Faculty of Science

York University

Division of Natural Science
http://natsci.info.yorku.ca/
Course Outline

1700C Computers, Information, and Society F/W 2020-21
ONLINE COURSE

Course Instructor(s) and Contact Information

Dr. Dov Lungu

If you want to contact me for questions/issues related to the course that <u>do not require privacy and confidentiality</u>, you should first post your questions in the **Student to Students** public forum which is one of the 3 e-Class (previously known as Moodle) forums we will be using in the course. This forum functions as a public, mutual assistance group in which students help each other in all course related matters.

If you do not get a suitable answer in the **Student to Students** forum, the next step is for you to post your question in the **Student to Professor** public forum where the professor will answer it. All students should access these two forums frequently because the questions/issues discussed in them will probably be of interest to all.

For <u>highly personal and confidential questions</u> and <u>issues</u>, you could email me if your email is not longer than 3-4 lines. You should send it to natsb@yorku.ca Emails sent to any other address <u>will not</u> be answered. If you do not receive an answer from me or one of my TAs within 48 hours, it might mean that I did not receive your email. In this case, you should resend it but only after first checking if it would be sent to the right address which must always be natsb@yorku.ca

NOTE: If you receive an e-Class announcement and/or email from me and have a <u>private and confidential</u> questions related to it, please DO NOT reply directly to the address of<u> the post/emai</u>l. Your reply should be directed to natsb@yorku.ca

If you cannot briefly summarize your question or any other confidential information you would want to share with me in an email, you should attend one of the office hours at the times indicated in e-Class. The office hours will take place through Zoom.

BEFORE posting to forums or emailing me, please carefully go through all your course explanatory documents such as those to be found in the **Important Documents** box on the right side of the e-Class screen. Those documents together with my announcements, the discussions in forums and chats as well as the schedule published on e-Class, include information about assignments and exam dates, deadlines and guidelines, course slides and videocasts or audiocasts, office hours, etc.

If a question you post on the **Student to Professor** forum or include in an email can be answered by referring to information already available on e-Class, I will direct you to where this information can be found but **only** if you can demonstrate that you had done your best to find by yourselves the information you needed.

I will update the entire class on important matters related to the course as they happen by sending posting messages in the Announcements forum. You also should be able to receive the same e-Class announcements as emails.

NOTE: This course being a purely online one, everything that happens in it happens online. Throughout the year, I will not be available on campus.

Course Description

This course provides a selective survey of the development of computers and the interactions between Information Technology and society. The first part of the course consists of a selective review of the origins of current Information Technologies. Its second part examines, from a variety of perspectives, a broad range of socio-technical issues central to 21st century such as artificial intelligence, privacy, access to information, computer security, the transformation of work and a few others. These issues have arisen, or have become topical, as a result of development and application of new Information Technologies. Most of them are highly contentious and form the object of lively debates.

Technical Requirements for Course

Students will interact with the course materials, the course director /teaching assistant as well as with one another using e-Class (previously known as Moodle) and Zoom.

In order to participate in this course, you will need a stable, higher-speed Internet connection, and access to a computer (or at least a smartphone) with webcam and microphone capabilities for online chats. The teleconferencing platform Zoom will be used for recording lectures, virtual office hours and, occasionally, online discussions. Any Zoom session will require you to log in with your York U passport ID.
Technology requirements and FAQs for e-Class can be found at:
https://lthelp.yorku.ca/95440-student-faq

If you have any technical issues, <u>please do not contact the professor of the TA</u>.
Instead, visit York's student computing services at:
http://student.computing.yorku.ca/gettingstarted/

You can also email askit@yorku.ca or ithelp@yorku.ca

Upon successful completion of this course committed students will:

1. Gain familiarity with the history of the computer.
2. Be able to critically examine the social, economic, political, legal and cultural implications of Information Technology.
3. Do basic qualitative and quantitative research
4. Be able to analyse contradictory arguments, challenge received wisdom and ask their own questions about the role of present-day's Information Technology in society.
5. Improve their critical, analytical and communication skills.

2 Term Exams (20% each) = 40%
7 Assignments (5% each) = 30%*
1 Term paper   = 30%

* Only the best 6 marks out of the 7 count.

Please note: For the dates of exams, assignments, and term paper, please consult the course schedule one-Class.

Exams
There will be one exam toward the end of the Fall and Winter terms. Each exam will include all the respective term's lectures, readings, discussions, videos, etc.. Each of these two exams may consist of one or more of the following: an essay, long-answer questions, short-answers questions. The precise structure of each of the two exams will be communicated at least two weeks before the exam. Both exams take place on the dates specified on the course's e-Class and will be completed within 72 hours. The precise date of each term exam will be posted on e-Class.
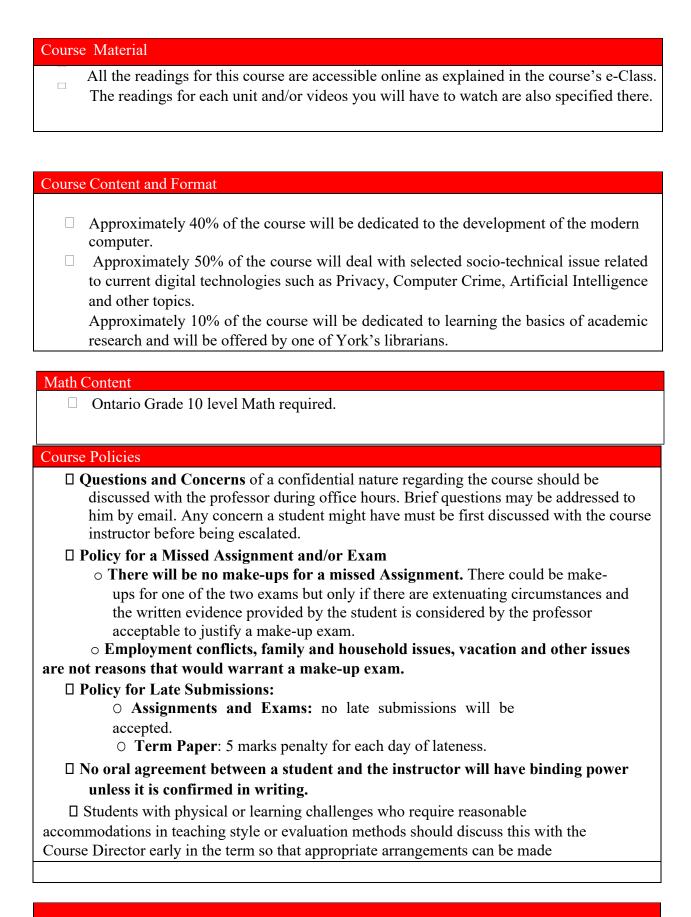
Assignments
There will be 11 class assignments during the year but only 7 of them will be marked. Students will be let known whether an assignment was a marked one only after the due day for that assignment. Each class assignment is worth 5% of the final mark for the course but only your best six class assignment marks out of the seven will count. That means that if you have completed all seven assignments, your lowest mark would be dropped. **There are no make-up class assignments even if you miss one of them for medical reasons.** Each class assignment may consist of your brief analysis or reaction to some of the very recent material covered in the course, including the readings. Each assignment will be 300-350 words long and will be completed within 48 hours. Most assignments will be written from Friday at 8 PM to Sunday at 8 PM. The precise date of each Assignment will be announced on e-Class.

Term Paper
The term paper consists of a 2000-words essay or research report. For further information, see the *Term Paper* document on e-Class.

NOTE: All Exams, all Assignments, and the Term Paper will be submitted via Turn It In.

Course Material

☐ All the readings for this course are accessible online as explained in the course's e-Class. The readings for each unit and/or videos you will have to watch are also specified there.

Course Content and Format

☐ Approximately 40% of the course will be dedicated to the development of the modern computer.

☐ Approximately 50% of the course will deal with selected socio-technical issue related to current digital technologies such as Privacy, Computer Crime, Artificial Intelligence and other topics.

Approximately 10% of the course will be dedicated to learning the basics of academic research and will be offered by one of York's librarians.

Math Content

☐ Ontario Grade 10 level Math required.

Course Policies

Questions and Concerns of a confidential nature regarding the course should be discussed with the professor during office hours. Brief questions may be addressed to him by email. Any concern a student might have must be first discussed with the course instructor before being escalated.

Policy for a Missed Assignment and/or Exam
  o **There will be no make-ups for a missed Assignment.** There could be make-ups for one of the two exams but only if there are extenuating circumstances and the written evidence provided by the student is considered by the professor acceptable to justify a make-up exam.
  o **Employment conflicts, family and household issues, vacation and other issues are not reasons that would warrant a make-up exam.**

Policy for Late Submissions:
  o **Assignments and Exams:** no late submissions will be accepted.
  o **Term Paper**: 5 marks penalty for each day of lateness.

No oral agreement between a student and the instructor will have binding power unless it is confirmed in writing.

Students with physical or learning challenges who require reasonable accommodations in teaching style or evaluation methods should discuss this with the Course Director early in the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made

University Policies

Important Sessional Dates

For information of the sessional start and end dates, drop deadlines, and withdrawal dates, please see the Office of the Registrar website at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Academic honesty requires that persons do not falsely claim credit for the ideas, writing or other intellectual property of others, either by presenting such works as their own or through impersonation. Similarly, academic honesty requires that persons do not cheat (attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation), nor attempt or actually alter, suppress, falsify or fabricate any research data or results, official academic record, application or document. Finally, academic honesty requires that persons do not aid or abet others to commit an offence of academic dishonesty, including intentional acts to disrupt academic activities.

Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist.

Please familiarize yourself with the full Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, found at http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/

Please also familiarize yourself with the SPARK Academic Honesty tutorial found at https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/

Message from the Faculty of Science Deans Office Regarding Academic Honesty

Numerous students in Faculty of Science courses, including NATS courses, have been charged with academic misconduct when materials they uploaded to third party repository sites (e.g. Course Hero, One Class, etc.) were taken and used by unknown students in later offerings of the course. The Faculty's Committee on Examinations and Academic Standards (CEAS) found in these cases that the burden of proof in a charge of aiding and abetting had been met, since the uploading students had been found in all cases to be willfully blind to the reasonable likelihood of supporting plagiarism in this manner. Accordingly, to avoid this risk, students are urged not to upload their work to these sites. Whenever a student submits work obtained through Course Hero or One Class, the submitting student will be charged with plagiarism and the uploading student will be charged with aiding and abetting.

Note also that exams, tests, and other assignments are the copyrighted works of the professor assigning them, whether copyright is overtly claimed or not (i.e. whether the © is used or not). Scanning these documents constitutes copying, which is a breach of Canadian copyright law, and the breach is aggravated when scans are shared or uploaded to third party repository sites.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.
Please familiarize yourself with the full Senate Policy on Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, found at http://secretariat- policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities- policy/
Counseling and Disability Services - http://cds.info.yorku.ca/

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents.

Note: Students who will have an academic conflict as a result of a religious observance, at any point in the term, should make the instructor aware of such at least three weeks prior to the conflict.

Student Conduct in Academic Situations

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures regarding disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the website of the University Secretariat (http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/).

NATS-AID

Free peer tutoring for students enrolled in Natural Science Courses. See
http://natsci.info.yorku.ca/nats-aid/

Learning Commons

The Learning Commons brings together key supports for your learning: writing, research, learning skills and career services. http://www.library.yorku.ca/cms/learning-commons/

goSAFE

goSAFE is a complimentary service provided to the York Community. At the Keele campus, goSAFE has two routes: North Route & South Route which will safely transport community members by vehicle from one specified hub to another on campus. goSAFE operates seven days a week, all year round, including University closures (with the exception at Glendon during the Christmas holiday closure).

Call the goSAFE office at 416-736-5454 or extension 55454 during hours of operation. Please give your name, location and destination. http://www.yorku.ca/goSAFE/

Mental Health and Wellness at York University

Outlines a variety of resources available to support mental health and wellness
http://mhw.info.yorku.ca/resources/resources-at-york/students/

Good2Talk

Post-Secondary Student 24 hour Helpline http://www.good2talk.ca/
1-866-925-5454