the student to petition for a "W" or take an "I" in the course. [US: 2/9/87; RC: 11/20/87]"

Option #3:

Students are expected to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the classes scheduled for the semester are missed (excused) per University policy. Per *Senate Rule 5.2.4.2*, students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The professor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to an excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred.

### **Verification of Absences**

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. *Senate Rule 5.2.4.2* states that faculty have the right to request “appropriate verification” when students claim an excused absence because of illness, or death in the family. Appropriate notification of absences due to University-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.

### **Academic Integrity**

Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

*Senate Rules 6.3.1* (see <http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/> for the current set of *Senate Rules*) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work, which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

### **Accommodations due to disability**

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. It is located on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754 and via email at

[drc@uky.edu](mailto:drc@uky.edu). Their web address is

<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/>.

Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at:

<https://ci.uky.edu/sis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf>

### **TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION & RESOURCES Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT)**

<http://www.uky.edu/UKIT/>; 859-218-4357

### **Library Services & Distance Learning Services**

<http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/DLLS>

- Carla Cantagallo, DL Librarian
- Local phone number: (859) 257-0500, ext. 2171; long-distance phone #: (800) 828-0439 (option #6)
- Email: [dllservice@email.uky.edu](mailto:dllservice@email.uky.edu)
- DL Interlibrary Loan Service:

[http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/libpage.php?lweb\\_id=253&llib\\_id=16](http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/libpage.php?lweb_id=253&llib_id=16)

For more resources about online classes and student resources, visit

<http://www.uky.edu/ukonline/>

The School of Information Science has a page with a comprehensive list of technology resources here: <http://ci.uky.edu/sis/students/techtips>

### **Military Members and Veterans**

We recognize the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please inform your instructor if you are in need of special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate your academic life. If you are aware of a complication, we will work with you and put you in contact with university staff members who are trained to assist you. Please contact the Coordinator of the University of Kentucky Veterans Resource Center at (859) 257-1148 for additional assistance. Visit <http://www.uky.edu/veterans> for more available resources.

## COURSE CALENDAR (Readings should be finished *before* class session).

*Please note, readings may be subject to change with advanced notice.*

### Week 1: Course Overview and Introduction to Theorizing about Tech & Society

- Review Syllabus
- Introduce Yourself in the Discussion Forums

### Week 2: Are We an Information Society?

- Read: Selections from: Masuda, Y. (1980). The information society as post-industrial society.
- Read: Chapter 1 & 2 of: Webster, F. (2014). Theories of the information society. Routledge.
- Listen to Recording: “[Melvyn Bragg on Information Technology and Societal Change](#)” (This was recorded in January of the year 2000, keep that in mind!)

### Week 3: Technology and Social Change: Who is in the Driver’s Seat?

- Read: Heilbroner, R. L. (1967). Do machines make history?. *Technology and culture*, 8(3), 335-345.
- Read: Williams, R., & Edge, D. (1996). The social shaping of technology. *Research policy*, 25(6), 865-899.
- Read: News article: “[Humanity Confronts A Defining Question: How Will AI Change Us?](#)”

### Week 4: Do Technologies Have Politics?

- Read: Winner, L. (1980). Do artifacts have politics?. *Daedalus*, 121-136.
- Read: Gillespie, T. (2010). The politics of ‘platforms’. *New media & society*, 12(3), 347-364.
- Read: News: “[Facebook Let Advertisers Exclude Users By Race](#)”

### Week 5: ICTs and Bias

- Read: Friedman, B., & Nissenbaum, H. (1996). Bias in computer systems. *ACM Transactions on Information Systems (TOIS)*, 14(3), 330-347.
- Read: Bowker, G. & Starr, S.L (1999) “[The Case of Race Classification and Reclassification Under Apartheid.](#)” From: *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*, pp. 195-225.
- News article: “[How China Uses High-Tech Surveillance to Subdue Minorities](#)”

### Week 6: Technology, Power, and The State

- Read: Selections from: Braman, S. (2009). *Change of State: Information, Policy, and Power*. MIT Press.
- Read: Monahan, T. (2006). Counter-surveillance as political intervention?. *Social Semiotics*, 16(4), 515-534.
- News Article: “[State Driver’s License Photos are Routinely Being Used in Facial Recognition Searches](#)”



### **Week 7: Is Computer Code Replacing the Rule of Law?**

- Read: Selections from: Lessig, L. (2009). Code: And other laws of cyberspace.
- Read: News Article: "[Bitcoin, Blockchain, and The Rule of Law vs. The Rule of Code.](#)"

### **Week 8: Social Media, Democracy, and the "Public Sphere"**

- Read: Shirky, C. (2011). The political power of social media: Technology, the public sphere, and political change. *Foreign affairs*, 28-41.
- Read: Friedland, L. A., Hove, T., & Rojas, H. (2006). The networked public sphere. *Javnost-The Public*, 13(4), 5-26.
- News Article: "[Twitter is wondering whether or not Twitter is bad for society](#)"

### **Week 9: ICTs and Social Movements**

- Read: Christensen, H. S. (2011). Political activities on the Internet: Slacktivism or political participation by other means?. *First Monday*, 16(2).
- **SKIM:** Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tents, tweets, and events: The interplay between ongoing protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*, 65(2), 320-350.
- Listen to Podcast: "[Activism vs. Slacktivism](#)"

### **Week 10: Informing Each Other?**

- Read: Starbird, K., Maddock, J., Orand, M., Achterman, P., & Mason, R. M. (2014). Rumors, false flags, and digital vigilantes: Misinformation on Twitter after the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. *I-Conference 2014 Proceedings*.
- Read: Al-Ghazzi, O. (2014). "Citizen Journalism" in the Syrian Uprising: Problematizing Western Narratives in a Local Context. *Communication Theory*, 24, 435-454.
- Listen to Podcast: "[Is fact-checking the best way to fight misinformation?](#)"

### **Week 11: ICTs and Social Relationships**

- Read: Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook "friends:" Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(4), 1143-1168.
- Read: Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2014). Cultivating social resources on social network sites: Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors and their role in social capital processes. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19(4), 855-870.
- Read: News Article: "[How Your Social Network Could Save You From A Disaster](#)"
- Read: News Article: "[Social Media Builds Walls, Not Bridges](#)"

### **Week 12: The Economics of ICTs**

- Read: Katz, M. L., & Shapiro, C. (1994). Systems competition and network effects. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 8(2), 93-115.
- Read: Selections from: Rogers, E. M. (2010). Diffusion of innovations. Simon and Schuster.
- Listen to Podcast: "[Getting Network Effects](#)"

### **Week 13: Work: Automation, Algorithms, and Labor**

- Read: David, H. (2015). Why are there still so many jobs? The history and future of workplace automation. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 29(3), 3-30.
- Read: Rosenblat, A., & Stark, L. (2016). Algorithmic labor and information asymmetries: A case study of Uber's drivers. *International Journal of Communication*, 10, 27.
- Read: News Article: "[End of the road: Will automation put an end to the American trucker?](#)"

### **Week 14: Cities and ICTs**

- Read: Nam, T., & Pardo, T. A. (2011). Conceptualizing smart city with dimensions of technology, people, and institutions. In *Proceedings of the 12th annual international digital government research conference: Digital government innovation in challenging times* (pp. 282-291). ACM.
- Read: News: "[Uber and Lyft are the 'biggest contributors' to San Francisco's traffic congestion, study says](#)"

### **Week 15: Social Media and Digital Labor**

- Read: Van Dijck, J., & Poell, T. (2013). Understanding social media logic. *Media and Communication*, 1(1), 2-14.
- Read: Postigo, H. (2016). The socio-technical architecture of digital labor: Converting play into YouTube money. *New media & society*, 18(2), 332-349.
- Read: News Article: "[The Golden Age of YouTube Is Over](#)"

### **Week 16: Whose Future?**

- Read: van Dijk, J., & Hacker, K. (2003). The digital divide as a complex and dynamic phenomenon. *The Information Society*, 19(4), 315-326.
- Read: McLennan, S. J. (2016). Techno-optimism or information imperialism: Paradoxes in online networking, social media and development. *Information Technology for Development*, 22(3), 380-399.