

Special Topics: The Digital Workplace and Change:

Rutgers University

School of Management and Labor Relations

Semester: Fall 2019

Instructor: Narendra Neel Khichi, Jr

Email: neel.khichi@rutgers.edu

Tuesday: 6:00pm-8:40pm at Brookdale

Office Hours: Please email me if you wish to meet either before or after class.

Special Topics: The Digital Workplace and Change: 37:575:480 19778

Catalog Description

This course examines and evaluates our digital society, computerization, automation, and emerging technologies, and how they have changed the nature of work, the workplace, and its impact the economy, culture, and society.

Course Description:

This course serves as an engagement, education, and interaction on the topic of digital, computerized, and technological change and its relationship with work and the workplace. The course introduces ideas and theories and evaluates the relationship between technology, automation, society, and work. We will address and discussion the relationship among the digitation of society, our computerized culture, and the impact on work and the workplace.. In addition, the course analyzes and evaluates the impact digitization, computerization, and automation have in our rapidly evolving and changing social, cultural, and technological society. In this course we will discuss issues of efficiency, predictability, calculability, and control as it pertains to various sectors of work from the education, healthcare, government, the fast food industry, big box stores, social media, and specific technological examples such as Google (driverless cars), Facebook and Twitter's political economy, online sharing platforms such as Airbnb, Uber, collaborative work and production found in Wikipedia, and much more.

Learning Objectives:

The student is able to:

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

- Apply employment relations concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2).

School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)

Instructor Objectives:

This course provides an overview of different issues relating to how digitization, computerization, and automation change the nature of the world of work and how the demands of work can also shape the kinds of technological progress that a society makes. At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- a. Identify various theoretical frameworks for analyzing the inter-relationships and inter-dependencies between new technologies and the workplace and perform a critical analysis of a real world technology adoption and its impact on a particular organization or group of workers.
- b. Given information about a new technology being used in a contemporary workplace, students should be able to identify potential points of conflict and change in that workplace's hierarchy, ethical decision making, etc.
- c. To develop an understanding for theories, concepts, and examples of technology and work, its impact on human behavior and society in the 21st Century technological workplace.
- d. To analyze, critique, and evaluate such social phenomena in the workplace such as: technological advances, culture, social dynamics, socialization, deviance, social stratification, gender, racial/ethnic relations, the impact of science, the role of religion and politics, the influence of education and positive and negative uses of power.
- e. To focus on the technology and work, paying special attention to the human impact on the environment

Required Textbooks:

- 1) **The APP Generation: How Today's Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy, and Imagination in a Digital World by Gardner and Davis. Yale University Press ©2014**
- 2) **The McDonaldization of Society: Into the Digital Age, 9th edition by George Ritzer © 2018**

Online articles and PDFs

Recommended Reading: ****excerpts from these texts will be used as supplemental reading in addition to the notes, texts, and articles on Canvas****

- a) Social Media: A Critical Introduction. 2nd Edition (paperback) (Fuchs). (c) 2017 Sage Publications
- b) Personal Connections in the Digital Age by Nancy Baym
- c) Alone Together by Sherry Turkle
- d) Infinite Reality: Avatars, Eternal Life, New Worlds and the Dawn of the Virtual Revolution by Blascovich and Bailenson
- e) I Know Who You Are and I Saw What You Did by Lori Andrews
- f) The Shallows: What Is The Internet Doing to Our Brains? By Nicholas Carr
- g) A History of the Internet and the Digital Future by Ryan.

Grading Scale:

100.0-90.00.....	A
89.99-87.00.....	B+
86.99-80.00.....	B
79.99-77.00.....	C+
76.99-70.00.....	C
69.99-65.00.....	D
65 <.....	F

Students are to keep track of their own grades, what work they owe, and what they are missing. Please note where an 'A' begins and where a 'B+' begins and ends. Any issue with a grade for a specific quiz must be addressed by making an appointment to meet with me (and not via email) NO MORE than one week after the quiz is administered. Anything issue after a week will not be considered. Also remember grades/grading are a reflection on whether or not you followed directions, abided by specific dates, and whether you fulfilled the expectations and requirements of the assignment.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to read and understand Rutgers University's academic integrity policy. Members of the Rutgers community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors.

Please visit the website: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers> and review the policy.

There is a zero tolerance policy on any and all forms of cheating.

Student's That Require Special Accommodations **Disabilities Service Policy**

Students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified and are college able will receive reasonable accommodations to support their special needs. Students must self-identify to the Disabilities Services office to qualify to receive services. Rutgers University is in full compliance with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Canvas:

Familiarize yourself with Canvas, as all quizzes will be administered through Canvas. All forms of communication with the class as a whole will be done through Canvas as well. You can access it at: <https://tlt.rutgers.edu/canvas>

Email: Anything related to the class will be posted on Canvas and sent to you via email. It is your responsibility to frequently CHECK YOUR RUTGERS EMAIL and Canvas for the latest on any class information or news.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend ALL classes. More than TWO unexcused absences reduces your overall grade ONE LETTER grade (ie: B+ goes down to a B). More than FIVE unexcused absences is an automatic F.

Class Expectations and Procedures:

Quizzes and assignments are to be turned in ON TIME. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Should an issue arise, contact me via email. You may lose points on the assignment, but a 50 is better than a 0.

Also, be respectful and courteous to other people's opinions that may differ from yours. Keep in mind, it is okay to disagree. In fact, it is healthy and encouraged. But the disagreement must be discussed in an adult manner. In addition, if during class or on the optional discussion board a comment is made that you feel I should address, you find offensive, or would like me to comment on, please email me separately and I will. Sometimes things can easily be taken out of context during an open discussion or on discussion forums and it takes an unbiased reader/commenter (me) to bring understanding to both sides.

Graded Assignments:

Online Quiz #1	50
Online Quiz #2	50
Online Quiz #3	50
Online Quiz #4	50
Essay #1	100
Essay #2	100
Essay #3	100
Presentations	100
Participation	50
Attendance	50
<hr/>	
Total	700

Attendance:

You are expected to attend ALL classes. More than TWO unexcused absences reduces your overall grade ONE LETTER grade (ie: B+ goes down to a B). More than FIVE unexcused absences is an automatic F.

=====

This will be a fun, interesting course and an overall strong learning experience for you. Should you have any questions or any difficulty with anything, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. Please give me at least 24 hours to respond to your email.

=====

Schedule:

(This schedule is subject to change without warning or prior notification)

(Each chapter, along with all articles posted on Moodle should be read prior to the class it is assigned)

Week	Readings/Topics of the Week	Assignment (s)
SEPTEMBER WEEK 1 9/3	No class Labor Day	
WEEK 2 9/10	Ritzer (2018) pages 1-27 Chapter 1: Introduction Gardner and Davis (2014): Preface and Introduction Reading: McDONALDIZATION <i>What is McDonaldization?</i> <i>Who is "The App Generation?"</i> <i>Who are the "Digital Natives?"</i> <i>What is Techno-Social Life?</i>	Assignment: Introductory Essay Introductory Essay due by Sunday night, September 9 th @1159pm. Posted onto Canvas by deadline.
WEEK 3 9/17	Ritzer (2018) POST-MILLENNIALS Chapter 1: McDonaldization Past and Present Pages 27-45 Gardner and Davis (2014) Chapter 1: Talking about Technology and Creating the Internet Age Reading: Striking with social media: The contested (online) terrain of workplace conflict	

	<p><i>A Short History on Information, Communication, and Technology</i> <i>When was the Web born?</i> <i>What was early online networking like?</i> <i>What was the Triple Revolution of the 2000s?</i></p>	
<p>WEEK 4 9/24</p>	<p>AMAZON</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 1: pages 48-42</p> <p>Gardner and Davis (2014) Chapter 3</p> <p>Reading: “Silicon Valley’s Labor Uprising”</p> <p>Walmart and Amazon; Google and Search Engines</p> <p><i>What are online communities, networks, and networking?</i> <i>What to create digital environments?</i> <i>What is the intersection between the online and offline worlds?</i></p>	<p>QUIZ #1 Specifics and instructions regarding the assignment will be discussion in class prior to its due date and will be sent via email.</p>
<p>OCTOBER WEEK 5 10/1</p>	<p>TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 3: pages 55-72</p> <p>Reading: “Notes on GPS: Technology, Employee Monitoring Enters a New Era.”</p>	

	<p><i>Discussion the participatory culture</i> <i>What is crowdsourcing?</i> <i>Being liked and having followers?</i> <i>What is vertical surveillance?</i> <i>Is there privacy?</i></p>	
<p>WEEK 6 10/8</p>	<p>CULTURE, TECHNOLOGY, and WORK</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 3: pages 72-92</p> <p><i>What is technology's role in Globalization?</i> <i>What are some cultural divides?</i> <i>What is citizen journalism?</i></p> <p>Capital Accumulation Free Labour and Slave Labour Globalization and Technology Cultural Divides Social Movements Citizen Journalism</p>	
<p>WEEK 7 10/15</p>	<p>SOCIALIZATION, IDENTITY, and WORK</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 4: pages 95-110 Gardner and Davis (2014) Chapter 4: Personal Identity in the Age of the App and Techno-Socialization of the Self</p> <p><i>What is personal identity?</i> <i>What is personal identity in the age of the app?</i> <i>What is the techno-socialization of the self?</i> <i>What is socialization, self, and</i></p>	<p>Essay #2 due Specifics and instructions regarding the assignment will be discussion in class prior to its due date and will be sent via email.</p>

	<p><i>identity?</i> <i>When is identity marginalized?</i> <i>What are differences growing up online vs offline?</i></p>	
<p>WEEK 8 10/22</p>	<p>SOCIAL INTERACTION, TECHNOLOGY, and WORK</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 4: pages 110-122 Gardner and Davis, Chapter 5: Apps and Intimate Relationships and Friends, Dating and Relating Online in and out of the Workplace</p> <p><i>What is interactivity?</i> <i>What does it mean to make digital connections?</i> <i>How does friendship differ online and offline?</i> <i>What is the traditional life span of digital relationships?</i></p> <p>Socialization, Self, and Identity. Development and Performance of the Self Growing Up Online and Offline Socialization Through Adulthood</p>	
<p>WEEK 9 10/29</p>	<p>DRIVERLESS CARS</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 5 pages 125-143 Gardner and Davis (2014), Chapter 5: The Techno-Social Institutions</p> <p>Reading: Apple, Foxconn, and Chinese workers’ struggles from a global labor perspective”</p> <p>Reading: Impact and Evolution of</p>	<p>QUIZ #2 Specifics and instructions regarding the assignment will be discussion in class prior to its due date and will be sent via email.</p>

	<p>Technology in College Unions</p> <p><i>What is the institutional “heart?”</i> <i>How are the following institutions influenced by technology: health care, religion, education, work, etc?</i></p> <p>The Public Sphere Political and Uncivil Communication on Twitter The Institutional Heart: The Family Health, Religion, Work, and Commerce The Media</p>	
<p>NOVEMBER WEEK 10</p> <p>11/5</p>	<p>DRONES</p> <p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 6 pages 145-155</p> <p><i>What are some reactions to the concepts of constant availability, convenience, multitasking, and being plugged in to society?</i></p> <p>The Notion of Privacy Facebook and Ideology Making Digital Connections The Lifespan of Digital Relationships Trust and Social Support</p>	
<p>WEEK 11</p> <p>11/12</p>	<p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 6 pages 155-164</p>	<p>QUIZ #3</p>
<p>WEEK 12</p> <p>11/19</p>	<p>Film and discussion</p> <p>Class meeting going over presentations</p>	

<p>WEEK 13 11/26</p>	<p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 7 pages 167-180 Airbnb and Uber: The Political Economy of Online Sharing Platforms</p> <p>Wikipedia: A New Democratic Form of Collaborative Work and Production?</p> <p>Working on presentations</p>	<p>Essay#3 Due Specifics and instructions regarding the assignment will be discussion in class prior to its due date and will be sent via email. In Class Presentations</p>
<p>DECEMBER WEEK 14 12/3</p>	<p>Ritzer (2018) Chapter 7 pages 181-201 Gardner and Davis (2014) Chapter 7</p> <p>Beyond McDonaldization, the App Generation and Our Superconnected Future</p> <p><i>What does the future look like for all of us?</i></p> <p>Presentations Group 1</p>	<p>In Class Presentations</p>
<p>WEEK 15 12/10</p>	<p>Presentations Group 2 Last Day of Classes.</p> <p>Final Paper Due</p>	<p>QUIZ #4 Specifics and instructions regarding the assignment will be discussion in class prior to its due date and will be sent via email.</p>
<p>WEEK 16 12/17</p>		