LIS 201: The Information Society

Fall 2018

https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/119837

Instructor
Ellen LeClere
eleclere@wisc.edu / ellenleclere@gmail.com
Office Hours: Mondays, 10 AM-12 PM
Office: 4289 Helen C. White Hall

Teaching Assistants
Laurie Buchholz
buchholz2@wisc.edu
Office Hours: TBD
Office: 4110 Helen C. White Hall

Harvey Long
hdlong@wisc.edu
Office Hours: TBD
Office: 4289 Helen C. White Hall

Angela Meadows
ameadows@wisc.edu
Office Hours: Mondays, 12-1 PM and 2:30-3:30 PM
Office: 4110 Helen C. White Hall

Meeting Times and Location
Lecture
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM, 1121 Mosse Humanities Building.

Discussion Sections
301 – Mondays, 1:20 – 2:10 PM, 4290 Helen C. White Hall (Angela Meadows)
302 – Wednesdays, 1:20 – 2:10 PM, 4290 Helen C. White Hall (Laurie Buchholz)
303 – Wednesdays, 3:30 – 4:20 PM, 4191F Helen C. White Hall (Harvey Long)
304 – Mondays, 3:30 – 4:20 PM, 4191F Helen C. White Hall (Angela Meadows)
305 – Mondays, 4:35 – 5:25 PM, 4191F Helen C. White Hall (Harvey Long)
306 – Tuesdays, 4:35 – 5:25 PM, 4290 Helen C. White Hall (Laurie Buchholz)

Introduction and Course Learning Outcomes
We live in an information-rich world. We have easy access to the Internet, which allows us to access and share information across national and geographic borders almost instantaneously. We communicate in a variety of networked media, about a variety of subjects, with a variety of people, and for a variety of purposes. Information communication technologies (ICTs) grow increasingly "smart" and can do more work that humans used to do. We often hear that online access to information and ICTs are the foundation of our current "Information Society." The

implication is that *information* – its proliferation, accessibility, use, control, and ownership – are a fundamental feature of the human experience. But… so what?

Well, several things. ICTs have profound implications for human behavior and well-being. They may alter the way societies function. Ways in which ICTs are deployed affect how people exercise fundamental rights, such as free expression (for good and ill); and challenge long-standing social values, such as privacy. In other words, the flow of information and ICTs *reflect* and *affect* things of value and are therefore morally important for us to consider.

With that in mind, there are three key objectives for this course.
1. Students will understand important moral, political, social, and historical contexts of information technologies.
2. Students will be able to critically evaluate important moral, political, social, and historical questions that arise in the context of information technologies.
3. Students will be able to research, analyze, and discuss complex issues and arguments surrounding important moral, political, social, and historical questions as they pertain to information and ICTs.

Moreover, this is a Comm-B requirement-fulfilling course. One of the most valuable skills you can have is the ability to communicate ideas effectively orally and in writing. *It is important to building your own knowledge and understanding of complex ideas and theories* – the ability to communicate ideas is closely related to one's understanding of those ideas. *It is important to your personal and professional development* – research demonstrates again and again that the ability to communicate effectively is important to employers and organizations, and it is a skill that many professionals and academics lack. Becoming a stronger communicator will enhance your opportunities as a professional and as a participant in civic life. More about Comm-B specific learning outcomes may be found in the Course Management section.

Course Management
Prerequisites
Enrollment in this course is contingent on having satisfied the Communications A requirement.

Instruction Mode
This course meets three times per week. Students are expected to have completed course readings prior to the first weekly meeting, whether that be a discussion section OR lecture. Lectures will be delivered using a traditional lecture model with limited opportunities for student feedback and engagement. The purpose of lectures is to clarify and supplement the readings, not to replace them. Discussion sections led by the TAs are smaller and more personalized and allow for deeper engagement with course content in structured discussions, exercises, and activities. You are encouraged to get to know your classmates and TA and play an active role in your own learning process by asking questions, seeking clarifications, providing feedback, and sharing personal experiences. **Please note that your TA should be your first point of contact for all questions and support related to the class or assignments.**

4 credit class
Students completing this course will earn 4 credit hours. A credit hour is defined as the learning that takes place in at least 45 hours of learning activities, which include time in lectures or class meetings, in-person or online, laboratories, examinations, presentations, tutorials, preparation, reading, studying, hands-on experiences, and other learning activities; or a demonstration by the student of learning equivalent to that established as the expected product of such a period of study.

Comm-B Requirement and Learning Outcomes
This course fulfills Course B of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Undergraduate Communication Requirement. Students develop skills that enable them to be effective speakers and writers in and out of the classroom. In courses satisfying the Communication requirement, students will:
- Make effective use of information retrieved, organized, and synthesized from appropriate sources.
- Present ideas and information clearly and logically to achieve a specific purpose.
- Make effective use of communicative forms appropriate to a specific discipline and adapted to the intended audience.
- Use appropriate style and conventions associated with particular communicative forms, genres, or disciplines.

Course Policies
Attendance
Any student for whom religious observances conflict with lecture or discussion section attendance or other mandatory academic requirements should let their TA know within the first two weeks of class to make appropriate arrangements for make-up work. Make-up work may be scheduled before or after the regularly scheduled requirements. In the event of unforeseen events or emergencies, students should let their TA know as soon as possible to secure appropriate accommodations or possible extensions.

Students are allowed two absences from discussion section over the course of the semester. TAs will take attendance at the start of each discussion section. Absences beyond this allowance will negatively affect your participation grade. While attending lecture is strongly encouraged, it is not mandatory (i.e. we do not take attendance at lecture). Quizzes are randomly administered during lectures and if you are absent from lecture during a quiz day you will not be given the opportunity to make up the quiz (this does not include excused absences already approved by your TA).

Distractions
Please avoid disrupting lecture (arriving late, talking in class, texting, or packing up before class ends), and please turn off your cell phone or other mobile devices. Laptops are permitted, but we reserve the right to ask you to put it away if we see that you are not using it for course-related purposes or causing distractions to other students.

Academic Integrity

We follow the University of Wisconsin-Madison's standards for academic integrity, cheating, and plagiarism. These rules may be found here: https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

While you are encouraged to draw upon relevant literature as part of fulfilling the Comm-B requirements, any work that you submit for academic credit must be your own work – i.e. written in your own words. Any information that is not common knowledge (concepts/ideas, paraphrases, or direct quotes) must be clearly attributed in your writing and your reference list in a consistent citation style.

Academic misconduct violations will result in an automatic 0 on the assignment and an instructor determined sanction. Students facing allegations of academic misconduct will be notified in writing, typically by email, of the instructor's decision. The Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards (OSCCS) may also be informed and will contact the student about his/her rights and any additional sanctions. Repeated acts of academic misconduct or extreme circumstances may result in more serious actions such as academic probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Student Accommodations

It is my intention to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. To request academic accommodations, register as soon as possible with the McBurney Disability Resource Center (located at 1305 Linden Drive). For more information on obtaining a McBurney Center VISA, see http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/students/howto.php.

Diversity and Inclusion

From the University of Wisconsin-Madison statement on diversity: "Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways in which their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world." Please see https://diversity.wisc.edu/ for more information.

Assignment Descriptions

Oral assignments

Article response - 10 points

Students will present a summary and critique of one of the required readings over the course of the semester, providing at least one question for class discussion at the end. Presentations will be recorded. To receive full points, students must also evaluate their speech. Presentations must not exceed 5 minutes.

Final Project - 20 points

Critical book review, to be prepared as a multimedia presentation for class viewing. Further details of the final project will be distributed via Canvas. Projects must not exceed 5 minutes.

Participation

This is a 4-credit, Comm-B course. As such, the expectations for reading and class preparedness are higher than the average course. Please come to your discussion sections prepared to participate, having read all required readings for the week in advance.

Written assignments

Paper 1 - 10 points

Your first paper will analyze the development of a new technology or the development of a stable, widely-used technology using conceptions of technological progress we review in the first weeks of the course. Further details of the paper will be distributed via Canvas.

Paper 1 will be completed in stages:
- Printed draft due in Week 4 discussion section
- Student conferences in Week 5 (no discussion section)
- Final due printed in Week 6 discussion section

Paper 2 - 10 points

Your second paper will be a position paper that considers the benefits and consequences of new technological policies or practices on individual privacy. Further details of the paper will be distributed via Canvas.

Paper 2 will be completed in stages:
- Printed draft due in Week 9 discussion section
- Student conferences in Week 10 (no discussion section)
- Final due printed in Week 11 discussion section

SPINs (x10) – 3 points each
Stories Pertaining to the Information Society. Every week you will find a recent news story (within the month) about an information society issue, trend, case, technology, law, practice, or related matter and prepare a summary of the story and its relation to course content in a short paper OR respond to a set of explainers/tasks in a short paper. SPINs should not exceed one page, double-spaced (approximately 250 words).

SPINs are due every Sunday at 11:59 PM. Late SPINs may be turned in for half credit up to a week after the original due date. SPINs turned in over a week late will not be graded.

Quizzes (x5) – 2 points each
Five pop quizzes will be administered randomly during lectures. Pop quizzes will consist of two multiple choice questions related to concepts from recent course content.

Point Breakdown

Oral assignments	
Article response	10 points
Final project	20 points
Participation	10 points
Written assignments	
SPINs (x10)	30 points (maximum 32 points)
Paper 1	10 points
Paper 2	10 points
Pop quizzes (x5)	10 points (maximum 11 points)

Grading Scale

A	94 and above
AB	89-93
B	84-88
BC	79-83
C	70-78
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Extra credit opportunities
Students may complete one additional SPIN (worth 2 points) and one additional pop quiz (worth 1 point).

Course Agenda and Readings

Week 1 September 6	**Topic:** Thursday: Introduction to the course. **Readings:** None. **Due:** None.
Week 2 September 11 September 13	**Topic:** Tuesday: Introduction to moral philosophy / information ethics Thursday: Introduction to information ethics (continued) **Readings:** Edmonds, David. (2014). Chapters 1-5, in *Would You Kill the Fat Man?* Princeton University Press, pp. 3-45. Regan, Tom. (2012). "Introduction to Moral Reasoning," in *Information Ethics: Privacy, Property, and Power* (Adam D. Moore, ed.), Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, pp. 30-46. Halsey, Ashley. (2017). "When driverless cars crash, who gets the blame and pays the damages?" *The Washington Post*. **Due:** Week 2 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 3 September 18 September 20	**Topic:** Tuesday: Introduction to determinist theories of technology Thursday: Introduction to social construction of technology (SCOT) **Readings:** Slack, Jennifer and Wise, J. Macgregor. (2005). "Determinism," in *Culture + Technology: A Primer*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, pp. 41-49. Sismondo, Sergio. (2004). "The Social Construction of Scientific and Technical Realities," in *An Introduction to Science and Technology Studies*, Blackwell Publishing, pp. 51-64. * Winner, Langdon. (2010). "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" in *The Whale and The Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 19-39. **Due:** Week 3 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 4 September 25 September 27	**Topic:** Tuesday: Intellectual property Thursday: Information regulation

Readings:

Spinello, Richard A. (2014). "Intellectual Property in Cyberspace." In *Cyberethics: Morality and Law in Cyberspace*, 5th edition. Jones & Bartlett, pp. 103-152.

* Lessing, Lawrence. (2006). Chapter 7, in *Code 2.0*, pp. 121-137. Available via a Creative Commons license, via http://codev2.cc/download+remix/Lessig-Codev2.pdf

Risen, Clay. (2017). "When Jack Daniel's Failed to Honor a Slave, an Author Rewrote History." *The New York Times*.

Due:

Paper 1 printed draft (by discussion section)
Week 4 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)

Week 5 October 2 October 4	**Topic:** Tuesday: Omar Poler (guest lecture on cultural property) Thursday: Cultural property and information access PAPER 1 CONFERENCE WEEK – NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS. **Readings:** * Atalay, Sonya, Shannon, Jen, and Swogger, (2017). "Journeys to Complete the Work." NAGPRA Comics, pp. 1-24. * Colwell, Chip. (2017). *Plundered Skulls and Stolen Spirits*. University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-54. * Caswell, Michelle. (2011) "Thank You Very Much, Now Give Them Back': Cultural Property and the Fight over the Iraqi Baath Party Records." The American Archivist, 74 (Spring/Summer): pp. 210-240. **Due:** Week 5 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 6 October 9 October 11	**Topic:** Tuesday: Free speech, democracy, and information access Thursday: Free speech, democracy, and information access (continued) **Readings:** * Greenawalt, Kent. (2012). "Rationales for Free Speech," in *Information Ethics: Privacy, Property, and Power* (Adam D. Moore, ed.), University of Washington Press, 2012. * Warburton, Nigel. (2009). "Chapter 2 – A Free Market in Ideas?" in *Free Speech: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, pp. 22-41. Dowd, Robert C. (1990). "I Want to Find Out How to Freebase Cocaine or Yet Another Unobtrusive Test of Reference Performance," *The Reference Librarian*, 11(25-26): 483-493. Mill, J. S. (1859). Chapter 2: On the Liberty of Thought and Discussion, in *On Liberty*. Available at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/34901/34901-h/34901-h.htm#Page_28. **[SKIM]**

	Due: Paper 1 (by discussion section) Week 6 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 7 October 16 October 18	**Topic:** Tuesday: Privacy and contextual integrity Thursday: Privacy, student data, and learning analytics **Readings:** * Nissenbaum, Helen. (2010). Chapter 7, in *Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy, and the Integrity of Social Life*. Stanford Law Books, pp. 127-157. * Rubel, Alan and Kyle M. L. Jones. (2016). "Student privacy in learning analytics: An information ethics perspective." *The Information Society*, 32(2), 143–159. Solove, Daniel. (20 May 2011). "Why Privacy Matters Even if You Have 'Nothing to Hide'," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 57(37): 11-13. Schultz, Alex. (2017). "Why is this wearable-tech company helping college teams track how often athletes sleep, drink, and have sex?" *Deadspin*. **Due:** Week 7 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 8 October 23 October 25	**Topic:** Tuesday: Privacy, memory, and access to information Thursday: The right to be forgotten **Readings:** * Jones, Meg Leta. (2016). Chapter 1: Forgetting Made Easy, in *Ctrl + Z: The Right to Be Forgotten*. New York University Press, pp. 27-53. * Jones, Meg Leta. (2016). Chapter 2: Forgetting Made Impossible, in *Ctrl + Z: The Right to Be Forgotten*. New York University Press, pp. 55-80. De Baets, Antoon. (2016). "A Historian's View on the Right to Be Forgotten," *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, 30(1-2): 57-66. **Due:** Week 8 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 9 October 30 November 1	**Topic:** Tuesday: An introduction to algorithms and ethical harms Thursday: Adam Pham guest lecture on data markets and agency **Readings:** * Gillespie, Tarleton. "The relevance of algorithms," in *Media Technologies*, Tarleton Gillespie, Pablo Boczkowski, and Kirsten Foot (eds), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. * Pham, Adam and Castro, Clinton. (forthcoming). "The Moral Limits of the Market: The Case of Consumer Scoring Data," Ethics and information Technology.

* Sandvig, Christian et al. (2016). "When the Algorithm Itself is a Racist: Diagnosing Ethical Harm in the Basic Components of Software," *International Journal of Communication* (10): 4972-4990.

Due:
Paper 2 printed draft (by discussion section)
Week 9 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)

Week 10 November 6 November 8	**Topic:** Tuesday: Harvey Long guest lecture on predictive policing Thursday: Digital inequality PAPER 2 CONFERENCE WEEK – NO DISCUSSION SECTIONS. **Readings:** * Angwin, Julia et al. (2016). "Machine Bias." *ProPublica*. Available at https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing * Eubanks, Virginia. (2017). "From Poorhouse to Database," in *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor*, New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, pp. 14-38. Chokshi, Niraj. (19 January 2018). "Can Software Predict Crime? Maybe So, but No Better Than a Human," *The New York Times*. **Due:** Week 10 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 11 November 13 November 15	**Topic:** Tuesday: Private governments Thursday: Privacy and liberty in the workplace MANDATORY DESIGN LAB WORKSHOP. **Readings:** * Anderson, Elizabeth. (2017). Chapter 2, in *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives*. Princeton University Press, pp. 37-71. * Akrap, Mirko (2016). "RFID Implementation: Testing in Prisons and Parolees for the Greater Good," *The John Marshall Journal of Information Technology & Privacy* Law 33(1): 22-45. Metz, Rachel. (17 August 2018). "This company embeds microchips in its employees, and they love it," *MIT Technology Review*. **Due:** Paper 2 printed final (by discussion section) Week 11 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 12	**No lecture/discussion sections – Thanksgiving break.**

Week 13 November 27 November 29	**Topic:** Tuesday: Introduction to information labor Thursday: Greg Downey guest lecture on information labor **Readings:** * Autor, David H. (2015). "Why Are There Still So Many Jobs? The History and Future of Workplace Automation," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 29(3), pp. 3-30. * "Retraction." *This American Life*, available at https://www.thisamericanlife.org/460/retraction Taylor, Frederick Winslow. (1919). Principles of Scientific Management. Harper & Brothers Publishers. Introduction - Chapter 1, pp. 5-14. **[SKIM]** **Due:** Week 13 SPIN (Sunday at 11:59 PM)
Week 14 December 4 December 6	**Topic:** Tuesday: Information ethics in a global information society Thursday: Everything is terrible… so what? **Readings:** * Phillips, Kristopher G. (2017). "Is philosophy impractical? Yes and no, but that is precisely why we need it," in *Why the Humanities Matter Today: In Defense of Liberal Education* (Lee Trepanier, ed.). Lexington Books. Gilliard, Chris and Culik, Hugh. (30 July 2018). "The New Pythagoreans." *boundary 2*, available at http://www.boundary2.org/2018/07/gilliard-culik/ **Due:** Final project (by discussion section)
Week 15 December 11	**Topic:** Tuesday: Final project viewing, course evaluations **Readings:** None. **Due:** Final project

* Indicates content that may be used for the article response assignment.