HON 362: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY
Spring 2010
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:15 am – 11:30 am
D. H. Hill Library: West Wing -- Mini-Theatre

INSTRUCTOR
KAWANNA BRIGHT
D.H. Hill Library
513-2603
kawnna_bright@ncsu.edu
IM screen name: kawannalibrarian (on AIM, Yahoo, GoogleTalk, and MSN) or
http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/staff/kmbright/
Office hours: By Appointment

COURSE SITE
This course will be maintained through the Moodle courseware site. You can log in to the site at http://moodle.wolfware.ncsu.edu. This syllabus, information on course readings and assignments, and the course schedule will be kept in this location. Students who have never used Moodle before may want to view the Moodle Student Orientation: http://moodle.wolfware.ncsu.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=39390 in order to become familiar with the resource. Students with questions or concerns related to using Moodle for this course should approach the instructor before assignments are due.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Developments in information technology have a dramatic impact on society and how we conduct research. In turn, society is grappling with these dramatic changes, and their effect on economics, politics, and the lives of individuals and communities. This course will explore the relationship between information technology, society, and academic research. Through readings, discussions, and assignments, students will probe complex issues such as information overload, the digital divide, information ethics, indeterminate authority, and the open access movement. As we explore specific information technologies, students will also have the opportunity to develop greater expertise in locating, evaluating and using information. This will be a seminar course that will consist of reading and discussion and involve hands-on exploration of various information technologies. Assignments will include an interview with an expert researcher, a reflective research journal, and a reflection paper addressing how the various information technology issues discussed in the course influence the student’s own research behaviors.

TEXTBOOK
There is no textbook. Readings will be placed on reserve: http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/reserves/
**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Reflective Research Journal (25%):** Students will journal their activities, thoughts and feelings related to research and class discussions throughout the semester. Weekly journaling is required and journals will be graded weekly (15 times) throughout the semester, at the end of each week. For the first two weeks of class, students will be required to complete 3 journals per week. For all subsequent weeks only 2 journal posts will be required. Students can choose between completing two structured posts or one structured post and one free post during these weeks. There will be 32 required posts for the semester. Any posts completed above this number will be considered extra credit. Journals posts for each week must be completed by the following dates: **January 18/25/31; February 7/14/21/28; March 7/14/28; April 4/11/18/25/30.**

**Class Participation (15%):** Students will participate in class discussion by sharing their thoughts about the issues, listening to others’ comments, and posing questions for discussion. Class participation graded three times during the semester, **February 11, March 30 & April 29.**

**Expert Interview (20%):** Students will interview a professor or other researcher in their discipline or an area of interest regarding their information-seeking habits and write a summary paper. Due **March 2.**

**Student-Led Discussions (20%):** Students will participate in scheduled student-led discussions during the semester on a course-related topic. Students will be placed into groups of five based on a selected article. As a group, students will develop a set of questions that they will use to lead a 30 minute discussion on their article. Individually, each member of the group will also locate one additional article related to the topic of their discussion. This selected article will be submitted along with a description of how and where the student found the article, and why they selected it. The discussion questions and selected articles will be due on the date of the groups’ discussion session: **March 9 & March 11.**

**Final Reflection Paper or Research Paper (20%):** Students will have the option of completing either a final research paper on a topic or set of topics from class, or a reflection paper where they will analyze their research behaviors as chronicled in the research journal, reflect on the course readings and discussions, and share insights about their experience. Selection of reflection or research paper Due **April 15;** Final paper Due **May 11.**

**GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY**

**Objective:** Help students to develop an understanding of the mutual relationships between science or technology and societies, including the effects of or the effects on cultures, values, industries, governments, or other facets of those societies.

- **Learning Outcome:** Students will be able to articulate the key issues in the relationship between information technologies and society, as well as the competing values that keep these issues unresolved. Students will also be able to recognize the influence of information technologies and of society on their own research behavior and the research behaviors of others.

- **Assessment:** This objective will be assessed partially during class discussions; students will contribute supporting and conflicting evidence based on the readings, their experience, and their insights. It will also be assessed by the Expert Interview assignment; students will interview an expert in their field of research, analyze the expert’s behavior and share their insights in a paper. This outcome will also be
assessed through the Reflection or Research Paper; students will journal their research behaviors, analyze them in terms of the issues raised through reading and discussion, and present their insights and/or arguments in the paper.

**Objective:** Help students develop an ability to critically evaluate information regarding these mutual relationships, recognizing that the information may come from a variety of sources and perspectives.

- **Learning Outcome:** Students will be able to evaluate information sources using standard evaluation criteria instead of merely relevance and convenience. Students will also recognize the vast array of information sources, including scholarly, popular, trade, and new media.

- **Assessment:** This objective will be assessed during class discussions as students react to readings. It will also be assessed by the Research Journal and Reflection or Research Paper as students chronicle and analyze their information seeking behaviors.

**Prerequisites and Restrictions**

Students must be enrolled in the Honors program.

**Grading Scale**

- A+ 98-100
- A  94-97
- A-  90-93
- B+  87-89
- B  83-86
- B-  80-82
- C+  77-79
- C  73-76
- C-  70-72
- D+  67-69
- D  63-66
- D-  60-62
- F  59 and below

**Attendance and Late Work Policies**

1) Excuses for anticipated absences must be sent to and approved by the instructor via email at least one day before the absence.

2) Excuses for unanticipated absences due to an emergency must be sent to and approved by the instructor via email within one week after the absence.

3) Students are allowed two unexcused absences throughout the semester. A third unexcused absence will lower a student's course grade by one-third, i.e., from a B to a B-. Every additional unexcused absence will lower the student's grade an additional one-third.

4) Being late to class by fifteen minutes or more constitutes half an unexcused absence. The instructor reserves the right to judge a flagrantly inattentive student as absent without excuse.

5) Requests for extensions must be sent to and approved by the instructor via email at least one day before the assignment due date.
6) Excuses for late work due to an emergency must be sent to and approved by the instructor via email within one week after the assignment due date.
7) Unexcused late work will lower a student's assignment grade by one-third for each day the assignment is late, i.e., from a B to a B-.

For more information, see NCSU's Attendance Regulation (REG02.20.3) at http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/academic_affairs/courses_undergrad/REG02.20.3.php.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
It is the understanding of the instructors of this course that the student's typed or signed name on any assignment indicates that the student adheres to the Honor pledge and neither gave nor received unauthorized aid on the assignment. The instructors support academic integrity as defined by NCSU's Code of Student Conduct Policy (POL11.35.1):
http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/student_services/student_discipline/POL11.35.1.php

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. For more information on NCSU's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see the Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Regulation (REG02.20.1):

COURSE EVALUATIONS
Online class evaluations will be available for students to complete during the last 2 weeks of spring term: 8 a.m. April 21 through 8 a.m. May 5,

You will receive an email message directing you to a website where you can login using you Unity ID and complete evaluations. All evaluations are confidential; I will not know how any one student responded to any question, and you will not know the ratings for any instructors.

Evaluation website: https://classeval.ncsu.edu/
Student help desk: classeval@ncsu.edu
More information about ClassEval: http://www.ncsu.edu/UPA/classeval/

ADDITIONAL NOTES
This course requires no laboratory work, field trips, extra expenses, or extra transportation.