



# DIGITAL TECH & SOCIETY

NEW 103H1F - FALL 2019



## COURSE TIME

Thursdays 1-4 pm

## CLASS LOCATION

Wetmore Hall 54E

## COURSE WEBSITE

[g.utoronto.ca](http://g.utoronto.ca)

## NEW ONE COORDINATOR


[new.one@utoronto.ca](mailto:new.one@utoronto.ca)

## INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Alexandra Guerson

## CONTACT

[alexandra.guerson@utoronto.ca](mailto:alexandra.guerson@utoronto.ca)

 @aeguerson

## OFFICE HOURS

11:00am-12:00pm Thursday or by  
appointment

WE50L

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

*"It is impossible that old prejudices and hostilities should exist, while such an instrument has been created for the exchange of thought between all the nations of the Earth."*

*(Charles Briggs and Augustus Maverick, The Story of the Telegraph, 1858)*

*"... a central paradox of this connected age is that while it is easier than ever to share information and perspectives from different parts of the world, we may now often encounter a narrower picture of the world than in less connected days"*

*(Ethan Zuckerman, Digital Cosmopolitans, 2013)*

How does digital technology shape how we live, think, see and imagine? How are our

lives affected by increased opportunities for surveillance and regulation as well as connection and communication across spaces? In this course, we will explore the role of technology in shaping our relationship in and our engagement with the place where we live - our city, our school, our community - and the larger world. At the heart of it is the concept of citizenship - a concept that goes beyond legal status to include membership in a group, a sense of belonging, but also expectations around participation in shaping that community. The main question we will explore this term is: what role does technology play in our citizenship?

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course you will be able to:

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- To think critically about our own uses of technologies, and how these uses affect the environment that surrounds us and our ability to participate in it
- To develop an understanding of the social, economic impact of the uses (and abuses) of digital technologies
- To develop critical skills in reading and research
- To become critical users, not just passive users of technologies

## COURSE MATERIALS

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Course readings will be available on the course website unless otherwise stated.

## EXPECTATIONS

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As your instructor, I expect that you will:

- Take responsibility for your own learning.
- Come to every class prepared and ready to engage with the material and your fellow students.
- Come to class with a considerate, respectful and nonjudgmental attitude towards each other and the instructor and help to create a positive space for creative learning and exploration.

As students, you can expect that I will:

- Establish and maintain a positive space for exploration and learning.
- Come prepared to every class.
- Help you learn and achieve the course objectives.

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR CLASS

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In order to be able to get the most out of class and participate fully, you will need to read the materials assigned before each class. The readings are listed in the syllabus and are available on Quercus unless otherwise specified.

We will spend some time in class discussing how to read for university courses and how to prepare for discussions.

## COURSE WORK AND GRADING

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A detailed description of each assignment, including assessment criteria, will be posted on Quercus and discussed in class.

**Please note:** There is no final exam for this course. Your learning will be assessed throughout the semester via assignments and participation in the seminar.

Assignments	Due Date	Value %
<b>Digital Tech Critical Review</b>		
Step 1 - Group Contract & Topic	Sept 16	
Step 2 - Technology Review	Oct 14	10+5
Step 3 - Literature Review & Proposal	Nov 04	10+5
Step 4 - Oral Presentation	Nov 28	10
Step 5 - Final Assignment & reflection	Dec 02	10
<b>Social Media Diary – Blog Assignment</b>		
In the week prior to class on October 17, keep a diary of your social media usage for at least two days. After, spend at least 2 days offline. Keep a diary during those days. You will submit a reflection about your experience.	Oct 16 by 1 pm	5

<p><b>Learning Beyond the Classroom - Blog Assignment</b> Starting on Week 3 and until Week 10, a maximum of six students per week will write individual blog posts on the course website.</p>	Throughout	10
<p><b>Learning Lab attendance &amp; responses</b> Free-writing exercises and quick reflections on experiences in the Learning Labs, responding to prompts and questions.</p>	Throughout	10
<p><b>Seminar attendance and participation</b> See note about attendance and participation under Course Policies below.</p>	Throughout	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

### Grading scale - Faculty of Arts & Science

Assignments at the University of Toronto are graded using the following system unless a specific rubric has been supplied by the instructor.

%	Letter Grade	GPA	Description
90 – 100	A+	4.0	<b>Excellent: You far exceeded the expectations of this assignment.</b>
85 – 89	A	4.0	Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
80 – 84	A-	3.7	
77 – 79	B+	3.3	<b>Good: You completed the assignment beyond minimum expectations.</b> Evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable
73 – 76	B	3.0	
70 – 72	B-	2.7	

%	Letter Grade	GPA	Description
			understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.
67 – 69	C+	2.3	<b>Adequate: You demonstrated a basic understanding of assignment requirements.</b> You are profiting from your university experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.
63 – 66	C	2.0	
60 – 62	C-	1.7	
57 – 59	D+	1.3	<b>Marginal: You didn't demonstrate sufficient understanding of assignment requirements for success</b> Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and little evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.
53 – 56	D	1.0	
50 – 52	D-	0.7	
0 – 49	F	0.0	<b>Inadequate: You didn't demonstrate basic abilities to fulfill assignment requirements.</b> Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature/course concepts.

## ACADEMIC AND OTHER SUPPORTS FOR NEW ONE STUDENTS

### 1) ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Successful transition to university-level academic work involves taking care in this, your first year, to develop effective learning habits and necessary academic skills. **New One**, with its small classes and skills-building activities, is geared toward providing academic support and giving you opportunities to learn creatively as well as reflect on the ways in which you learn best, while at the same time challenging you intellectually.

In addition, there are several New College, university-wide, and online resources available to support your academic

development that build on whatever capacities and skills you already have at this point. For example, a good command of written English is essential for the completion of most university assignments. The **Writing Centre** can help you develop and clarify your ideas in clear language. It is also important to organize your ideas, build logical arguments and communicate them well. Again the Writing Centre instructors will work with you to develop your own skills.

We strongly encourage you to take full advantage of these resources as early as you can in the term, so that you can reap the benefits right from the start of your undergraduate career.

### **New College Writing Centre**

You can make an appointment for one-on-one writing instruction at the [Writing Centre website](#) as you work on your assignments.

### **New College Library**

Jeff Newman (jeff.newman@utoronto.ca), the New College librarian, is available to help you figure out how to research your assignment topics and show you the information management tools that will help you do that. There are computer terminals, printing facilities and individual and group study space in the library that can be booked for your use. Visit the [New College Library Website](#) for more information.

### **English Language Learning**

There are several services for students who are multilingual or wanting to improve their

academic English skills in speaking, reading, and writing. For more information, visit the [English Language Learning Program website](#).

### **2) TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY**

There are several student services to support your general learning and transition to university life. Consider reaching out to your registrar or your student life office for support in any aspect of adapting to university.

### **3) ACCESSIBILITY**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. Students who require accommodation for documented health/disability issues should contact [Accessibility Services](#) (<http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>) as soon as possible by phone at 416-978-8060 (TTY: 416-978-1902) or email at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca).

## **GENERAL COURSE POLICIES**

### **1. Attendance and class participation**

Full attendance and active participation in the weekly classes and Learning Lab plenary sessions is required. It counts toward your class participation grade. The 10% Learning Lab grade is based on your participation in plenary activities, and submission of responses to the events, activities and guest speakers when required. If you miss a Learning Lab session due to illness or any other emergency, please contact me, as the New One Coordinator.

## 2. Assignment submission

All assignments are to be submitted via Quercus by midnight the day of the deadline. Late assignments will only be accepted by students who have contacted me in advance of the deadline and who have received an extension. If you are having trouble with an assignment, please contact me as soon as possible. There will be opportunities in class to discuss progress on assignments and to clarify any questions.

## 3. Referencing style: APA

All references in written work must be fully cited using the APA format. The [Owl Purdue APA website](#) is a useful style guide.

## 4. Academic integrity and plagiarism

Acting with academic integrity means not only making ethical choices in what we say and write, but also offering credit to others who thought about ideas before us. In **New One**, we will help you learn the conventions of academic integrity, such as citing sources correctly and being clear about where our own words begin and end.

To learn more, [The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute an academic integrity violation and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

### *In papers and assignments:*

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

### On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

### In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please consult your instructor or access other institutional resources.

## 5. Copyright in Instructional Settings

If you wish to record, photograph, or otherwise reproduce lecture presentations, course notes or other similar materials provided by instructors, you must obtain the instructor's written consent beforehand. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor's consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

## 6. Email response time

Email is the best way to reach me. I will respond within 24 hours during the work week. I will respond to emails received between Friday at 4 p.m. and Sunday evening on Monday. Asking questions in class is always a good idea since by bringing a question to class you may be helping another student who may have the same question.

## 7. Class technology policy

This is a course on the use of digital technology, therefore, I assume we will be using technology in the classroom. I will also assume that you will use your technology responsibly – keep in mind that laptops and smartphones can not only distract you from class discussion, but they also distract your classmates.

## 8. New One Media:

We will occasionally take photos and videos of some of the New One activities and events. If you do not wish to be in any of them, please contact Alexandra Guerson at [new.one@utoronto.ca](mailto:new.one@utoronto.ca) and let her know. The photos or videos may be used for promotional material in the future.



## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

All activities take place in the classroom assigned for the course unless otherwise stated.

### Week 1 - September 5

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1:00-2:30 - **Introduction to NEW103H – Digital Technology & Society**

No Readings

**Discussion:** *What piece of technology most influences your life?*

2:45-4:00 (Room WI 1017) - Introduction to New One

- Welcome by New College Principal, reps from Library and Writing Centre
- Who is in the program?
- Reflection on your first week at U of T

### Week 2 – September 12

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1:00-3:00 – **Technology, cities, and citizenship**

Readings: Zuckerman, E. (2013). Connection, infection, inspiration. In *Rewire: digital cosmopolitans in the age of connection* (pp. 11-37). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

**In the News:**

**Discussion:**

*What is digital technology? Does it separate or unite us?*

3:00-4:00 – Blog writing workshop with Tess Takahashi

### Week 3 – September 19

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1:00-2:00 (Room WI 1017) - Learning Lab: Preparation for Kensington Market Fieldtrip

2:00-4:00 - **Digital Technology and the city – mapping and AR**

Readings:

TBA

Tool - Zotero: your personal research assistant

#### Week 4 – September 26

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1:00-3:00 – **Field trip:** Meet in the classroom and then visit to Kensington Market

3:00-4:00 - **Debrief**

No readings

#### Week 5 – October 3

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1:00-4:00 **Smart Cities**

*In today's class we will meet the Sidewalk fellows: Keisha St. Louis-McBurnie, Candice Leung, and Sharly Chan.*

Readings:

Green, B. (2019) The Smart Enough City: Putting Technology in its Place to Reclaim our Urban Future. Chapter 1.

Sidewalk Toronto Fellows Report (2018).

**Discussion:**

TBA

#### Week 6 – October 10

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1:00-2:00 (Room WI 1017) - **Learning Lab: Understanding and evaluating sources**

2:00-4:00 - **Big Data and the City**

*Guest lecturer: Jesse Coleman, Big Data Innovation Team, City of Toronto*

Readings : Sanderson, N. (2019, June 20). Analysis: the permanent King Street transit way is a model for all Toronto. Retrieved August 27, 2019, from Spacing Toronto website: <https://spacing.ca/toronto/2019/06/20/analysis-the-permanent-king-street-transit-way-is-a-model-for-all-toronto/>

Big Data Innovation Team. (2019). *The Transportation Impacts of Vehicle-for-Hire in the City of Toronto*. City of Toronto.

**Discussion:**

*What surprised you the most about the use of big data by the City of Toronto?*

Week 7 – October 17

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1:00-2:00 (Room WI 1017) - **Learning Lab: Navigating the U of T Library database successfully**

2:00-4:00 - **A brief history of the web**

**Readings:**

A History of the web. Retrieved from:

<https://webfoundation.org/about/vision/history-of-the-web/>

Hemsley, Jeff, Jenna Jacobson, Anatoliy Gruzd, and Philip Mai. "Social Media for Social Good or Evil: An Introduction." *Social Media + Society* 4, no. 3 (July 1, 2018): 2056305118786719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118786719>.

Krotoski, A. (2014). 700 friends on Facebook. In *Untangling the Web* (pp. 87–98). London: Faber & Faber.

Video:

[Cederberg, Patrick & Walter Woodman \(Writer, Editor, Director\). \(2013\). Noah \[Motion Picture\]. Canada. \(17 min\). Mature content.](#)

**Assignment discussion:**

*In the week prior to this class, keep a diary of your social media usage for at least two days. After, spend at least 48 hours offline. Keep a diary during those two days. We will discuss the experience in class and I will do the challenge with you.*

Week 8 – October 24

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1:00-2:30 (Room WI 1017) - **Learning Lab: Student Panel**

2:30- 3:00 – **Preparing Step 3 of Critical Review Project** – We will work on the first three questions of part 1 and the two questions in part 2.

Week 9 – October 31

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1:00-2:30 - **Digital Privacy – what does it mean?**

*Guest speakers: Dr. Sara Grimes, Director, KMDI and Semaphore Lab & Dr. Leslie Shade, Professor, Faculty of Information*

Readings:

Livingstone, S., & Third, A. (2017). Children and young people's rights in the digital age: An emerging agenda. *New Media & Society*, 19(5), 657–670.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816686318>

3:00-4:00 - **Final discussion of step 3 of Critical Review Project**

Week 10 – November 14

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1:00-2:00 (Room WI 1017) - **Learning Lab: Making the most of your oral presentations**

2:00-4:00 - **Reflecting back on digital technology and citizenship**

Quote: "We shape our tools, and afterward they shape us." Marshall McLuhan

Readings:

Zuckerman, E. (2014). New Media, New Civics? *Policy & Internet*, 6(2), 151–168.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/1944-2866.POI360>

Week 11 – November 21

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1:00-4:00 **Hackathon in class**

Preparing the final project

Week 12 – November 28

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1:00-4:00 – **Presentations and showcase of final projects**