COQUITLAM COLLEGE
Established 1982

COURSE OUTLINE

Last Revised: January 2022

Last Reviewed: January 2022

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: Digital Culture

Course Number: CMNS 253

Credits: 3

Total Weeks: 14 (Fall, Spring)
12 (Summer)

Total Hours: 39

Course Level:
☐ First Year ☒ Second Year
☐ New ☐ Revised Course
☐ Replacement Course

Department: Humanities

Department Head: P. Best

Former Course Code(s) and Number(s) (if applicable): N/A

Pre-requisites (If there are no prerequisites, type NONE): CMNS 110 or CMNS 130

Co-requisite Statement (List if applicable or type NONE): NONE

Precluded Courses: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover topics examining the relationship between digital communications media and contemporary society. It will focus on aspects of digital culture and society related to the development and characteristics of online communities through mobile devices, social media, and other popular and emerging digital media technologies that facilitate so much of contemporary communications. It will examine phenomena and societal structures around digital media and society from the mundane through to the profound, from the global to the the local, to the individual. It will take a critical perspective on digital cultures, and explore topics including the datafication of everyday human relationships, the relationship between social media and politics, the changing face of digital labour and content production for media technologies, and many other key issues in our ubiquitously connected world.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and demonstrate their understanding of key theories and concepts regarding the relationship between digital media technologies and society.

- Be self-reflective about their own engagement with digital media technologies.

- Demonstrate the ability to apply academic concepts to the critical analysis of practical examples of digital communications media.

- Produce arguments that demonstrate the development of their own critical perspective on digital media technologies and society.

- Find and evaluate the relevance of additional academic resources and apply them to topics from the course.

- Further develop interdisciplinary academic and transferrable skills.

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTION AND GRADING

Instructional (Contact) Hours:

Type	Duration
Lecture	39
Seminars/Tutorials	
Laboratory	
Field Experience	
Other (s*pecify):*	
Total	39

Grading System: Letter Grades ☒ Percentage ☐ Pass/Fail ☐ Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory ☐ Other ☐

Specify passing grade: 50%

Evaluation Activities and Weighting (total must equal 100%)

Assignments: 70%	Lab Work: %	Participation: %	Project: %
Specify number of, variety, and nature of assignments:		*Specify nature of participation:*	*Specify nature of project:*
Assignment 1 5%			
Assignment 2 35%			
Assignment 3 30%			
Quizzes/Test: %	Midterm Exams: %	Final Assessment: 30%	Other: % *Specify:*

TEXT(S) AND RESOURCE MATERIALS
Provide a full reference for each text and/or resource material and include whether required/not required.

Readings and resources for this course will be available through MyCC – Coquitlam College's Moodle-based virtual learning environment (VLE). The assigned readings are indicated in the course content information below.

COURSE TOPICS
List topics and sequence covered.

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1	**Introduction** to digital culture & concepts of digital society & datafication.	Evgeny Morozov. "The Nonsense of 'the Internet' – and How to Stop It" *To Save Everything, Click Here* (Public Affairs, NY: 2013) pp 17-64
Week 2	**Convergence** culture, media & technology, memes, remix culture, mods, and creativity.	Henry Jenkins. "What Constitutes Meaningful Participation?". *Spreadable Media* (NYU: 2013) pp 153-194

Week 3	**Communities.** BBS to blogs to social media. Web 2.0 & Web3, social and technological networks, collective intelligence, fan culture.	Nancy Baym. "Communication in digital spaces". *Personal Connections in the Digital Age* (Polity, Cambridge: 2010) pp 50-71
Week 4	**Design.** Affordances & constraints, the power of defaults, platforms as digital spaces, digital fashions, and skeuomorphism	Peter Nagy & Gina Neff. "Imagined Affordance: Reconstructing a Keyword for Communication Theory". *Social Media & Society* 1, no2 (2015) pp 1-9.
Week 5	**Platforms**. The open web, fragmentation & walled gardens, concentration of media ownership, and the internet of things.	Jose Van Dijck. "The Ecosystem of Connective Media". *The Culture of Connectivity* (Oxford: 2013) pp 154-176.
Week 6	**Commons**. Copyright & copyleft, the GPL and creative commons. Free & open source software and distributed services.	Lizzie O'Shea. "Protect the Digital Commons!". *Future Histories* (Verso: 2019) pp 239-260
Week 7	**Media archeology.** Lost digital cultures, linkrot, abandonware, emulators, and digital archives.	Yves Citton, "Archeologizing Mediarchy". *Mediarchy* (Polity: 2019) pp 145-156.
Week 8	**Virtual worlds**. Games and interactivity, affect, verisimilitude, and the uncanny valley.	Kent Aardse. "The Other Side of the Valley; Or, Between Freud and Videogames". *Journal of Games Criticism* 1, no2 (2014) pp 1-12.
Week 9	**Labour**. Digital industries, content creation & aggregation, the gig economy, precarity & alienation, material & immaterial labour, monopolization, venture capital, and the FAANG.	Arjun Appadurai & Neta Alexander. "Creative Destruction and the New Socialities". *Failure* (Polity: 2020) pp 46-69.
Week 10	**Journalism**. Information overload, alternative & citizen journalism.	Mark Andrejevic. "Cutting through the Glut: Knowledge Small Enough to Know". *Infoglut* (Routledge, NY: 2013) pp 136-165
Week 11	**Governance**. Global connectivity, digital communications infrastructure, emerging regulatory environments, & cybersecurity.	Barbrook, Richard, and Andy Cameron. "The californian ideology." *Science as Culture* 6, no. 1 (1996) pp 44-72.
Week 12	**Privacy**. Value and the commodification of data, surveillance, & the panopticon.	Shoshana Zuboff. "Chapter 3: The Discovery of Behavioral Surplus". *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* (Public Affairs, NY: 2019) pp 65-97
Week 13	**Revision** and final assessment preparation.	
Week 14	**FINAL ASSESSMENT**	

NOTES

1. Students are required to follow all College policies. Policies are available on the website at: Coquitlam College Policies
2. To find out how this course transfers, visit the BC Transfer Guide at: bctransferguide.ca