

**SOCIETY ONLINE:
SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COMPUTER MEDIATED COMMUNICATION**

**COGN 150
Fall 2004
Wednesdays 9:00-11:50
MCC125**

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Fall 2004 Office Hours:
Tues. 5-6, Thur. 2-3, and by appointment
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This senior seminar examines the social implications of the rise of information and communication technologies with a particular focus on the rise of the Internet. The work in this course centers on a student-peer review process in which students learn to comment upon others' writing. The semester-long writing process should culminate in a polished paper of original research, suitable for a writing sample for graduate school application and possible publication. The readings in the course will focus on the impact of new technologies on culture, economics, politics, and communities. It is expected that students will begin the seminar with ideas about a research project on the social forces of communication.

Required Readings:

Philip N. Howard and Steve Jones, *Society Online: The Internet in Context*, Thousand Oaks: CA, Sage, 2004. Ordered through the UCSD Bookstore and also available through Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and major booksellers.

Other required course readings are available through electronic course reserves **or** directly through the library's journal holdings. Many of these materials can be accessed from any computer connected to the UCSD network. Please check with the library if you are having difficulty connecting to the library from an off-campus computer.

Structure of the Course:

Every week has a reading assignment and a writing assignment. Please post all writing assignments to the WebBoard which is located at

<http://webboard.ucsd.edu>

Please post writing assignments pertaining to your research projects to the Research Discussion conference of our class WebBoard. Please post writing assignments pertaining to the weekly readings to the Reading Discussion conference of our class WebBoard. Students are expected to have prepared the readings **and** their responses by the MONDAY before class. This allows all seminar participants to read each other's reading responses before our Wednesday class. Class preparation each week involves checking the WebBoard for reading discussion posts from classmates. Failure to do so will result in a lower participation grade.

Week 1 September 29

Course introduction and Introductory Lecture

Week 2

October 6

What do we mean by social implications of the Internet?

Reading:

Paul DiMaggio, Eszter Hargittai, W. Russell Neuman, and John P. Robinson, "Social Implications of the Internet," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2001, 27:307-36. (Available through ejournals).

Society Online, forward by Lee Rainie and chapter 1 "Embedded Media" by Philip Howard

Classmates' responses to the readings (on Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.)

Writing due Oct. 4 on WebBoard

1) Topic statements of research interest due (explanation in class on September 29). Please post to Research Discussion conference of COM 150's WebBoard.

2) Please write 2-3 paragraphs response to reading (further explanation in class on September 29). Include three well-formed discussion questions for the class to discuss. Please post to Reading Discussion Conference.

Week 3

October 13

Culture Online

Reading:

Wired and Well Read, Griswold and Wright in *Society Online*

Deeper Understanding, Deeper Ties: Taking Faith Online, Larsen in *Society Online*

The Disembodied Muse: Music in the Internet Age, Peterson & Ryan in *Society Online*

Classmates' responses to the readings (on Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.)

Handout on Research Projects

Writing due Oct. 11 on WebBoard

1) Proposals due. Please post to the Research Discussion section of the WebBoard.

2) Please write 2-3 paragraphs response to reading (further explanation in class on September 29). Include three well-formed discussion questions for the class to discuss. Please post to Reading Discussion Conference.

Week 4

October 20

Politics Online I

Reading:

Will Internet Voting Increase Turnout? An Analysis of Voter Preference, Stromer-Galley in *Society Online*.

The Internet and Political Involvement in 1996 and 2000, Rice and Katz in *Society Online*.

New Media, Internet News, and the News Habit, Dessauer in *Society Online*.

Classmates' responses to the readings (on Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.)

Writing due Oct. 18 on WebBoard

1) Research questions due. Please post to Research Discussion conference on the WebBoard.

2) Please write 2-3 paragraphs response to reading. Include three well-formed discussion questions for the class to discuss. Please post to Reading Discussion Conference.

Week 5

October 27

Politics Online II

Reading:

Crisis Communication and New Media: The Web After September 11, Schneider & Foot in *Society Online*.

Technology and Tolerance: Public Opinion Differences Among Internet Users and Nonusers, Robinson, Neustadt, & Kestnbaum in *Society Online*.

Jon Katz, "The Digital Citizen," Available online at <http://hotwired.wired.com/special/citizen/>

Classmates' responses to the readings (on Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.)

Writing due Oct 25 on WebBoard

1) Research update due. Please post to Research Discussion conference on the WebBoard.

2) Please write 2-3 paragraphs response to reading. Include three well-formed discussion questions for the class to discuss. Please post to Reading Discussion Conference.

Week 6

November 3

Social Problems Online

Reading:

Interrogating the Digital Divide: The Political Economy of Race and Commerce in New Media, Nakamura in *Society Online*.

Informed Web Surfing: The Social Context of User Sophistication, Hargittai in *Society Online*.

American Internet Users and Privacy: A Safe Harbor of Their Own?, Starke-Meyerring, Burk, & Gurak in *Society Online*.

Classmates' responses to the readings (on Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.)

Writing due Nov 1 on WebBoard:

1) Continue work on first draft.

2) Please write 2-3 paragraphs response to reading. Include three well-formed discussion questions for the class to discuss. Please post to Reading Discussion Conference.

Bending Gender Into the Net: Feminizing Content, Corporate Interests, and Research Strategy, Shade

Andrew Feenberg and Maria Bakardjieva "Virtual Community: No 'Killer Implication,'" *New Media & Society* vol. 6, 1, pp 37 - 43.

Classmates' discussion questions posted to the Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.

Writing:

1) Continue paper writing.

2) Please post to the reading discussion conference on WebBoard three well-formed discussion questions for class.

Week 10

December 1

Conclusions and Applications

Reading:

Conclusion: Contexting the Network, Jones in *Society Online*

The Future of the Internet, Bainbridge in *Society Online*

David Silver, "Internet/Cyberculture/ Digital Culture/New Media/ Fill-in-the-Blank Studies," *New Media & Society*, vol 6, 1, pp 55-64.

Nina Wakeford, "Pushing at the Boundaries of New Media Studies," *New Media & Society*, vol 6, 1, pp 130-136.

Classmates' discussion questions posted to the Reading Discussion conference of WebBoard.

Writing

1) Continue paper writing. **Final Papers due Dec 8.**

2) Please post to the reading discussion conference on WebBoard three well-formed discussion questions for class.

FINAL PAPERS

Due Wednesday, December 8 at 5:00 p.m. Please, no late papers. Papers received after December 8 will have 1/2 letter grade deducted for each day late. No papers will be accepted for any reason after December 12.

The expectations for the final paper will be discussed in class and in handouts throughout the term. There will be several opportunities in class to discuss papers as they are being prepared. Getting started early is one of the best ways to assure a better grade.

Multimedia such as embedded video, pictures, etc. can be used to supplement the writing of final papers. Production projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you are interested in

multimedia or production projects, please let me know in your research proposal.

GRADING

The final grade in the course is based on a 100-point scale. This scale encourages participation in class, completing the readings on time and participation in the peer-review system.

Final Papers:	75 points
Class participation	10 points (lose 1 point for each unexcused absence)
Response papers	10 points (lose 1 point for each late or unacceptable response; deduct 2 points for each response not handed in)
First draft	5 points for turning a draft in by November 8 (no points for later drafts)

Final papers will be graded for the strength of ideas and writing (including grammar), for evidence of original research, and for clarity of argument. Final papers will be marked on the following 100-point scale (and worth 75% of the final grade):

90 - 100	A; very good
80 - 89	B; good
70 - 79	C; satisfactory
60 - 69	D; unsatisfactory
below 60	F; unacceptable

It is expected that students will be familiar with the university's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. Plagiarism and other violations of the policy will not be tolerated in this course. All students suspected of violating these policies will be referred to the appropriate Dean for disciplinary action.

Weekly response papers will be graded for evidence of close attention to the reading and for their ability to help generate productive class discussion.