SAMPLE SYLLABUS FOR NMCC COMMON SEMINAR

J610

Winter 2013

History & Theory of New Media

Th: 12-2.50 p.m.

137 Allen

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Office hours: MW  2.30-3.30 p.m. and
By appointment

Course Description

The emergence of new modes of communication and interconnectivity brought about by the digital revolution have radically changed our notions of self, identity and society. This course will introduce students to the history of the new media as well as to the key theoretical issues that have emerged in its wake. We will begin by considering the relationship between technology and communication and by tracing the processes that have led to the creation of a new media order. We will then investigate some crucial topics and issues that have risen in the wake of these developments: information theory, code and law, digital capitalism, network theory, and digital politics. In conclusion, we will examine how the concepts, protocols and practices associated with the new media force us to refigure traditional modes of social and cultural theory.
Course Requirements

The course has three sets of assignments:

Responses

Each week (Week 1-8) students will respond to a designated article (or articles). Responses will be approximately one page long and should be posted on Blackboard by noon the day the class meets. Please bring a hard copy of your response to class to hand over to the instructor for grading.

Seminar

During Weeks 9-10 students will participate in a group seminar (two seminar sessions per week) that will present and analyze one specific issue in new media studies. Each student is expected to make a 15 minute presentation and then participate in discussion with fellow seminar members as well as answering questions from the audience. You are also required to submit a short report (3-4 pages) that summarize your arguments. The report is to be handed in on the day of your presentation. Your grade for this assignment will be based on both the class presentation as well as your written report.

Finals

Students will write a short take-home essay (6-8 pages) in response to one of several questions provided by the instructor. The form of your answer should approximate to that employed in doctoral comprehensive examinations. The questions will be handed out Monday, March 11 and the assignment is due by 5 p.m. on Monday, March 18.

Note: All assignments will be discussed in much greater detail in class and on Blackboard.

Grade Distribution

Responses: 30%
Seminar: 40%
Finals: 30%

Readings

All readings for the course will be available as PDF files on Blackboard. Files will be posted under Readings and will be organized in folders that correspond to a particular week. (Ex: Readings for Week 3 will be placed in a folder named Week 3).

Note: A list of all the readings (by week) will be posted on Blackboard
Course Schedule
Note: This schedule is subject to change

WEEK 1 (1/10)  The Question of Technology
Topics: The philosophy of technology, the impact of new technology, technology and culture.

WEEK 2 (1/17)  Guest Lecture
Students will attend a public lecture delivered by Professor Wendy Chun, Department of Modern Culture and Media, Brown University.
Venue: Fir Room, EMU. Time: noon – 2.00 p.m.

WEEK 3 (1/24)  Information
Topics: The rise of information society, the mathematical theory of communication, informational machines, the politics of information.

WEEK 4 (1/31)  Code and Law
Topics: Code in cyberspace, the architecture of code, digital privacy, freedom and copyright, code as law.

WEEK 5 (2/7)  Digital Capitalism
Topics: Ownership and control in cyberspace, corporatization of cyberspace, open-source movement, freeware, new media and new capitalism.
WEEK 6 (2/14) Networks

Topics: The Internet, small worlds theory, networks and public discourse, collective intelligence, socio-technical systems.

WEEK 7 (2/21) Digital Politics

Topics: Race and gender in cyberspace, the digital divide, network neutrality, internet censorship, outsourcing the global economy, emerging software nations.

WEEK 8 (2/28) Digital Philosophy

Topics: Deleuze and assemblage theory, Kittler and discourse networks, Latour and actor-network theory, object-oriented ontology.

WEEK 9 (3/7) Seminars 1 & 2

WEEK 10 (3/14) Seminars 3 & 4

FINAL Assignment due Monday, March 18
LIST OF READINGS

Week 1


**Week 2**


“Crisis, Crisis, Crisis, or Sovereignty and Networks,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 2011, Vo. 28(6), pp. 91-112.

**Week 3**


Weaver, Warren, “Recent Contributions to The Mathematical Theory of Communications,” waste.informatik.hu-berlin.de/Lehre/ss11/SE.../weaver.pdf

**Week 4**


**Week 5**


Week 6


Nierder, Sabine and Jose van Dijck. “Wisdom of the Crowd or technicity of content? Wikipedia as sociotechnical content” new media & society 2010 12(8): 1368-1387


Week 7


Week 8


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**Week 9**

Surveillance Readings:


Man/Machine:


Week 10
