
TOPICS: HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES in Spring 2021 (LW5091A)

Course Code	LW5091A	Professor(s)	Claudia Roda, Susan Perry
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	PL first floor
Class Schedule	F: 13:45-15:05 in C-103 T: 09:00-10:20 in C-103	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	croda@aup.edu, sperry@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	701

Course Description

When we speak of digital technology, our focus is often prohibitively narrow. Taking our cues from scientific research models, we examine the parts, rather than the whole, inadvertently isolating software from hardware, the technological frameworks from their actual use, or the costs of the digital revolution from the benefits. This course joins two seemingly disparate disciplines – law and science – in an attempt to understand more fully the dense, multidimensional nature of the digital revolution and how we are going to live with it. While it is somewhat risky to predict the outcome of any revolution, we find the application of a human rights framework extremely useful in highlighting many of the connected aspects of this technological transition. Our course is designed as an interdisciplinary primer, a guide to examining the critical issues that shape our use of digital technology; by elaborating specific case studies, we ground our general arguments in lived experiences across diverse geographic contexts.

Please note that considerable creative thinking is required for this course. The professors are interested not only in what the reading says on a specific subject, but also what new insights students can bring to these topics.

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

Course Outline

Week One Introduction

JAN/19-22

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights + technology (Perry)
- History of relevant technology + future trends (Roda)
- Sign-up schedule for annotated bibliography.

reading:

- UDHR on web board
- Perry-Roda *Introduction*

Week Two Digital Revolution Infrastructure – is wireless technology safe?

JAN/26-29

- Wireless technology (Roda)
- Global-local health and environmental impacts (Perry)

reading:

- CRC submission on web board
- Lancet www.thelancet.com/planetary-health Vol 2 December 2018: [Planetary electromagnetic pollution: it is time to assess its impact](#)
- Perry-Roda, Chapter 2

Annotated bibliography on EMFs.

Week Three User Privacy in a World of Digital Surveillance

FEB/2-5

- Privacy impact of digital technology (Perry)
- Privacy by design (Roda)

reading:

- Perry-Roda, Chapter 3

Annotated bibliography on GDPR and other privacy regulation.

Minibreak One FEB/8-10

Week Four Surveillance and censorship

FEB/12 & 16

- Privacy, surveillance and censorship (Roda)
- Dissent vs. self-censorship in China (Perry)

reading:

- Perry-Roda, Chapter 4
- China Digital Times: <https://chinadigitaltimes.net>

Annotated bibliography - online surveillance in China & in EU/US.

Week Five Internet of Things

FEB/19 & 23

- Digital discrimination (Perry)

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- IoT infrastructure (Roda)

reading:

- Perry-Roda Chapter 5

Annotated bibliography on new IoT infrastructure rolling out for 2020-21.

Please note: Professor Perry will be speaking (briefly) on Monday, February 22d at the 2021 edition of the Joakim Dungal Lectures in International Justice on 'Polarization and Human Rights in a Digitalized World'. You may register for and join this online seminar via Teams. Required attendance for those who do not have class.

Minibreak Two FEB/24-28

Week Six Human Attention in Digital Environments

MAR/2-5

- Technology and Higher Education (Perry)
- Human attention and technology (Roda)

reading:

- Roda (2012), Human Attention in Digital Environments - Introduction (available at the library)
- Perry-Roda Chapter 6

Annotated bibliography on human attention in AI environments.

MAR/3 War College 15h00-20h00 (This event will be held online or in-person, to be announced.)

'Winning Without Victory - Navigating Indecisiveness in Endless Wars'.

Week Seven Human Rights Frameworks for Artificial Intelligence (AI)

MAR/9-12

- Engaged Citizenship and technology/SHERPA (Perry)
- Technology-related ethics and engagement (Roda)

reading:

- CNIL on AI: [How can humans keep the upper hand?](#)
- Awad, E., et al. "[The Moral Machine Experiment](#)." Nature 563, no. 7729 (November 2018): 59 (also available through [exeter.ac.uk](#))
- Abby Everett Jaques "[Why the moral machine is a monster](#)" We Robot Conference, April 2019

Annotated bibliography on use of 'responsible' AI.

Week Eight Students, Professors and AI

MAR/16-19

- The quintessential value of human to human learning (Perry)
- Narrative Control (Roda)

reading:

Annotated bibliography on AI in the university.

Week Nine Curriculum and AI

MAR/23-26

- The architecture of higher education in the 21th century? (Perry)
- Design Thinking workshop for final project (Roda)

reading:

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Annotated bibliography on AI and human learning.

Week Ten Current and future issues in technology and education

MAR/30-APR/2

- The evolution of human thinking – how to remain human? (Perry)
- Researching the University (Roda + Taylor Brooks)

reading:

- CNIL (2019) Shaping Choices in the Digital (on Teams)
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Annotated bibliography on outsourcing human tasks to AI.

April 6 – no classes (Faculty Retreat)

Week Eleven Education and Technology

APR/16

- Technology in education (Roda)

Week 12 Societal impacts

APR/20-23

- AI and human memory (Perry)
- Bioethical issues (Roda)

reading:

- Sparrow (2011) [Google Effects on Memory: Cognitive Consequences of Having Information at Our Fingertips](#)

Annotated bibliography on human memory, analysis and AI.

Week 13 Teaching Responsible AI: big issues

APR/27

- Focus on war and conflicts (Perry)

reading:

- [HRW on Killer Robots](#)

Annotated bibliography on big issues.

Final Exam Period presentations of Final Assignment.

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Human Rights and Digital Technology	S. Perry and C. Roda		978-1-137-58804-3	No

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

In addition to the required reading, students will be expected to prepare (for) the following:

- **In-class presentations (20%).** Students will work individually to prepare an annotated bibliography for one of 12 short, in-class presentations, complete with ten up-to-date peer-reviewed sources, plus an in-class explanation of their importance. We will provide a grading rubric on Teams for assessment criteria regarding this presentation. Presentation sign-up and schedule will be presented during the first week of classes and will start the second week.
- **War College Seminar Active Attendance (10%)** – Take part in the War College seminar ‘Winning without Victory’ on March 3d. Please prepare and ask one pertinent question.
- **AI Scenario (20%).** Students will work in pairs to write a two-page scenario imaging AI in a university setting in 2035. The scenario will include 5-10 citations and an annotated bibliography of 5-10 sources. Due on March 16.
- **Final Research Assignment (40%)** – Students will work individually to design a course syllabus addressing the challenges and opportunities for human rights protection in the context of current digital technology development. Please see details in Final Assignment document on Teams. Due April 27. Please note that late assignments will be penalized.
- **Class Presentation of Final Research Assignment (10%)** Students will present their syllabi during the final exam period. Please see grading rubric for oral presentation guidelines on Teams.

Other
