



北京大學  
汇丰商学院

Peking University HSBC Business School

Course Code  
New Media and Society  
Module 1, 2019-2020

## Course Information

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**Classes:**

Lectures: Tue & Fri, Time 10:30-12:20

Venue: PHBS Building, Room 415

**Course Website:** None.

## 1. Course Description

### 1.1 Context

**Course overview:**

Since the 1960s, the information society and digital media have gradually developed and have covered all aspects of human life. From the Internet to the mobile Internet, from robots to smart cities, the future of a networked society is the future of our lives, and even the future of human being. The future of digital culture is not only guided by the development of science and technology, but it also depends on how human dealing with the information technology. In other words, the real driving force for change is not the electronic chip, but the thinking and behaviour of the people.

The course is designed to help students learn the theory and analysis methods of Information Communication Technology and form a historical perspective on social media. Based on this, the course will further discuss about the history of information society development, as well as research findings on the use of human information and communication tools, and analyze the existing phenomena on social media. Through typical cases, images and films, the course will show the current situation of information society in China and abroad, reveal the influence of information and communication technology on human society and culture, and inspire students to imagine about the future digital life.

**Prerequisites:**

None.

## 1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

### Textbook:

### Reading materials:

- Alfred, D. C. Jr., & James W. C. (2000). *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, New York: Oxford University Press. (Required: Ch.1, Ch.6 & Ch.7)
- Aiden, E., & Michel, J.-B. (2014). *Uncharted: Big data as a lens on human culture*, New York: Riverhead Books
- Bartle, R. A. (1996). *Players Who Suit MUDs*. Journal of Online Environments, Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Biao, X. (2006). *Global "Body Shopping": An Indian Labor System in the Information Technology Industry*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (Required: Introduction & Ch.1)
- Boxu, Y. (2002). *Globalization: Origins, Development and Impact(Chinese edition)*, Beijing: People's Publishing House. (Ch.4 & Ch.8)
- Castells, M. (2000). *Toward a Sociology of the Network Society*. Contemporary Sociology, 29(5), 693-699.
- David, E. & Jon, K. (2010). *Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning about a Highly Connected World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Required: Ch.2 & Ch.3)
- Granovetter, M. S. (1973). *The strength of weak ties*. American journal of sociology, 78(6), 1360-1380.
- Henry, J. (2012). *Textual Poachers*, New York: Routledge. (Required: Ch.1, Ch.2 & Ch.5)
- Hindman, M. S. (2009). *The myth of digital democracy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Required: Ch.3)
- Jacobs, J. (1992). *The death and life of great American cities*, New York: Vintage Books. (Required: Ch.5)
- Jun, J. (2006). *Titanic law: AIDS risk analysis in China*, Sociology Study (5), 123-150.
- Kenney, M., & Zysman, J. (2015, June). *Choosing a future in the platform economy: the implications and consequences of digital platforms*. Discussion paper prepared for the New Entrepreneurial Growth Conference, Kauffman Foundation, Amelia Island Florida, USA. Retrieved from <https://live-brie-ob.pantheon.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/platformeconomy2distributejune21.pdf>
- Kuhn, T.S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Required: Ch.7)
- Mcgonigal, J. (2003). *'This Is Not a Game': Immersive Aesthetics and Collective Play*. Melbourne Dac Streamingworlds Conference.
- Nan, L. (2005). *Social Capital (Chinese edition)*, Shanghai: Shanghai people's publishing house. (Required: Ch.1, Ch.2 & Ch. 5)
- Philip, B. (2006). *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. (Required: Ch.15)
- Plantin, J. C., Lagoze, C., Edwards, P. N., & Sandvig, C. (2018). *Infrastructure studies meet platform studies in the age of Google and Facebook*. New Media & Society, 20(1), 293–310.
- Rosenblat, A., & Stark, L. (2016). *Algorithmic labor and information asymmetries: A case study of Uber's drivers*. International Journal of Communication, 10, 3758–3784.
- Sara, B. (2012). *A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology*, London: Pearson. (Required: Ch.2, Ch.3, Ch.6 & Ch.7)
- Sassen, S. (2001). *Impacts of Information Technologies on Urban Economic and Politics*. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 25(2), 411–418.
- Saunders, D. (2012). *Arrival city: how the largest migration in history is reshaping our world*. New York: Vintage Books. (Required: Ch.3)
- Wei, D. (2014). *Mobile homelands: community communication and identity practices of the "You county cab driver village"(Chinese edition)*, Beijing: social sciences academic press. (Required:

Ch.3)

West G. (2017). Scale. *The universal laws of growth, innovation, sustainability, and the pace of life in organisms, cities, economies, and companies*, New York: Penguin Press.

Williams, M. G. (2015). Cabs, community, and control: Mobile communication among Chicago's taxi drivers. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 3(1), 3-19.

## 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment (YES with details or NO)
1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	YES.
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	YES.
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	YES.
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	NO.
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	YES.
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	YES.
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	YES.
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	YES.
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	NO.
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	YES.

### 2.2 Course specific objectives

In this course, through a series of literature reading, case study and group discussion, students could have a better understanding of the information, communication technology and Internet from the perspective of social science. The topics of the course mainly include:

Information Society	Complexity
Infrastructure	Platform
Social Capital	Social Network
Guanxi (Relationships)	Social Structure
Globalization	Glocalization

## **2.3 Assessment/Grading Details**

### **2.3.1. Pre-lecture reading assignments**

Students are required to read assigned materials before the class.

### **2.3.2. Presentations (Group project)**

Students will be divided into several groups (no more than 3 people in each group) and give a 20-min presentation based on the topic of each session. The content of the presentation should include but is not limited to:

- 1) introduction of reading materials;
- 2) literature review.

The grade depends on the quality of the essay, and it accounts for 25% of the final grade. Strict time control is highly recommended, as it will be considered into the grading.

### **2.3.3. Discussion**

Each discussion will be held by three groups of students and all students should be participated based on the given references. This session will account for 20% of the final grade.

### **2.3.4. Final paper**

As for final paper, each group should complete the following work:

- 1) A literature review of the topic given below;
- 2) A case study of an information and communication technology with in-depth interviews.

The final paper account for 55% of the final grade.

In general, **final grade** = discussions (20%) + presentation (25%) + final paper (55%)

## **2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

### 3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

This course consists of 36 teaching hours. Each session takes up 2 hours. Relevant theories, papers, and cases will be introduced and discussed in the class. Students need to read the materials before each lesson and participate in the discussion and group assignments. Here are the 18 sessions of this course.

<b>Session 1:</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>Globalization and Communication</b> Readings: Castells (2000); Sassen (2001) Key words: Complexity, information society, network society, networked individualism
<b>Session 2:</b> <b>6<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>A brief history of the Internet</b> Readings: <i>A Nation Transformed by Information</i> , Ch.1, Ch.6 & Ch. 7 Cases: IBM, Google Key words: Military - commercial – civil usage, media social history <b>Specialist seminar: Literature searching methods in social science research (1 hour, by Li Chen, librarian of Shenzhen University Town Library)</b>
<b>Session 3:</b> <b>10<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>Globalization, Information and Communication technology</b> Readings: <i>Globalization</i> , Ch.4 & Ch. 8; <i>Global "Body Shopping": An Indian Labor System in the Information Technology Industry</i> , Introduction & Ch.1 Cases: Indian IT workers, multinational companies Key words: Globalization, information and communication technology, social structure
<b>Discussion 1:</b> <b>10<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>The future of the information society</b>
<b>Session 4:</b> <b>17<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>Cities and Strangers</b> Readings: <i>The death and life of great American cities</i> , Ch.5; <i>Mobile homelands</i> , Ch.3; <i>Arrival city</i> , Ch.3 Cases: Urban villages in Shenzhen Key words: Community, strangers, power
<b>Session 5:</b> <b>20<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>Infrastructure and Network platform</b> Readings: Plantin, Lagoze, Edwards, & Sandvig (2018); Kenney, & Zysman (2015) Cases: Google, Didi, Meituan Key words: Infrastructure, network platform
<b>Session 6:</b> <b>24<sup>th</sup> Sept.</b>	<b>Mobile city, mobile working and algorithmic labor</b> Readings: Williams (2015); Rosenblat, & Stark (2016) Cases: Ride-hailing drivers, deliveroo riders Key words: Actor-Process-Event Scheme of network analysis, information asymmetry
<b>Discussion 2:</b>	<b>City life and platform labor</b>

27 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	
<b>Session 7: 8<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<p><b>Social capital, relationships, and social structure</b>  Readings: Granovetter (1973); <i>Networks, Crowds, and Markets</i>, Ch.3; <i>Social capital</i>, Ch.1, Ch.2 &amp; Ch.3  Cases: Changes of social capital on social media  Key words: Different categories of social support, weak relationships, heterogeneous information</p>
<b>Session 8: 11<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<p><b>The paradigm evolution and basic concepts of social network analysis</b>  Readings: <i>The structure of scientific revolutions</i>, Ch.7; <i>Networks, Crowds, and Markets</i>, Ch.2  Case: The spread of infectious diseases  Key words: Paradigm revolution, centrality measures</p>
<b>Session 9: 15<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<p><b>Games and gamification</b>  Readings: Bartle (1996); McGonigal (2003)  Cases: World of Warcraft, Glory of Kings  Key words: Games, gamification, community members, large-scale collaboration</p>
<b>Session 10: 18<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<p><b>Subculture and fans</b>  Readings: <i>Textual Poachers</i>, Ch.1, Ch.2 &amp; Ch.5  Case: Produce 101</p>
<b>Session 11: 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct.</b>	<p><b>Artificial intelligence, utopia and dystopia</b>  Readings: <i>A Gift of Fire</i>, Ch.6 &amp; Ch.7  Cases: AlphaGo, Second Life</p>
<b>Discussion 3: 25<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<b>Online crowds and cyber-utopias</b>
<b>Session 12: 29<sup>th</sup> Oct.</b>	<b>Presentation of the final assignment</b>

#### 4. Miscellaneous

None.