IST 618 Information Policy

School of Information Studies
Syracuse University
Fall Semester 2015
DRAFT SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Instructor: Martha Garcia-Murillo
E-mail: mgarciam@syr.edu
Phone: 315-443-1829

Class Meeting Times: Tuesday 12:15-3:00
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Office location: Hinds Hall 206

Posters Dec 4th

Catalog Description

Public policy issues of the digital environment, including freedom of expression, intellectual property, economic regulations, privacy, security, access, standards, and dissemination of public information. Application of economic, legal, and political science concepts to policy analysis.

Narrative Description

This course will widen your view of information and communication technologies (ICTs) through adding a new perspective. The company, agency, or non-profit organization where you are working/will work after completing this degree does not operate in isolation. Societal and policy factors influence the decisions that managers make and you may have an opportunity to participate in these decisions. The foundation of this course is an integrated understanding of information industry policy. The course is interdisciplinary and we will cover subjects in the fields of Management, Economics, Political Science, and Law. We will use theory and examples from different academic and practitioner sources that present explanations of the problems that we will discuss in class. These resources are important because they give us a base from which our discussion can start. They also give us the opportunity to disagree and develop our own explanations. The examples are aimed at illustrating theories and presenting the problems that policy makers face when dealing with ICT industries. You will also complement your understanding of problems by doing additional readings and research on your own. I find these subjects fascinating and I hope you do too!

Course Goals and Objectives

IST 618 is a required core course for all of our master’s degrees. IST 618 is a core course because law, regulation, politics, and public policy are powerful factors shaping the environment of information and communication technologies. Information professionals need to have a well-rounded picture of the current situation and future direction of ICTs.
As a core course common to all programs, it has a clear set of goals and learning objectives which are:

- Analyze and critique basic public policy issues of the digital economy. We define these basic areas as: freedom of expression; intellectual property; economic regulation of communication-information industries; access and affordability; privacy and security; public sector information policy; and internet governance. The course is issue-based and attempts to teach about those topics in a way that is as globally applicable as possible.
- Help you understand how to apply key concepts from economics, law and political science to the analysis of communication and information policy issues, and know how different schools of thought approach those issues.
- To understand the reasons, circumstances, and factors that lead to government intervention.
- Discern and research emerging information policy issues and the way organizations are affected by or influence such policies.
- Advocate for and implement sensible and ethical information and technology policy in organizational and other settings as well as in the larger society.
- Provide you with the opportunity to identify a specific policy issue, assess it, and make recommendations.
- Locate, select, use, and evaluate sources of policy-related information.
- To improve your oral analytic and visual presentation ability, by presenting policy alternatives through class participation in simulations, debates, and formal group presentations.

**MATERIALS FOR THE COURSE**

The course will comprise an overlapping cycle of actions and reflections. The actions will mainly include class exercises, group work, and presentations. The reflections will include in-class discussions and exams. We will not follow the structure of any specific book but rather the sequence of topics outlined in the class schedule below, which includes journal articles, book chapters, reports and occasionally case studies.

The topics and readings for this class will provide you with the insights and knowledge you need to become an active participant in the information society and an informed citizen of its policies. You are required to read the articles and cases assigned each week before our class.

**EVALUATION**

Performance evaluation is a fundamental part of university programs, and this course will include evaluation components that attempt to reward participation in class activities as well as learning of the course’s knowledge and skills. Working on a system of (100) points total, the different components will carry the following weights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written summary of required materials</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current events presentations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final group paper and poster</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For final grades, the conversion from the final numerical grade to letter grade is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Exceptional work, outstanding effort, great attention to detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88+</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Good work as expected from a graduate student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83+</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Needs substantial improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Unable to meet the expectations of a graduate program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73+</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Needs substantial improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68+</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Unable to meet the expectations of a graduate program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63+</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Good work as expected from a graduate student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58+</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>Unable to meet the expectations of a graduate program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-58</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unable to meet the expectations of a graduate program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**Sept 1s**

**Introductions, Basic Concepts and Definitions**

**Required Material**

James Burke: Connections No. 4 Fait in Numbers (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v9WolB_XQE)

Webster, F. (2014). Theories of the information society, Routledge. (chapter two only)


**Recommended Material:**


**September 8th**

**Doing Research**

**Required Material:**


Information literacy and scholarship. Available at [http://infolit.ischool.syr.edu](http://infolit.ischool.syr.edu)

**Recommended Material:**


---

**September 15th**

**Business, non-profit and the regulator: How do organizations influence policy?**
Required Material:

NPR (2012). "A Former Lobbyist Tells All." Retrieved Aug. 8, 2015, from (skip the first section on the number


Recommended Material:


http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/campfoverview.html

http://citizenactionny.org/

September 22th
Economics of Information

Required Material:

Recommended Material:

UCLA. (2009). Information Technology Changing the Global Economy. from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhUtwDI5rXI

http://tinyurl.com/avznw

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fixed_cost


### October 6th

**Net Neutrality**

**Required Material:**


**Recommended Material:**


### October 13th

**Convergence**

**Required material:**
### October 20th

#### Internet Governance

**Recommended material:**


**Required Material:**


### October 27th

#### Intellectual property rights

**Recommended material:**


**Recommended Material:**


---

**November 3rd Privacy**

**Required Material:**


**Recommended Material:**


### November 10th

**Security**

**Required Material:**


**Recommended Material:**


### November 17th

**Freedom of information**

**Required Material:**


Recommended Material:

November 24th
Free Speech

Required Material:


Recommended Material:


December 1nd
Designing regulation

Required Material:

December 4th
Poster presentations at the i-school

COURSE WEBPAGE

Blackboard: The iSchool uses Syracuse University’s Blackboard system to facilitate distance learning and main campus courses. The environment is composed of a number of elements that will help you be successful in both your current coursework and your lifelong learning opportunities. To access Blackboard, go to the following URL: http://blackboard.syr.edu Use your Syracuse University NetID & Password to log into Blackboard.

Questions regarding technical aspects of Blackboard, please submit a help ticket to the iSchool dashboard at My.iSchool Dashboard (https://my.ischool.syr.edu). Log in with your NetID, select “Submit a Helpdesk Ticket,” and select Blackboard as the request type. The iSchool Blackboard support team will assist you.
The structure of the course is designed to encourage exploration and to tap into your natural curiosity, and so I trust that you will neither need nor want to violate the school’s or the university’s standards for academic conduct.

Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific citation expectations, as well as about university policy. The university policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same written work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. The presumptive penalty for a first offense by an undergraduate student is course failure, accompanied by a transcript notation indicating that the failure resulted from a violation of Academic Integrity Policy. The standard sanction for a first offense by a graduate student is suspension or expulsion.

For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu

Our community values diversity and seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. Syracuse University and I are committed to your success and to supporting Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990).

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), http://disabilityservices.syr.edu, located at 804 University Avenue, room 309, or call 315-443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities “Accommodation Authorization Letters,” as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs although I cannot arrange for disability-related accommodations.