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
Contact: tatyana.dumova@und.edu or 701-777-4726

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

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:


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.

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

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


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


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


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


*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]


**Defining information** (Sept 28)


**Accessing information** (Oct 5)


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


*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)


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


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

**Knowledge economy** (Nov 2)


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


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


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


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


Note: * - recommended reading