

**Fall 2005**  
**SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AN INFORMATION SOCIETY**  
**COMM 405**

**Course Information:**

Instructor: Tatyana Dumova, Ph.D.  
Course: #41378; W 2–4:50 pm / O’Kelly Hall Rm 221  
Office hours: T 3:30–5:30 pm & W 5-6 pm / O’Kelly Hall Rm 223  
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**Catalog Description:** Considers and evaluates different perspectives on the information society, ranging from humanistic and Neomarxist critiques to the optimistic scenarios of some futurists. Examines the implications of new means of creating, storing, manipulating and disseminating information. Discussion of whether or not the potential benefits will be realized. 3 credits

**Prerequisites:** Admitted Communication major or instructor consent.

**Course Format:** This is an upper division course that will be conducted in a seminar style—lots of informal discussion of reading and research, with students contributing as presenters of “information” found outside of class. Your presence and participation is both critical and expected. Consequently, regular daily assignments are scheduled to ensure you are prepared for class.

**Course Objectives:** This course is found in the “Information” category, Level C, of the School of Communication curriculum. It specifically provides you with work toward the goals of the “Information” category, which are:

- To understand the diverse and changing ways we acquire, produce, and share knowledge about the world;
- To understand various kinds of messages, stories, images, and texts and how and why they are constructed;
- To research the role of interpretation in how we respond to messages and texts;
- To research and create socially responsible oral, written, and visual communication.

**Saving Materials:** All School of Communication students are required to prepare a Senior Portfolio reflecting their work as students of the School. The portfolio must contain an up-to-date résumé, several examples of scholarly writing (e.g., research papers) and other items, such as digital imaging, photography, video, public relations or advertising work, or any other communication-related artifacts that the student has produced. Be sure to save your projects from this class so they could be included in the portfolio. You will be required to provide at least one piece of work that corresponds to each of the School of Communication majors’ 12 Goals for Student Learning.

**Notes:**

All students are subject to the UND Code of Student Life, including but not limited to, issues of scholastic dishonesty.

To request disability accommodations, please make an appointment to see the instructor. For more information and assistance, please call Disability Services at (701) 777-3245.

The School of Communication is committed to bringing the richness of cultural diversity to all students. Through active engagement, the School of Communication endeavors to provide multi-cultural opportunities, to reduce cultural stereotypes, to embrace cultural differences, and to promote respect for cultural diversity.

The School of Communication follows the Academic Grievance Procedures of the College of Arts and Sciences. The procedures are posted online on the UND College of Arts and Sciences Forms web page at <http://www.und.edu/dept/artsci/forms.html>

You should be subscribed to the School of Communication listserv (SComminfo). To subscribe, send an e-mail message from your own account as follows:

To:                listserv@listserv.nodak.edu  
 Subject:         leave the subject line blank  
 Message:         subscribe UND-scomminfo yourfirstname yourlastname

**Assignments and Grading:**

Daily assignments (10 pts each/top 10 grades used)	100 pts
Visionaries/practitioners of information society (Web page & presentation)	100 pts
Information diary (Web log & 3-4 page reflection paper)	100 pts
Broadcast research (digital video webcast & presentation)	100 pts
Issue paper (approximately 10-12 pages)	100 pts
Presentation of one paper	50 pts
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	550 pts

Final grades are calculated on a 10% per letter grade scale as follows:

495 – 550	A
439 – 494	B
383 – 438	C
327 – 382	D

**Classroom Policies:**

- Regular attendance is necessary to be successful in this course. A written synopsis of the assigned readings may be submitted to make up for a missed class.
- Please do not hesitate to ask me for assistance when needed.
- All projects should be completed on time. For each day an assignment is late one percent of the grade will be deducted.

**Texts**: All required course readings will be accessible online, through e-Reserve, course reserve, or at the Library. Three recommended texts are available at the University bookstore:

Dijk, Jan A. G. M. van. (2005). *The deepening divide: Inequality in the information society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Webster, Frank. (2002). *Theories of the information society* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Wilhelm, Anthony G. (2004). *Digital nation: Toward an inclusive information society*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

For additional readings, see the attached selected bibliography.

**Tentative Timeline:**

Unit I. *Information Society: History, Theory & Practice*

This will be a “walk through” introducing you to the major debates and the major approaches that have shaped thinking and research agendas regarding the information society.

Aug 24	Introduction to the course
Aug 31	Information age milestones
Sept 7	Information society theory
Sept 14	Visionaries of the information society
Sept 21	Practitioners of the information society. <i>Visionaries/Practitioners assignment due</i>
Sept 28	Defining information
Oct 5	Accessing information
Oct 12	Consuming information
Oct 19	Producing and distributing information
Oct 26	Evaluating and verifying information. <i>Information diary due</i>

Unit II. *Information Society: Issues & Applications*

This part of the course will focus on more specific issues and applications. Please feel free to express your preferences and ideas about the content of this unit to help us meet the goals of the course. Topics suggested for discussion include but are not limited to:

Nov 2	Knowledge economy
Nov 9	Digital divide/Public sphere
Nov 16	Intellectual property/Ethical issues
Nov 23	Post-broadcast technologies. <i>Broadcast research assignment due</i>
Nov 30	Future of IT
Dec 7	TBA
Dec 9	Reading and review day
Dec 12	Final exam time Monday at 1:00 pm. Final presentations. <i>Issue paper due</i>

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Lana Rakow for sharing her Fall 2002 COMM 405 syllabus, which provides a foundation for the present course.

## COMM 405 READING LIST

### Unit I. *Information Society: History, Theory & Practice*

#### **Information age milestones** (Aug 31, Sept 7)

May, C. (2002). Locating the information age in history. In *The information society: A skeptical view* (pp. 19-48). Malden, MA: Polity. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Mattelart, A. (2003). The cult of numbers. In *The information society: An introduction* (pp. 5-25). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Mattelart, A. (2003). Managing the industrial and scientific age. In *The information society: An introduction* (pp. 27-46). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[Course reserve](#)]

#### **Information society theory** (Sept 7, 14)

May, C. (2002). What is the global information society? In *The information society: A skeptical view* (pp. 1-18). Malden, MA: Polity. [[Course reserve](#)]

Boyle, J. (1997). The information society. In *Shamans, software and spleens: Law and the construction of the information society* (pp. 1-16). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Lyon, D. (1996). The roots of the information society idea. In N. Heap, R. Thomas, G. Einon, R. Mason, & H. Mackay (Eds.), *Information technology and society: A reader* (pp. 54-73). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Castells, M. (2000). Materials for an exploratory theory of the network society. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51 (1), 5-24. [[Available online](#)]

\*Mackay, H. (1996). Theorising the IT/society relationship. In N. Heap et al. (Eds.), *Information technology and society: A reader* (pp. 41-53). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[I have a copy](#)]

\*Webster, F. (2002). The information society as post-industrialism: Daniel Bell. In *Theories of the information society* (2nd ed., pp. 30-58). New York: Routledge. [[Bookstore](#)]

#### **Visionaries of the information society** (Sept 14)

Bush, V. (1945, July). As we may think. *Atlantic Monthly* [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 1, 2005, from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/194507/bush> [[Available online](#)]

Drucker, P. F. (1996, Summer). The shape of things to come (An interview with Peter F. Drucker). *Leader to Leader*, 1 [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 1, 2005, from <http://www.pfdf.org/leaderbooks/L2L/summer96/drucker.html> [[Available online](#)]

\*Engelbart, D. C. (2000). Can we make society smarter? In J. Fouke (Ed.), *Engineering tomorrow: Today's technology experts envision the next century* (pp. 82-87). Piscataway, NJ: IEEE Press. [[On search](#)]

\*Licklider, J. C. R., & Taylor, R. W. (1968). The computer as a communication device. *Science & Technology*, 21-31. [[Requested through ILL](#)]

\*Negroponte, N. (1995). *Being digital*. New York: Knopf. [[Chester Fritz Library](#)]

**Practitioners of the information society** (Sept 21)

Berners-Lee, T. (1999). Web of people (chapter 10). In *Weaving the Web: The original design and ultimate destiny of the World Wide Web by its inventor* (pp. 123-141). San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Hundt, R. E. (2001). *You say you want a revolution: A story of information age politics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. [[I have it](#)]

\*Gates, B. (with N. Myhrvold & P. Rinearson). (1995). *The road ahead*. New York: Viking. [[Library](#)]

\*Saffo, P. (1994). The place of originality in the information age. In M. Bierut (Ed.), *Looking closer: Critical writings on graphic design* (pp. 94-96). New York: Allworth Press. [[On search](#)]

**Defining information** (Sept 28)

Brown, J. S., & Duguid, P. (2000). Limits to information (chapter 1). In *The social life of information* (pp. 11-33). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press. [[Course reserve](#)]

Roszak, T. (1986). Of ideas and data. In *The cult of information: The folklore of computers and the true art of thinking* (pp. 87-107). New York: Pantheon Books. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Berners-Lee, T. (1999). Machines and the Web (chapter 13). In *Weaving the Web: The original design and ultimate destiny of the World Wide Web by its inventor* (pp. 177-198). San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. [[Course Reserve](#)]

**Accessing information** (Oct 5)

Dijk, J. A. G. M. van. (2005). Skills access (chapter 5). In *The deepening divide: Inequality in the information society* (pp. 71-93). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

Dijk, J. A. G. M. van. (2005). Usage access (chapter 6). In *The deepening divide: Inequality in the information society* (pp. 95-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

**Consuming information** (Oct 12, 19)

Fiske, J., & Hartley, J. (2003). The signs of television (chapter 3). In *Reading television* (pp. 22-40). New York: Routledge. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Postman, N., & Powers, S. (1992). *How to watch TV news*. New York: Penguin Books. [[Library/Buy this book online](#)]

\*Fiske, J., & Hartley, J. (2003). The codes of television (chapter 4). In *Reading television* (pp. 41-48). New York: Routledge. [[I have a copy](#)]

**Producing and distributing information** (Oct 19)

Rosenfeld, L., & Morville, P. (1998). Organizing information. In *Information architecture for the World Wide Web* (1st ed., pp. 22-46). Cambridge, MA: O'Reilly. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Fleming, J. (1998). Looking at process (chapter 6). In *Web navigation: Designing the user experience* (pp. 75-104). Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Mosco, V. (2000). Webs of myth and power: Connectivity and the new computer technopolis. In A. Herman & T. Swiss (Eds.), *The World Wide Web and contemporary cultural theory* (pp. 37-60). New York: Routledge. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*McChesney, R. (2000). So much for the magic of technology and the free market: The World Wide Web and the corporate media system. In A. Herman & T. Swiss (Eds.), *The World Wide Web and contemporary cultural theory* (pp. 5-36). New York: Routledge. [[I have a copy](#)]

### **Evaluating and verifying information** (Oct 26)

Baran, N. (1998). Selling our children: Channel one and the politics of education. In R. W., McChesney, E. M. Wood, & J. B. Foster, (Eds.), *Capitalism and the information age: The political economy of the global communication revolution*. New York: Monthly Review Press. [[On search at CFL](#)]

Hundt, R. E. (1997, October 22). From Buenos Aires to Geneva and beyond (Speech at the World Affairs Council in Philadelphia, PA) [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 2, 2005, from <http://www.fcc.gov> [[Available online](#)]

Minow, N. (2003). Television and the public interest (Speech before the National Association of Broadcasters, May 9, 1961) (Transcript). *Federal Communications Law Journal*, 55 (3), 395-406 [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 13, 2005, from <http://www.law.indiana.edu/fclj/pubs/v55no3.html> [[Available online](#)]

## **Unit II. Information Society: Issues & Applications**

### **Knowledge economy** (Nov 2)

Tapscott, D. (1996). Twelve themes of the new economy (chapter 2). In *The digital economy: Promise and peril in the age of networked intelligence* (pp. 43-72). New York: McGraw-Hill. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Berners-Lee, T. (1999). Weaving the Web (chapter 14). In *Weaving the Web: The original design and ultimate destiny of the World Wide Web by its inventor* (pp. 199-209). San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. [[Course Reserve](#)]

\*Schwartz, E. I. (1998). *Webonomics: Nine essential principles for growing your business on the World Wide Web*. New York: Broadway Books. [[Library](#)]

\*Schwartz, E. I. (2001). *Digital Darwinism: Seven breakthrough business strategies for surviving in the cutthroat Web economy*. New York: Broadway Books. [[Library](#)]

\*Wilhelm, A. G. (2004). A Faustian bargain for the digital age (chapter 3). In *Digital nation: Toward an inclusive information society* (pp. 37-57). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

### **Digital divide/Public sphere** (Nov 9)

Dijk, J. A. G. M. van. (2005). Inequality in the information society (chapter 7). In *The deepening divide: Inequality in the information society* (pp. 131-143). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

Dijk, J. A. G. M. van. (2005). Inequality in the network society (chapter 8). In *The deepening divide: Inequality in the information society* (pp. 145-161). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

\*Habermas, J. (1962). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. (T. Burger, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Polity. [[Library](#)]

\*Hundt, R. E. (2001). *You say you want a revolution: A story of information age politics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. [[I have it](#)]

\*Gehring, V. V. (Ed.). (2004). *The Internet in public life*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. [[Library](#)]

### **Intellectual property/Ethical issues** (Nov 16)

May, C. (2002). Intellectual property (Appendix). In *The information society: A skeptical view* (pp. 162-167). Malden, MA: Polity. [[Course reserve](#)]

Walma van der Molen, J. H. (2004). Violence and suffering in television news: Toward a broader conception of harmful television content for children. *Pediatrics*, 113 (6), 1771-1775. [[Available online](#)]

\*Cortada, J. W. (2001). Public policy and information. In *Making the information society: Experience, consequences, and possibilities* (pp. 294-339). New York: Prentice Hall. [[I have a copy](#)]

### **Post-broadcast technologies** (Nov 23, 30)

Dessauer, C. (2004). New media, Internet news, and the news habit. In P. N. Howard & S. Jones (Eds.), *Society online: The Internet in context* (pp. 121-136). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Friend, C., Challenger, D., & McAdams, K. (2005). The future now: Convergence and the Web (chapter 16). In *Contemporary editing* (pp. 407-444). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill. [[e-Reserve](#)]

Rogers, E. M. (2002). The information society in the new millennium: Captain's log, 2001 (chapter 3). In C. A. Lin & D. J. Atkin (Eds.), *Communication technology and society: Audience adoption and uses* (pp. 43-64). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Boczkowski, P. J. (2005). *Digitizing the news: Innovation in online newspapers*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. [[Library](#)]

\*Noam, E. M., Groebel, J., & Gerbarg, D. (2004). *Internet television*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. [[Library](#)]

### **Future of information technologies** (Nov 30)

Berners-Lee, T. (1999). Mind to mind (chapter 12). In *Weaving the Web: The original design and ultimate destiny of the World Wide Web by its inventor* (pp. 157-175). San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. [[Course Reserve](#)]

\*Cortada, J. W. (2001). The future of information in America. In *Making the information society: Experience, consequences, and possibilities* (pp. 369-411). New York: Prentice Hall. [[e-Reserve](#)]

\*Heap, N. et al. (Eds.). (1996). IT futures. In *Information technology and society: A reader* (pp. 341-349). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [[I have a copy](#)]

\*Wilhelm, A. G. (2004). *Digital nation: Toward an inclusive information society*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. [[Course reserve/Bookstore](#)]

Note: \* - recommended reading