

# LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY ORILLIA

## 2010 COURSE OUTLINE

### **SOCI 3810 WAO: Information and Society**

Times: Wed. & Fri. 10-11:30am  
Location: TC 0004

Instructor: Prof. Kristy Marcellus  
Office Location: HP0012  
Office Hours: Thursdays 9-12  
Email: kcmarcel@lakeheadu.ca

#### ***Course Overview:***

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a range of perspectives of the relationship between information and society. The course will focus especially on the complex interdependence of information, communication and technologies, and will interrogate ideas related to the creation, manipulation, and uses of information in social life. By the end of the course, students should be able to articulate the differences between information and communication, to critically interrogate the idea of the 'Information Age', and to evaluate a variety of sources and applications of information in day-to-day social life.

#### ***Required Materials:***

Brown, J.S. and P. Duguid (2002) *The Social Life of Information*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press. [abbreviated as 'B+D' below]

Webster, F. (2006) *Theories of the Information Society*. New York: Routledge. [also available as an e-book through the LU Library's website]

Additional readings listed below are accessible through the library website's journal database search capabilities with your student ID. Some are also on reserve in the library (noted below). Some, also noted below, will be on reserve in the library.

Crampton, J. (2009) "Cartography: maps 2.0," *Progress in Human Geography* 33(1): 91-100.

Forlano, L. (2009) "WiFi Geographies: When Code Meets Place," *The Information Society* 25(5): 344-352.

Hough, M. (2009) "Keeping it to ourselves: Technology, privacy and the loss of reserve," *Technology in Society* 31(4): 406-413.

Hustwit, G. (2007) *Helvetica*. Swiss Dots/Veer. [available online at many locations, such as [http://v.youku.com/v\\_show/id\\_XNjAwMTI1MjQ=.html](http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjAwMTI1MjQ=.html)]

Lewis, J. and A. West (2009) "Friending': London-based undergraduates' experience of Facebook," *New Media and Society* 11(7): 1209-1229.

Mosco, V. (2005) "When Old Myths Were New: The Never-Ending Story," (Ch.5) in *The Digital Sublime: Myth, Power and Cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. Pp. 117-140. [On 2 hr. reserve in the library]

Utz, S. (2009) "Egoboo' vs. altruism: The role of reputation in online consumer communities," *New Media and Society* 11(3): 357-374.

WebCT information will include a copy of this course outline and online discussion boards. Students must familiarize themselves with WebCT in order to effectively participate in the course. The slides from our meetings will also be posted on WebCT.

### ***Evaluation Scheme:***

Participation: 15%

Weekly Response Papers: 15%	Due at the beginning of every Fri. class
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Reading and Discussion Facilitation: 15%	Date assigned by instructor
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Guest Lecture Review: 20%	Due 2 weeks after the lecture occurs
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Final Paper: 35%	Due 07 April 2010
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### ***Important Dates:***

DATE	WHAT'S HAPPENING
05 Feb., 05 March	Independent Inquiry Days – NO CLASS
08 March	Last Day to Withdraw without academic penalty – Winter Courses
07 April	Final Paper due at the beginning of class

### **Course Schedule:**

06 + 08 Jan.	Introductions; Course Overview; Clarifying Terms READ: B+D Preface and Introduction
13 + 15 Jan.	Myths, Technologies, and Information READ: Webster Chs. 1 + 2; Mosco Ch. 5 [on reserve]
20 + 22 Jan.	Producing Information; Guest Lecture – Mr. D. Reid READ: Webster Ch. 6
27 + 29 Jan.	Privacy, Ethics, and Personal Information READ: Webster Ch. 4; Hough 2009
03 Feb.	Sharing Information: Paper, Conversation, and Innovation READ: B+D Chs. 6 + 7
05 Feb.	Sharing Information **Independent Inquiry Day: Watch <i>Helvetica</i> (2007)**
10 +12 Feb.	Social Interaction and Information READ: Utz 2009; Lewis and West 2009
17 + 19 Feb.	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES
24 + 26 Feb.	Communication and Information; Guest Lecture – Dr. D. Wolfe READ: B+D Ch. 2
03 Mar.	Information at Home READ: B+D Ch. 3
05 Mar.	Spaces of Information: Maps, GPS/GIS, and GoogleEarth READ: Forlano 2009; Crampton 2009 **Independent Inquiry Day: Explore GoogleEarth and compare electronic/online maps to paper maps**
10 + 12 Mar.	The Information Age – Castells READ: Webster Chs. 8 + 9
17 + 19 Mar.	Information and Economy READ: Webster Chs. 7, 3
24 + 26 Mar.	Education and the Transmission of Information READ: B+D Ch. 8, Afterword; B+D Ch. 5

31 Mar.	Work and Information Part I READ: B+D Ch. 4
02 Apr.	GOOD FRIDAY – NO CLASS
07 Apr.	Work and Information Part II READ: Webster Ch. 5
08 Apr.	Course Wrap-Up

### ***More Information About...***

Participation: In-class – stories of interest, contributing to discussions; Online – items of interest, questions emailed to instructor for discussion in class or online, WebCT engagement with course materials and other course participants

Weekly Response Papers: A 1-2 page commentary on the week's readings; for weeks with scheduled Independent Inquiry Days, WRPs must be submitted via email by the beginning of the normal class meeting time and should include the additional materials/activities noted in the course outline; must be more substantive than a summary of the readings, i.e. should refer and make connections to other readings and/or discussions from class; may be related to the other assignments for this class; the goal is to demonstrate to the instructor that you have read and critically engaged with the course materials for the week

Reading and Discussion Facilitation: A brief (5-10 minute) oral summary of an assigned lecture's readings and development of 3 questions for class discussion, one of which will become an online discussion question for the week (all questions must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on the day of your assigned facilitation); should demonstrate relationships with the rest of the course; may include *short* multi-media presentations to enhance understanding of the required readings (video clips, songs, news stories, etc.); group discussion should be no more than 7-10 minutes *in addition to* the oral summary.

Guest Lecture Review: A 5-7 page review of one of the two guest lectures scheduled for this term; should include a brief summary of the lecture; must relate the topic of the guest lecture to the content of the course (should be a critical engagement with both the lecture material and the rest of the course materials); must include personal opinion.

Final Paper: A 9-11 page formal academic paper on any topic relating to Information and Society you choose. Approval from the instructor is recommended and can help you to focus your topic to a manageable scope. Grading template to be posted on WebCT.

Penalties for Late Assignments: Late submissions will be penalized at 2% per day to a maximum of 10 days including weekends, and may not be returned to students on the same day as assignments submitted on time. Late Weekly Response Papers will be penalized at a rate of 0.2% per day and will not be accepted more than one week after the original due date.

Turn-Around Time: One week for Weekly Response Papers; ten days for Guest Lecture Reviews, Final Papers

Requesting a Re-evaluation of Course Work/Challenging A Grade: You may do this after a 24-hour 'cooling-off' period following the release of a grade. You *must* provide a roughly one-page write-up outlining *specifically* why you would like your grade to be revisited. I reserve the right to lower the grade if, upon re-examination, this is warranted. If we are unable to resolve the dispute, students have the right to formally appeal a grade through set University guidelines, found here: <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/policy.php?pid=116>

Getting Information about the Course: Check your LakeheadU email account regularly to get information about this course (changes to the schedule, last-minute cancellations, etc.). You will also need to use this to access the course readings through the library website and to access the WebCT components of the course.

Communicating with the Instructor: All email to the instructor regarding this course *must* originate from your LU email account and should include the course number (SOCL 3810 WAO) in the subject line. I do my best to respond to email within a 24-hour period (usually much faster between Wed. and Fri.) but will not respond to email or WebCT issues on Mondays or Tuesdays. I suggest making use of the 'Does Anyone Know...' discussion board on WebCT to get answers to questions from fellow course participants (and periodically from me); use the 'Anonymous Feedback' board to provide me with comments about the course – I will be able to see the comment but not who wrote it. Please feel free to stop by during my office hours; if you need to make an appointment at another time, email me to set something up.