

**PERS 2001 “The Citizen in the Information Age” - Fall 2004**  
**Tuesday/Thursday, 11:00 – 11:50 am**  
**General Classroom 201**

The course website is on WebCT <http://webct.gsu.edu>

The Internet and World Wide Web are influencing nearly all aspects of personal and public life. They are changing interpersonal and public communication, commerce, civic activity, and how people participate in society. What are the implications of this change for those who do not have access to the Internet, or do not have as convenient or unrestricted access as do others? What impact has the Internet had on the questions of censorship, privacy, intellectual property, authority, and ethics? Knowledge about and a degree of mastery over these and other information-related issues are essential for students to become educated information-age citizens.

This class will touch on each of these issues through readings, lectures, and discussion. The class will provide students the opportunity to discuss and debate these topics, and to explore what it means to be a participant in, and help shape, the Information Age. An individual research paper will allow students to select and explore an information-related issue in-depth.

Upon completing this class, students should be able to meet the following learning objectives:

1. Identify key controversial issues in the Information Age.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking, both orally and in writing, about these issues.
3. Describe social issues regarding the use of information today.
4. Identify, analyze, and communicate issues about information access from a global perspective.

**Faculty:**

Tammy Sugarman, M.A., M.S.I.

Assistant Professor

Office: 128 University Library North

Voice: 404-463-9944

Email: [tsugarman@gsu.edu](mailto:tsugarman@gsu.edu) (preferred method of communication)

Office hours: Wed. 9am-10am or by appointment

Mailbox: Inside office suite, Library North, 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

**Required Text:**

Readings as assigned; all readings available in WebCT.

**Expectations:**

- Students will actively participate in class discussions and activities.
- Students will prepare for each class by completing readings and assignments.
- Students will respect the learning environment of their classmates, instructors, and guest lectures by listening attentively, asking thoughtful and appropriate questions, and showing respect for others' viewpoints and opinions.
- In order to foster a positive learning environment, **cell phones must be turned off during class.**

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance, being on time, and staying for the whole class period is expected. Please do not be late for class. It is rude to interrupt your classmates and your instructor or guest lecturers once the class has begun. Students accumulating over three absences may be withdrawn from the course and assigned either a W or a WF.

Students are responsible for all assignments and information covered in classroom discussion and in reading materials, including those distributed during the class whether they are present or not. It is recommended that, in the case of an absence, you contact a classmate to acquire lecture notes or learn of any assignments given in class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain this information from another student. All examinations and classroom activities are cumulative. There will be no opportunities to make up classroom activities, such as Pop Quizzes.

**Make-up examinations:**

Permission to make-up an examination must be granted in advance of the assigned administration of the examination. Permission will be granted in the event of illness or extreme hardship. To receive permission, e-mail one of the course instructors. Make-up examinations may or may not be the same as the original examination.

**Diversity Statement:**

Georgia State University values diversity and is committed to fostering and maintaining an educational environment which appreciates individual differences in all areas of operation including classroom instruction. To this end, any actions, practices, or processes by faculty or students that discriminates against or is prejudicial toward any person or group based on race, sex, age, religion, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status will not be tolerated.

**Academic Honesty:**

This course is governed by the University Policy on Academic Honesty, which is described in *On Campus: The Undergraduate Co-Curricular Affairs Handbook* available at <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwcam/code/academichonesty.htm>

**Grading Policy and Scale:**Course grade components are:

Midterm	200 points (20%)
Case Study	100 points (10%)
Class Participation	50 points (5%)
Pop Quizzes	50 points (5%)
Research Paper	300 points (30%)
Final examination:	300 points (30%)

The grade scale is:

900-1000 points	=A
800-899 points	=B
700-799 points	=C
600-699 points	=D
0-599 points	=F

**Important Dates:**

October 5	Paper Topic due
October 12	Midterm
October 26	Case Study Questions Due
November 18	Research Paper Due
December 16	Final Exam

*The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.*

Date	Topic	Notes/Assignments
Aug 24	Introduction	
Aug 26	What is the “Information Age”?	
Aug 31	Psychology of the Internet	<b>Guest Speaker: Lyn Thaxton</b>
Sept 2	Psychology of the Internet	<b>Guest Speaker: Lyn Thaxton</b>
Sept 7	Digital Divide	
Sept 9	Digital Divide	
Sept 14	Resources for Research Paper	
Sept 16	<b>NO CLASS – Do some preliminary research &amp; think about a topic for the research paper</b>	
Sept 21	Digital Divide	
Sept 23	Search Engines	
Sept 28	Web Evaluation	
Sept 30	Filters	
Oct 5	Censorship/Content control/Regulation	<b>Paper topic &amp; at least 2 annotated sources due at beginning of class</b>
Oct 7	Censorship/Content control/Regulation	
Oct 12	<b>Midterm</b>	
Oct 14	Intellectual Property	
Oct 15	<b>Semester Midpoint – Last day to withdraw and possibly receive a “W”</b>	
Oct 19	E-commerce	
Oct 21	E-commerce	
Oct 26	Security Discussion of Case Study	<b>Case Study Due at beginning of class</b>
Oct 28	Internet hate-speech	
Nov 2	Archiving Issues	<b>Don't forget to VOTE!!</b>
Nov 4	Presidential Election and the Internet	<b>Guest Speaker: Laura Burtle</b>
Nov 9	USA Patriot Act	<b>Guest Speaker: Casey Long</b>
Nov 11	Privacy	<b>Guest Speaker: Doug Goans</b>
Nov 16	Spam	

Date	Topic	Notes/Assignments
Nov 18	Research Paper Discussion	<b>Research Paper Due</b>
Nov 23	<b>NO CLASS - Thanksgiving</b>	
Nov 25	<b>NO CLASS - Thanksgiving</b>	
Nov 30	Government Information	
Dec 2	Internet Dating	<b>Guest Speaker: Lyn Thaxton</b>
Dec 7	Blogs	
Dec 9	Last Class - Review for Final	
Dec 16	<b>Final Exam – Note time change - 10:15am!</b>	