**SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHICAL, HISTORICAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**

**MODULE DESCRIPTION – YEAR 2023-24**

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| **MODULE CODE AND TITLE** | **CS220-4-SP - Navigating the Digital World** | | |
| **MODULE TERM** | Spring | **CREDITS** | 15 |

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| **CONTACTS** | **NAME** | **EMAIL** |
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| **ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN** |  |  |  |
| **ASSESSMENT TYPE** | **% Of Overall Module** | **Deadline Week** | **Deadline Date** |
| Assignment (2000 words) | 100% | 30 | Wednesday, 24 April 2024 |

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| **LISTEN AGAIN AVAILABILITY** | Listen Again is available for the lecture, seminar and workshop sessions. |

Module available to:

* Study Abroad students
* Auditing students
* Outside option students

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9. **MODULE OUTLINE**

What does it mean to be a "digital citizen"? As increasing portions of our personal and professional lives are played out online, acquiring the ability to effectively use digital interfaces and think critically about them is an ever more urgent task, as well as a topic of fierce debate. While some allege that digital technologies are a root cause of a "post-fact" era filled with "fake news" that limits our worldview, others see in them the key to unlocking social change and bringing people together in new ways and across geographical boundaries.   
  
The digital revolution is constantly reshaping our world in a myriad of ways: from surveillance laws to social mobilisation; from innovative business models to open access information; from warfare strategy to medical treatment. Not only this, the way we construct our individual identities, build communities, protect human rights, and promote the humanities is increasingly mediated through online platforms, and contingent on the uneven access that global communities have to technology.  
  
This module is designed to provide you with the practical skills required to navigate the increasingly digital world we live in, and to open up an important critical, interdisciplinary space; you will be encouraged to consider its legal, ethical, social, political, creative and economic implications.   
  
Some of the key questions we will be addressing are:

* How are digital technologies transforming society?
* To what extent do digital technologies curb or enhance our rights and freedom?
* What digital skills are needed for the knowledge economy and a democratic society?
* How can we build and use our online identities?
* How might we use digital technologies as creative and engaging forms of communication?

**Spring term (CS220SP) specification:**

The Module Director organizes two-hour sessions for weeks 16–20 and 22–25. Each session consists of a one-hour lecture plus a one-hour seminar for discussion. The lectures are given by different experts on a specific topic linked to the module (e.g., digital heritage, social networks, gender inequality, video games and cybercrime). Throughout the term, you will be asked **to choose a research question** from a given list (see below) **and answer it** in written form (i.e., in an essay). By your deadline, you will need to submit your essay using an accessible PDF file on FASER.

1. **AIMS**

**The aims of this module are:**

* To acquire specific skills in the use of digital tools and online platforms.
* To introduce selected debates surrounding the development and use of digital technologies.
* To gain a critical understanding of the ethical, technical and social dimensions in the development and use of digital technologies.

1. **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**By the end of this module the student should have:**

* A deeper understanding of digital literacies, as well as the confidence and ability to use a broad range of digital technologies.
* The ability to discuss the material covered in the module and to demonstrate this competence through coursework, seminar discussions and the creation of a digital portfolio.
* A good understanding of the topics and debates that are central to the digital world.
* Confidence in using a number of specialised terms and terminology on digital technologies.
* The ability to distinguish elements of continuity and disjuncture in the development of digital technologies.
* An understanding of the impacts of digital technologies on society and human life.

1. **TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS**

One-hour lecture, plus one-hour seminar in weeks 16–20 and 22–25.

Week 21 is Reading Week.

1. **READING**

The full reading list is available on Talis.

<https://rl.talis.com/3/essex/lists/C1156A49-571C-FE3A-544C-6396C8B97AD8.html?lang=en-GB&login=1>

1. **ASSESSMENT & SUBMISSION**

**Anonymous marking**

The School operates anonymous marking for the majority of modules. Please do not include your name in the title, header/footer or file name of your submission. Use your **Student Registration Number.**

**Submission of Coursework**

Coursework must be uploaded and submitted to FASER, the University’s Online Coursework Submission system available at <http://faser.essex.ac.uk/> .

The files you submit need to include your **Student** **Registration Number** (the 7-digit number on your student card) **and your module code.**

For CS220SP, you have to upload two files; the essay in PDF format including a word count and the Essay Cover Sheet as an additional document. Copies of the cover sheet can be found on Moodle.

*(Examples will be provided and explained in class.)*

**The deadline for online submissions is 12 noon on the date stipulated**.

We strongly recommend that you do this earlier to avoid any last-minute issues. You must ensure that you are familiar with this process well in advance of the deadline. Guidance on how to upload your work is available on the FASER website through the submission system.

When submitting your coursework, please make sure:

1. that your **Student** **Registration Number** (the 7-digit number on your student card), the **module code** and **coursework title** is clearly set out at the top of the first page (NO NAME).
2. that you include the ‘Essay Cover Sheet’ as **an additional document**. Copies of the cover sheet can be found on Moodle.
3. A **word count** is displayed at the end of your essay.

No extensions will be granted. Students who fail to submit their coursework by the stipulated deadline will receive a mark of zero unless they are able to submit a valid claim for late submission.

**Returning of marks and feedback**

Students should receive their mark and feedback for coursework within 20 working days of the submission deadline. Return dates are listed on FASER.

If you submit your work late, you will not receive your mark and feedback within 20 days of the original deadline.

1. **ASSIGNMENT DETAILS AND QUESTIONS**

The list of research questions you must choose from for your essay:

* How does social media impact self-representation and identity?
* What is the importance of social networks?
* Are digital technologies a threat to democracy?
* To what extent do hackers represent a threat and/or an opportunity for democracy?
* What is the relationship between open science and the democratisation of e-knowledge?
* How is AI impacting education?
* Why does the digital world need to be gendered?
* To what extent is online surveillance a ‘necessary evil’?
* How can we use digital technologies to protect and promote human rights and justice?
* What are the legal and political aspects of cybercrime?

Other research questions are possible, however will need to be discussed with the Module Director.

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

* **Guidance on COVID-19:** [**https://www.essex.ac.uk/covid-19**](https://www.essex.ac.uk/covid-19)
* **Module credits:** You must take 120 credits in a year
* **Module codes explained**: FY = Full Year, AU = Autumn Term, SP = Spring Term
* **Late Submission/Extenuating Circumstances Information:** [**https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/exams-and-coursework/late-submission-of-coursework**](https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/exams-and-coursework/late-submission-of-coursework)
* **Marking Criteria:** can be found on Moodle - Information for Current Students
* **Support relating to disability, health or personal issues:** We would like to encourage you to contact the Student Services Hub, either by email [**askthehub@essex.ac.uk**](mailto:askthehub@essex.ac.uk)or by telephoning 01206 87 4000