Themes:

*Media, Technology and Politics* is an issues-oriented seminar focusing on the real world of digital politics. In life in the wires, the intersection of media, technology and politics is increasingly the way we are immersed daily in the complex narratives of power, indeed, the way in which the clashing ideologies are perceived, understood and often acted upon. Weaponized by the blast of information warfare, images, stories, memes and data moving at the speed of light reshape the basic framework of politics, sometimes in the direction of greater authoritarianism, at other times democratically, deeply influence our critical perception of the times in which we live, creating, in fact, the digital citizen.

Consequently, there is an urgent requirement to understand politics today in a way that is equal to the speed and complexity of media and technology. When digital technology in the form of mass media and social media moves at the speed of light, influencing how we perceive, think, imagine and feel, then we really need a way of understanding technology in relationship to questions of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and race. Equally, when media, whether mass media or social media, ignite viral storms of information warfare aimed at hijacking the emotions and consciousness of digital citizens, then there is an urgent requirement for a new language to understand how politics actually works in digital society. Faithful to the critical political imagination which always works to make the invisible visible, to give a voice to the silenced, the prohibited, the excluded, thinking issues related to media, technology and politics emphasizes the concept of digital justice. The seminar will begin with an exploration of Sherry Turkle’s *The Inner History of Devices*, with its different, creative approaches to technology as autobiography, memoir and practice-based fieldwork. It continues with Donna Haraway’s reflections on the importance of “situated knowledge,” that is, understanding the real world of information society in terms of its key intersections with gender, race, class and power. The essays comprising *Critical Digital Studies* rethink the question of media, technology and politics in the context of 21st century politics and society, travelling deeply into the devices we use, the apps we privilege, the “information warfare” we experience, the images we track, the data clouds that track us, in order to better understand the real world of digital politics and digital justice.

Books:


Grading and Assignments:

1. On January 31st, students are expected to submit a short outline (2-3 pages) of their research papers, including title, theme(s) to be explored, method and key readings. Grading Value: 5%

2. Take-Home Mid-Term Literature Review: Due Feb. 14th. Value: 30%

3. Major Research Paper (20 pages, Due: March 7th, 2018). Topics for the research paper should be discussed with the instructor. All research papers will be presented in seminar during one of the designated classes in March and April. It is important that topics for the research paper reflect your own interest and concerns in the question of media, technology and politics, thus providing you with the opportunity to undertake an in-depth exploration of a key issue in the area. Equally, presentations of research papers in the seminar are intended to provide everyone with an opportunity to share their perspective on media, technology and politics with the seminar as a whole as well as have the opportunity to respond to questions/comments generated by their presentation. Grading Value: 50%

4. Participation (Class presentations and seminar participation). Class presentations are a really vital part of the learning experience in the seminar, permitting a diversity of perspectives in the seminar to be presented as well as encouraging creative and critical reflections on assigned readings. Value: 15%

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

January 10: Introduction: Technologies of the New Real Life with Devices

January 17: Road Stories from Life in the Wires: DIY Bodies/Three Methods of Understanding Technology: Memoir, Clinical Practice, Fieldwork
Readings: Sherry Turkle, The Inner History of Devices, Politics, pp.2-76. (Reading the Inner History of Devices, Through Memoir: The Prosthetic Eye, Cell Phones, The Patterning Table, Television; Through Clinical Practice: The World Wide Web)

January 24: Road Stories from Living with Data: Robots Trekking Across the Uncanny Valley/ Technology as Autobiography
Sherry Turkle, The Inner History of Devices, pp.77-171 (Through Clinical Practice: Computer Games, Cyberplaces); Through Fieldwork (The Internal Cardiac Defibrillator, The Visible Human, Slashdot.com, The Dialysis Machine, Video Poker)
Politics Now: Media & Technology at the Intersections of Race, Class, Gender

January 31: “I Would Rather be a Cyborg than a Goddess”/Road Stories from the Information Bomb: Dreaming with Drones

*Research Paper Outlines Due

February 7: Situated Knowledge: Technology, Race, Nation, Culture

Critical Digital Studies

February 14: Software Culture as Ideology

*Take-Home Mid-Term Literature Review Due

February 21st: READING BREAK

February 28th: Road Stories from the New Security State: Surveillance Never Sleeps/
Technology, Tracking, Warfare

March 7th: Technology and the Body, Gender & Religion

*RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

March 14th, 21st, 28th, April 4th: ESSAY PRESENTATIONS
PERCENTAGE GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td>Varies depending on institution's grading scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
<td>Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The percentage grading scale applies to all Faculties at the University of Victoria.
2. The percentage grades should be associated with a letter grading schema.
3. A percentage grade for an N grade should be assigned in the following manner: N GRADE. If a student has not completed the exam, or has not completed the course requirements, but has submitted course requirements that total more than 49% of the total grade for a course, an instructor will assign a percentage grade of 49%.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

Please see the (revised) academic integrity policy: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-01/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html
Course Evaluation:
Your feedback on this course would be very much appreciated.
Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience
survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me
regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for
students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you
to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to http://ces.uvic.ca. You will need to
use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet or mobile
device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially
the following three questions, during the course.
1. What strengths did your instructor demonstrate that helped you learn in this
course?
2. Please provide specific suggestions as to how the instructor could have
helped you learn more effectively.
3. Please provide specific suggestions as to how this course could be improved