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COMX 422.01: Communication and Technology

Gregory S. Larson

University of Montana - Missoula

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Communication 422: Communication and Technology

Fall 2018

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Office hours: Wednesdays from 2-4 and Thursdays from 1 – 2 p.m. or by appointment.

Texts

Brynjolfsson, E & McAfee, A. (2011). *Race against the machine*. Lexington, MA: Digital Frontier Press. (Available through Amazon.com)

Postman, N. (1999). *Building a bridge to the eighteenth century: How the past can improve our future*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Other readings will be available online.

Nature of the Course

This course takes a critical look at the influence of communication technologies on social and organizational life. The current "information revolution" in organizations provides a context for the course. The world of work is changing due to the implementation of new technologies. For example, communication technologies allow people to work from home through telecommuting. On the one hand, this avoids long commutes, increases time spent at home, and protects the environment. On the other hand, this may also blur the distinction between home and work by increasing the influence of work in our personal lives. While organized topically around current issues/problems, class members will be introduced to many theoretical perspectives which frame scholarly thinking on these issues.

Course Objectives

As a result of satisfactorily completing the course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the nature of technological change and innovation.
2. Understand how the world of work is changing due to new technologies.
3. Understand how knowledge work is managed and organized effectively.
4. Identify the key ethical communicative responsibilities for managing science/technology ethically and effectively.
5. Position current technological advances within historical contexts.
6. Understand the need for diverse perspectives, including social scientific and humanistic, for understanding, creating and managing technology and science.
7. Know key questions to guide the development and adoption of new technologies.

8. Identify the technologies used for electronic surveillance in the workplace.
9. Develop a well-supported position regarding both the utility and ethics of electronic surveillance in the workplace.
10. Discuss important social issues at the intersection of work and technology.
11. Write analytic papers in which they make clear arguments and then defend their positions with strong supporting evidence.
12. Engage writing as an ongoing process that includes the need for revisions.

Attendance/Punctuality/Participation

You are expected to attend and to participate in class. Absences will result in the loss of up to 3 points per day from your participation grade. Also, please come to class on time and prepared to discuss the day's readings.

*****Please be courteous by coming to class on time and turning off cell phones and all other screens.***

Special Assistance

If some extenuating circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting your expectations for your attendance and performance, I expect you to contact me immediately. It is important that you contact me sooner rather than later.

Notice to Students with Documented Disabilities

I encourage students with disabilities, including but not limited to, chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, to discuss with me, after class or during my office hours, appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to you. Please contact [Disability Services for Students](#) if you have questions, or call Disability Services for Students (DSS) for voice/text 406.243.2243. You may also fax the Lommasson Center 154 for more information 406.243.5330.

Due Dates

A late written assignment will be penalized one full grade for each day it is late and NO late submissions will be accepted after the assignment has been graded and returned to your classmates.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Backup Copies

You are responsible for keeping back-up copies of all work that you (or your group) does for the class.

Outside Research

Outside research, beyond the assigned readings, is required for this course.

Requirements of the Course/Grading

So there are no surprises at the end of the semester, I encourage you to keep track of your points.

Assignments and Points Available

Participation/Attendance = 50 pts

Online Discussion Posts (5 at 10 pts. each) = 50 pts

Quizzes (5 at 10 points each)= 50 pts

Paper #1 (with rewrite) = 100 pts

Paper #2 (with rewrite) = 100 pts

Group Project: 50 pts

Total Points = 400 pts

Graduate Students Only:

Term paper: 200 points

Total Points = 600 pts

Letter grades are figured as follows:

A = Outstanding - goes beyond expectations

B = Good - above average

C = Satisfactory - meets minimum requirements

D = Unsatisfactory - does not meet some requirements

F = Failing -- Does not meet requirements

A = 100-93%

A- = 92-90%

B+ = 89-88%

B = 87-83%

B- = 82-80%

C+ = 79-78%

C = 77-73%

C- = 72-70%

D+ = 69-68%

D = 67-63%

F = Below 63%

As per our departmental policy, you may not drop or change your grading option after the thirtieth instructional day except in the following situations: a) documentable accident or illness, b) no evaluation record for the course, c) documentable family/personal emergency, and d) documentable change in employment schedule that prevents completion of course (ref. relevant university documentation).