

Society and Information Technologies

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Course Information

Course Description

Humans have a long history of technological advances that includes all varieties of tools, weapons, transportation, mechanical, industrial, and medical advances. On one hand, the computer is just another invention that is part of this long line of technological advances. On the other hand, that a computer can be programmed to perform a wide diversity of different tasks makes it different from many other inventions. Computer technology has impacted diverse areas such as sports management, health care, employment, manufacturing, education, defense, and automobiles.

This course explores how computing technologies such as computer software, hardware, and networking have affected our society. You will examine the basics of how these technologies work and how they have affected areas of human endeavors. We will examine how these technologies changed, improved, simplified and complicated society.

In this course you will participate in directed discussions where we will debate current issues about computer technology in our society. We will cover issues in areas such as law, privacy, employment, and computer crime. You are expected to participate and contribute to these group discussions on a weekly basis.

In addition to the group discussions, you will also need to complete some module review questions, write a short paper and complete a set of personalized exercises. The review questions are designed to make you think about some of the topics that we study. The paper (described in depth later) can either describe how a technology works or describe the current state of an issue we study. Finally the personalized exercises (also described later) ask you to answer a few questions that apply some of principles we will learn.

Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles behind how computers, computer networks, and various other computing technologies work through a research paper, online discussions, and class exercises.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role and impact of a computer technology on different parts of our society such as business, personal security, privacy, and

communication by participating in course discussions and completing a research paper.

Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net>.

Hint: type DePaul for name of the school.

[Click here for help buying your books](#)

Required Textbooks

Baas, Sara, R. (2007). *A Gift Of Fire - Third Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. ISBN 0-136-00848-8.

Morley, Deborah, (2006) *Computers and Technology in a Changing Society - Second Edition*. Course Technology. ISBN 1-418-81688-4.

Course Competences

In this course, you will develop the following competences:

Competence	Competence Statement
S-3-A	Can understand different perspectives on the relationship between technology and society, and describe the scientific principles underlying technological innovations.
S-3-F	Can analyze the integration of new technology into a specific field of human endeavor from at least two perspectives.
H-2-G	Can the role and impact of mass media or information technology on society

Relationship of this course to the competence statements

S-3-A

Understand the scientific principles behind a computer technology and can describe how social, political, economic or ethical impact of computers on our cultural structures and beliefs.

S-3-F

Can analyze the integration of a computing technology into a specific field from at least two perspectives such as historical, legal, ethical, economic, sociological, aesthetic or scientific.

H-2-G

Can evaluate the role and impact of a computing technology on society.

Course Structure

This course consists of 10 modules. Each module has a discussion question And some modules also have a review question or two.

To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due

for each week of the course.

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Assessment

Assessment of Learning

The criteria to complete this course require that:

- You participate consistently and constructively by completing the readings and assessments by their due dates.
- You submit your final paper by the due date.
- You consistently, actively, and in a timely fashion participate in the online discussions. You will receive a weekly note from the instructor, if your participation is estimated as outstanding, sufficient or insufficient. In any case you will have the opportunity to comment on the opinion of the instructor.

Research Paper Guidelines

You need to develop a 4 page (1000 words, excluding tables, pictures and references) paper that fulfills the requirements of your selected competency. For those taking two competencies, one paper can be written or two separate papers. Papers that address two competencies should be 8 (2000 words) pages in length. The paper should be double-spaced and use a 10-12 point font with one-inch margins.

Use APA format in writing your paper and citing sources. This is described in detail in the APA format online source noted below.

This is an opportunity to delve into a subject of interest and/or relevance to you. Your paper should either be

- **News Summary** – describe a current issue covering a topic from this course. An example topic may be: The state of a current computer virus, how it spreads, what its impact is, and how people are fighting it.
- **How it Works** – describe how a technology covered in this course works. An example topic might be: How Web Addresses Work.

The paper type you select should be guided by the competencies you are completing in this course. For example, students completing the S-3-A competency should pick the “*How it Works*” paper type. Students completing the S-3-F competency or S-2-G should do a “*News Summary*” paper type. (See topic selection section for more details.)

Website Resources

The following websites discuss research paper writing in detail and are references in this document:

General Guides:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/>

<http://www.nutsandboltsguide.com>

APA Format/Bibliography:

<http://www.nutsandboltsguide.com/apa.html>

Topic Selection:

<http://members.aol.com/lkivngstrn/essay/topic.html>

Topic Refinement:

<http://wwwtest.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/topic/index.htm>

A discussion "Research Paper Q&A" will be available for you to discuss topic ideas with other students and narrow down options.

Overall Approach

Your paper should analyze the current news and issues about some topic that we are studying. Ideas for topics are provided below.

Timeline For the Paper

Week 1-3	Explore Paper Topics
Week 5	Topic for Paper Due
Week 4-6	Collect Research for Paper and work on outline
Week 6	Research Paper Outline Due
Week 8-10	Write Paper
Week 11	Submit Paper

Research Paper Requirements and Tips

Paper Organization

Papers that are well-organized follow a flow that makes well-conceived transitions between topics. Each topic should be addressed fully before making the transition to the next subject area. This allows the reader to get a comprehensive understanding of the subject being addressed. As a result, the same idea is not addressed in different areas of the paper. For example, recommendations should be made in the recommendations section and not throughout the paper. Implications, however, can be made throughout the paper in discussing the subjects being addressed.

Consistent logic should be used so that the reader is clear regarding what points are being made. Drawing conclusions or stating implications can help to clarify what the author believes to be relevant about a particular situation or argument that is being addressed.

It is helpful to state main ideas clearly and concisely, particularly when a new issue is being introduced. For example, a single sentence can be used to summarize the point, followed by detail to explain it further.

Grammar and Punctuation

Appropriate grammar, punctuation and word selection will be evaluated. Paragraphs should be used to clarify ideas and there should be logical transitions between ideas.

Format

Please be sure to follow standard APA format. The following website is very helpful in providing tips and descriptions: www.nutsandboltsguide.com/apa.html

Your Assessment is to develop a 4 page paper (excluding tables and references) that fulfills the requirements of your selected competency. For those taking two competencies, one paper can be written or two separate papers. Papers that address two competencies should be 8 pages in length. The paper should be double-spaced and use a 10-12 point font with one-inch margins.

There should be a cover page. Your thesis statement should be made in the body of

your opening paragraph, not simply as a title at the top of the page.

Documentation and Use of Evidence

APA format is required in this paper. Always be sure to cite sources within your paper. For online sources, authors should be cited, as available, as well as dates in which the online references were retrieved and the website location. The guide mentioned above will provide further direction in citation.

Assertions should either be based on facts, with proper citations, or they should be qualified as hypotheses. If the source is not cited, it is difficult to tell whether a hypothesis is being stated or whether a resource supports the statement being made. In addition, quotation marks must always be used for direct quotes.

Current issues in Computers and Society

All papers must evaluate a specific topic brought up from this class. The S-3-A competency requires more detailed explanation of principles of how the technology works. So for that competency, you must describe the overall workings of the technology and describe the social impact of that technology.

Topic for Paper

Statement of Topic

You should have a formal topic statement for your paper. It should clearly state what you are writing about.

Topic Selection

Your topic needs to address your competencies for this course. You may already have a topic in mind. But if not, there are numerous sources for collecting ideas. Take notes of your ideas and questions as your review materials. One of your challenges is to narrow the focus adequately so that the paper doesn't simply require listing extensive information.

Following are some of the available sources:

- News items from local papers, magazines, TV reports or other reports.
- Texts including any of these used for this course.
- Online and paper based Journals such as Computerworld, Information technology, PC magazine.
- Library searches – start with any related topic and explore from there.
- Online searches – there are numerous websites that can be of assistance. These are listed in a section below.

Examples By Competency

Following are some examples of topical areas by competence. Keep in mind that the topic needs to be stated as either a research question or news summary topic.

S-3-A: Can understand the scientific principles behind a computer technology and can describe its social impact on our cultural structures or beliefs.

- Analysis of How The Internet Works
- Analysis of How Satellite Communication Works
- How e-mail finds its way across the Internet
- How a digital camera works
- Online Privacy: How Companies Record Information and Use It to Market
- How Digital Data Can Be Stolen and What It Can be Used For
- Freedom of Speech: How the WWW works and How it Affects Closed Societies (e.g., China)

- How a Computer Virus Spreads
- How Virus Checker Detect and Remove Viruses
- How Pornography Filters Detect and Filter Sites
- How Criminals Use Computers to Steal Identities

S-3-F: Can analyze the integration of a computing technology into a specific field from at least two perspectives such as historical, legal, ethical, economic, sociological, aesthetic or scientific.

- How Computers are Used in Law Enforcement
- How the Internet is Impacting Our Children's Education
- The Negative (or Positive) Impact of the Internet on Raising Children
- How Video Games Affect Childhood Development
- How our Personal Right to Privacy is Being Impacted By Big Government Databases
- How Email (or the Internet or the PC) Has Changed The Corporate World

S-2-G: Can evaluate the role and impact of a computing technology on society.

- The Current Impact of The Digital Divide on Urban America
- How High-Speed Wide Area Networking Enables Corporations to Move Jobs Off-Shore
- How Digital Music Impacts The Music Industry
- The Impact of Computerized Trading on Small Investors
- The Impact of Computerized Components on Small Automobile Mechanics
- How Computerized Devices are Changing Surgery
- How The Internet is Improving Americas Political Process
- How Access To Technology is Disenfranchising People of Lower Economic Status
- The State of the War Against Computer Viruses

Some Sources for Ideas by Area

- General Ideas-Across Various Categories

- <http://howstuffworks.com>
- <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/giffire/> - Gift of Fire Book Home page
- <http://www.course.com/morley2003/> - Computing and Technology Book Home page

- Viruses

- <http://www.norton.com>
- <http://us.mcafee.com/>
- <http://www.virusbtn.com/>
- <http://security.eweek.com>

- Privacy

- <http://www.computerprivacy.org/>
- <http://www.uwm.edu/Org/comp-privacy/>
- <http://www.eff.org/>

- The Digital Divide

- <http://www.digitaldividenetwork.org/content/sections/index.cfm>
- <http://www.pbs.org/digitaldivide/>
- <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/digitaldivide/>

- <http://www.ed.gov/Technology/digdiv.html>

- Hackers & Computer Crime

- http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/usamay2001_2.htm
- http://www.sphinxmontreal.com/hackers/hacker_resources.html/
- <http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/compcrime.html>
- <http://www.cybercrime.gov/>
- <http://www.gocsi.com/>

- Freedom of Speech

- <http://www.fff.org/freedom/0396c.asp>
- <http://www.cyberspacefreedom.org/risk.htm>

Required Sections of the Research Paper

Introduction

- Cover Page
 - Make sure to clearly indicate the type paper you are doing (News Summary or How it works) on your paper.
 - Put your competency and name and title on the paper
- The introduction is about one paragraph in length (Make sure that it includes a statement of thesis or research question.)

Findings - This represents the body of your paper.

- Your paper body will be different, depending on the type of paper you choose:

1. **“News Summary”** paper – This paper type should read like a magazine article. It should:

- Describe the issue or the item is you are investigating
- Describe a little of the past history.
- Answer what is new or what is currently happening with the issue or item.
- Include how the technology impacts society (does it help/hurt society. How? Be specific)
- Include references on at least 3 items.

2. **“How It Works”** paper – This paper type describes some technology. It should:

- Define what the technology is
- Describe how it works
- Describe the current state of the technology (e.g., if you where describing computer chips, you might indicate current speeds, densities, and capabilities.)
- Indicate how this technology impacts our society. (e.g., how does it help/hurt society, is this a worthwhile technology?)

Conclusions

Summarize your main findings and conclusions. Clearly, state how your paper resolves your thesis statement.

References

You should include

- References on at least 3 items.
- Sources can all be websites.
- Use up-to-date references (preferably 1-2 years old and not older than 2000).

Assessments

Your paper topic will be assessed, based on whether it is of the appropriate scope and its applicability to your chosen competence.

The paper's reference list will be evaluated on:

1. Are the **references** up-to-date, relevant, high quality references and of sufficient quantity?
 - For example, a paper on the Internet trends should probably not use references written more than 5-10 years ago.
 - If use use an Internet site, is it a reliable source? For example wikipedia is not a good source for reference paper.
2. Your paper should **thoroughly** cover the selected topic and be on a topic relevant to your competency and this course. It should also state on the front page the type of paper it is (e.g., news summary, how it works, etc)
 - For example, your paper should clearly state its thesis statement and the paper should clearly discuss and resolve the statement.
 - If your paper is a news summary, it should be current AND complete. (For example, a reference that is several years old may not be appropriate.)
 - If your paper describes how something works, it should not just define pieces that make things work but actually describe how things work. (For example, Don't just say the Internet uses TCP/IP to work. You will need to describe what TCP/IP is and how it actually works to move data on the Internet.)
3. The paper should be **well written and easy to understand**.
 - For example, paragraphs should be well written, using proper grammar and sentence construction.
4. Your paper should **clearly** differentiate between cited facts and your opinion.
 - I am much more interested in cited facts instead of opinions. This paper is not the place to provide your personal story or story of your uncle's personal experiences. For example, the following statement should contain a reference. "Company X is the largest distributor of Internet products for the last 3 years." Without a reference, it is an unsubstantiated opinion.
5. Your paper should be of the proper **APA format**.
 - See the cited references for details. In particular pay attention to how web sites are referenced.
6. Your paper should be your own work. I do check references and the Internet for

plagiarized papers.

Interactions and Discussion

Each student is expected to log on to the Discussion Forum at least 3 times per week and to make at least one contribution per discussion in the forum. Your responses to both instructor questions and to other students' comments will enhance the learning experience for all students and counts towards your grade.

Your contributions to discussions should include a supporting statement(s). Draw from your text readings, magazines, work or any personal experiences, etc. to explain why you agree/disagree with another student or why you have the perspective that you have.

Text does not carry the tone and nuances of face-to-face conversations. You read messages through your own perceptions, so misinterpretation is both easy and common. Congenial interaction in online conversations facilitates the learning process. Extra attention is needed in online dialogue for these reasons.

A Q&A discussion will be available for you to ask questions about the course. In this way, everyone can benefit from the questions that you have and the instructor only has to respond once to a question. Contact the instructor by email with any concerns about course performance, personal reasons for late Assessments, advising issues or with any matters that should be private from other students.

In on-line courses, the student is an interactive learner with the instructor providing guidance and mentoring.

Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation

In the online discussions you need to:

- Clearly and consistently link what you are learning in the course to your real life experiences.
- Show logical, well formulated arguments for your discussion points.
- Contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion. Especially make sure to maintain a kind and collegial tone and close with your signature.
- Demonstrate good "listening" skills and active inquiry skills in the online discussions. This means that you pay attention with openness to the commentary of others and you offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements.
- Contribute your own original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitated learning for other people.

Course Grading Scale

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

Evaluation Weighting

Category	Percent of Grade	# of Deliverables
Participation in Online Discussions	25%	Throughout the course

Topical Paper	35%	1
Homework	40%	3-6

Online Participation Guidelines

The following guidelines may encourage you to be active and critical in your participation, only together we will make this course a significant and pleasant learning experience:

- Participation is essential, so please connect to the course every day or at least every second day.
- Post your response to the discussion assessments in the first part of the week, in the second part of the week post comments to the other students.
- Discuss critically, give support to your peers, provide own ideas and experiences, challenge ideas of others or just make a comment that you read the posting.
- The role of the instructor, to make it easy for you to interact, to promote significant discussion, to give feed back on your postings and offer help where needed.
- This is not an independent study course, but a paced online group learning experience. This study guide indicates 6 to 11 hours per week of your time to be spent on this course of ten weeks.
- Please accept the challenge to work with others, to construct knowledge in negotiation with others. Working individually on the Assessments and just posting them might not lead to significant knowledge and skills.

Some difficulties at the beginning of an online course are quite normal; solving them is part of every distance learning experience.

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Policies

Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.




Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report

- or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at  773-325-7290 (phone) or  773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at  773-325-1677 .

Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review

Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
 - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

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Course Expectations

Time Management and Attendance

SNL’s online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than “face to face” courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour “face to face” course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

Your Instructor’s Role

Your instructor’s role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate “office hours” when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

Credits

This course was designed and produced by David A. Lash and staff at the Center for Distance Education of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.

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