

Stanford | Continuing Studies

Course Title: Technology for Social Good
Course Code: SOC 11
Instructor: Lucy Bernholz
Tuesdays: 7:00 - 8:50 PM

Course Summary:

Digital tools have changed the way we volunteer, give money, and organize for social good. This class looks at a range of examples from donating digitized DNA to keeping human rights activists safe with digital tools and looks at the opportunities and challenges of these approaches. The goal of the course is for students to be positioned to make informed choices about using digital tools (or supporting others to do so) to accomplish the social goals they care about.

**Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
 - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
 - Score will be determined by student attendance and participation.

**Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

Tentative Weekly Outline:

All classes are discussion-based and most include an invited guest speaker.

Week One: Introduction to Digital Civil Society, April 4

This session introduces the properties of digital data and infrastructure that distinguish them from other resources as well as the role of civil society in democracies. We'll introduce the four principles for using digital data in civil society: Consent, Privacy, Openness, and Pluralism. By the end of this class students will have a grounding from which to consider the parameters for using digital technologies safely, ethically, and effectively for social good.

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions
365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305
continuingstudies@stanford.edu
650-725-2650

Assigned Reading:

Pages 20 -23, Defining Digital Civil Society, “Philanthropy and the Social Economy: Blueprint 2016,” <http://www.grantcraft.org/guides/blueprint16>

Week Two: Cornerstone Institutions – Creative Commons, April 11

Digital media (books, music, video, posters) is familiar to anyone with an e-reader or an MP3 player. The digital environment – which is both creative space and a means of distribution - inherently requires creators to think about how they want their creations to be used. Creative Commons offers a set of licenses and tools that put this decision firmly in the hand of the person initiating the work. The impact of Creative Commons goes far beyond its licenses (which are used all around the world and are on more than 1 billion pieces of work) – it makes real the ways in which networked digital environments shift our understandings of ownership, control, and access and gives us practical tools, designed around people, to thrive in this economy.

Creative Commons, along with Mozilla, Wikipedia, The Internet Archive, and The Electronic Frontier Foundation, is a “cornerstone” institution for digital civil society.

Guest Speaker: Timothy Vollmer, Creative Commons

Assignment:

Check out www.CreativeCommons.org

Use the Internet Archive’s [Wayback Machine](http://www.archive.org) to find a news event from this day ten years ago. (April 11, 2007). Use [CreativeCommons.org](http://www.CreativeCommons.org) to find an image or video that represents that news event. Email the image file, with a note about what event it references to Lucy by Sunday night (April 10, 2017) so I can make slide show of them.

FAQs: Internet Archive Canada <https://blog.archive.org/2016/12/03/faqs-about-the-internet-archive-canada/>

Week Three: Data Donations, April 18

Making sense of digital data is neither easy nor cheap. But making sense of digital data is a key skill and resource for nonprofits. DataKind has helped bring the power of data science to dozens of nonprofit organizations and is expanding across the globe. Bringing together different forms of expertise – machine learning and medical research, data analysis and social welfare – is at the heart of what DataKind is trying to do.

Guest speaker: Jake Porway, Datakind

(Listening) Raw Data Podcast: The Big Data of Nature, Minutes 6:00- 10:12

<http://worldview.stanford.edu/raw-data/episode-7-big-data-nature> and

(Reading)

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/moneyball-for-shorebirds-how-precision-analytics-are-changing-habitat-conservation/>

Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth Data Donations

<http://mastercardcenter.org/insights/data-donations-transforming-public-policy-academic-research/>

Week Four: April 25

Encryption and Activism

How do individuals – alone or together – use digital tools to organize, advocate, fundraise, and make change? What can individuals and organizations do in order to protect their digital trails – and the people they represent – from prying eyes? What role does encryption and federal information policy play in shaping how we use tech for social good? How can the many different groups, opinions, and voices that make up civil society in a democracy thrive in the digital age?

Riana Pfefferkorn, Encryption Fellow, Stanford Center for Internet and Society,
Cayden Mak, Executive Director, 18 Million Rising

Reading:

Martin Shelton, Current Digital Security Resources

<https://medium.com/tinfoil-press/current-digital-security-resources-5c88ba40ce5c#.zdmm9tb5p>

Optional

Electronic Frontier Foundation, [Surveillance Self Defense Toolkit](#)

Freedom of Expression, Encryption, and Anonymity,

<http://www.gp-digital.org/wp-content/uploads/pubs/LatAm%20-%20freedom-of-expression-encryption-and-anonymity1.pdf>

Week Five: Ethical Algorithms, May 2

You've probably heard stories in the news about self-driving cars and the ethics of programming the car about what to do in an "accident." These types of challenges reach far beyond autonomous vehicles to issues such as education and criminal justice. Algorithms (the instructions that people write into software) are at the heart of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and the use of large data sets. As such, we know they are biased in several ways – by the data that are used to train them and by the humans who write them. How do we optimize the benefits while minimizing the risks – what will "ethical algorithms" look like?

Guest speaker: Kristian Lum, Human Rights Data Advisory Group

Reading

Kristian Lum and Mike Isaac, "To Predict and To Serve?" *Significance*, Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, December 2016

Reed Hunt, *Saving Privacy*

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Reed Hunt and respondents, "Saving Privacy," *Boston Review*, May 2014. Read the main article, the responses, and the author's response. Accessible online <http://bostonreview.net/forum/reed-hundt-saving-privacy>