

ICT 390 – Theory, Popular Culture, and ICT: Exploring Depictions of New Technology Using Netflix’s Black Mirror

Hybrid MWF | Spring 2018

FACULTY INFORMATION

Professor: Renee Kaufmann, Ph.D.
Email: Renee.Kaufmann@uky.edu
Office Hours: M,T 8:30-10:30am or by appointment
Course Time: 1:00-1:50 MWF (hybrid)



COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

Using the Netflix’s television show Black Mirror, this course will provide opportunities for students interested in exploring the darker side of new technologies and theory. Each Black Mirror episode explores our uses of technology and will be matched with theoretical frameworks for understanding potential behaviors around this phenomenon.

Students are advised to consider the following before enrolling in and completing the course. If interested, please note that Black Mirror is a fictional, future-based show with mature themes related to technology and society. With that being said, episodes can be disturbing, as the episodes may feature graphic content that is violent and/or sexual in nature. These episodes will be watched on your “out of class viewing days” (Wednesdays) and accompanied with a sheet to synthesize the theory(ies) discussed that week with the episode for class discussion.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Describe theories chosen for this course.
- Develop skills to be a critical consumer of popular culture/information.
- Apply theory to understand implications of technology use via Netflix’s Black Mirror.
- Explain the different types/impacts of technology practices have in their own life experiences.

Required Resources

- Access to Netflix for entire semester
- Additional readings will be posted on the course’s Canvas site.
- Laptop or tablet for class

ICT 390 - Course Policies

I. Attendance and Participation

This class is a community whose success is dependent on everyone’s participation. Also, there is a strong correlation between class attendance and grades. Therefore, attendance is vital for your achievement. You are expected to be in class and to participate fully every day so you can benefit as much as possible from this course. This means you are expected to (a) read and consider applications of the information before coming to class, (b) ask questions and/or make

applications in small group and large group class discussion, and (c) work to facilitate classroom interaction.

In order to accomplish course goals, you need to be in class every day. If you are absent on a day when an assignment is due, you will be allowed to hand in or make-up that work only if the absence is officially excused. You will be asked to provide official written documentation for absences. If you know ahead of time that you will be absent from class without an excused absence, please discuss this with your instructor and turn in any assignments ahead of time. Excuses for university-sponsored activities must be made prior to such absences. Attendance and participation will be monitored and recorded. There will be an allotted amount of points designated towards this for the class.

No makeup work is available for in-class exercises, workshops, or exams unless approved in advance by your instructor. It is your responsibility to monitor your attendance. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to ask a classmate what you missed.

Note: Please reference the definition of excused absence in current edition of Students Rights and Responsibilities or on the web at: <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/>

Excused Absences

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2* defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the professor.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable, but should not be given any later. Information regarding major religious holidays may be obtained through the Ombud (859-257-3737, http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents_ExcusedAbsences.php).

Students are expected to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the classes scheduled for the semester are missed (excused) per University policy.

Per *Senate Rule 5.2.4.2*, students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The professor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to an excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred.

Verification of Absences

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. *Senate Rule 5.2.4.2* states that faculty have the right to request “appropriate verification” when students claim an excused absence because of illness, or death in the family. Appropriate notification of absences due to University-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.

2. Academic Integrity

Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Senate Rules 6.3.1 (see <http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/> for the current set of *Senate Rules*) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work, which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

3. Accommodations Due to Disability

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with

disabilities. It is located on the corner of Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754 and via email at drc@uky.edu. Their web address is <http://www.uky.edu/DisabilityResourceCenter>.

4. Military Members and Veterans

We recognize the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please inform your instructor if you are in need of special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate your academic life. If you are aware of a complication, we will work with you and put you in contact with university staff members who are trained to assist you. Please contact the Coordinator of the University of Kentucky Veterans Resource Center at 859-257-1148 for additional assistance. Visit <http://www.uky.edu/veterans> for more available resources.

5. Student Evaluation

Course grades are earned and are NOT negotiable. Final grades will be rounded (e.g., 89.5 is reported as an A but 89.4 will be reported as a B). Course grades will not be discussed via email or in class. Students must make an appointment or see me during office hours. Extra credit opportunities may be made available at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading Scale

90% – 100% = A (Exceptional Achievement)

80% – 89% = B (High Achievement)

70% – 79% = C (Average Achievement)

60% – 69% = D (Below Average)

0% – 59% = E (Failing)

6. Submission of Assignments

All assignments, including papers, presentations, etc., should be submitted via Canvas. Assignments are due BEFORE class unless noted otherwise. Prepare and submit all assignments on time. Please submit assignments as doc, docx., or pdf files. Late work **IS NOT** accepted in this course. Assignments are also NOT accepted via email.

7. Civility and Professionalism

Students must learn to meet the standards of professional behavior and treat each other with respect. Critical inquiry is important, but attacking other persons, verbally or otherwise, is not accepted. Students must learn to receive and act on constructive criticism, be reliable and responsible, polite and respectable of others, and focus on producing above quality work.

Thus, everyone is expected to conduct themselves professionally during class. This includes arriving on time. Arriving late or using laptops or other devices for entertainment distracts everyone. Students who arrive at class more than ten minutes late, leave early without advance permission of an instructor, or use electronic devices may not receive attendance and/or participation credit for the day, at the discretion of the instructors. Professional behavior also entails being respectful of others and their opinions—even and especially when you do not agree with them.

8. Technology Policy

Cell phones should not be used for noninstructional purposes during class. Use of cell phones during class (texting, social media, internet use, gaming, etc.) for noninstructional purposes could lead to minor deductions in attendance/participation points.

However, cell phones may be left on vibrate for emergency notification purposes. If you expect an important phone call, please inform me before class and quietly excuse yourself when you receive it. Additionally, there are a variety of reasons you will be permitted to use cell phones for learning purposes during class. You are encouraged to use cell phones for note taking purposes during class. Additionally, cell phones may be used to take pictures of course content. Finally, feel free to use your cell phone to look up pertinent information that relates to class content during lectures or activities on social media or the internet. I am confident that you can use discernment to use cell phones in a non-distracting, productive way during our class.

9. Email Policy

Please give me up to 24 hours to reply to your emails, and I will do the same for you. Please remember to sign your email with your first and last name. I expect the language and structure of your emails to be professional. This includes punctuation, salutations/signature, etc.

10. Changes to the Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as the semester progresses. I will communicate the changes in class and send an announcement on Canvas. The most current syllabus will always be available on Canvas.

ICT 390 – Course Assignments

(1) Weekly Theory Application Papers - (90 points, 10 points each)

Each week you will be assigned a theory to read about and discuss during our lecture portion of class. On the hybrid day (W), you will watch the assigned episode and fill-out the theory application paper to help with our discussions on Friday. The application papers need to be completed PRIOR to coming to class on that assigned Friday (the application paper and rubric are posted on Canvas).

(2) Weekly Theory Discussions - (90 points, 10 points each)

Each week we will have discussion based on that week's theory and viewed episode (F). You will be graded on your engagement with discussion, discussion questions, and how well you present yourself during discussion (rubric will be provided). You will be able to use your theory application paper to help guide you during your discussion – note: these discussions may be whole group, small group, and dyadic.

(3) ICTs in the News – (20 points)

You will find one article from the news or popular media source that focuses on ICTs in popular culture. You will lead a small group discussion using this article as a discussion piece for 10 minutes. You are also responsible for a one-page rationale where you discuss: (a) where you got the article (source); (b) one theory might be helpful for understanding the technology discussion; (c). You should submit the article, your discussion questions, and your rationale to Canvas before the class begins.

**(4) Theory and Popular Culture Final Paper and Presentation
(100 points for paper; 50 points for presentation)**

Netflix just released their new season of Black Mirror, for your final paper and presentation for this course choose ONE theory we have discussed in class and apply it to any of ONE new episode **or you may choose another movie/show with technology implications. Paper needs to be 4-5 pages and APA style. You will present your analysis to the class in a 3-4 minute presentation. More details and rubric are posted on Canvas.

(5) Reflection Paper (50 points)

At end of the semester, you will have the opportunity reflect on what you learned this semester. You will need to make sure to answer the following questions in 3-4 pages answer: (1) How can theory inform the way we view use of technology? (2) How can you apply what you have learned about theory to your major/future/current employment? (3) Explain how your viewing of shows like Black Mirror have changes since applying theory to your viewing? Finally, make sure to include connections from our class discussions and lectures.

(6) Hybrid Day Assignments (25 points)

On the days that are labeled “online days” you will have an online lecture and a task/assignment to complete. These will range in point value.

(7) Attendance (100 points)

Each class period, attendance will be taken. At the end of the course, points will be allotted based on the percentage of classes attended throughout the semester.

Total: 525 points

Tentative Schedule: Spring 2018

Note: + readings on Canvas means EVERYONE has a reading to complete for that day.
Alternative show: Students may choose an “alternative episode” from the Twilight Zone or Star Trek to apply the theory for the week. This is the student’s responsibility to find an appropriate alternative show.

Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Week 1		
W, 1/10	First day: What is ICT 390?	Read the syllabus
F, 1/12	Introduction to theory	+ readings on Canvas
Week 2		
M, 1/15	No Class – MLK Birthday - Holiday	No Class – MLK Birthday - Holiday
W, 1/17	Introduction to theory (online class)	+ readings on Canvas
F, 1/19	Introduction to theory	+ readings on Canvas
Week 3		
M, 1/22	Theories vs Models	+ readings on Canvas
W, 1/24	Theory and Real-World Applications (online class)	+ readings on Canvas

F, 1/26	Theory and Real-World Applications	+ readings on Canvas
Week 4		
M, 1/29	Theory: Uses and Gratifications	+ readings on Canvas
W, 1/31	Episode: viewing day	
F, 2/2	Practice Discussion	WTA due before class
Week 5		
M, 2/5	Theory: Media Richness	+ readings on Canvas
W, 2/7	Episode: viewing day	
F, 2/9	Practice Discussion	WTA due before class
Week 6		
M, 2/12	Theories: UTAUT and Diffusions of Innovations	+ readings on Canvas
W, 2/14	Episode: viewing day	
F, 2/16	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 7		
M, 2/19	Theory: Cognitive Dissonance	+ readings on Canvas
W, 2/21	Episode: viewing day	
F, 2/23	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 8		
M, 2/26	Theory: Domestication Theory	+ readings on Canvas
W, 2/28	Episode: viewing day	
F, 3/2	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 9		
M, 3/5	Review of Theories (1-6)	+ readings on Canvas
W, 3/7	Episode: viewing day	
F, 3/9	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 10		
M, 3/12	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
W, 3/14	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
F, 3/16	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
Week 11		
M, 3/19	Theory: Technological Determinism	+ readings on Canvas
W, 3/21	Episode: viewing day	
F, 3/23	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 12		
M, 3/26	Theory: Social Construction of Technology	+ readings on Canvas
W, 3/28	Episode: viewing day	
F, 3/30	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class
Week 13		
M, 4/2	Theory: Mutual Shaping	+ readings on Canvas
W, 4/4	Episode: viewing day	
F, 4/6	Discussion/Application	WTA due before class

Week 14		
M, 4/9	ICT & Popular Culture	
W, 4/11	ICT in the News (Online Day)	
F, 4/13	ICT in the News Presentations	ICT in the News Handout Due
Week 15		
M, 4/16	Work Day	
W, 4/18	Work Day	
F, 4/20	Presentation Practice Day	
Week 16		
M, 4/23	Presentations	Final Paper and Presentation Due
W, 4/25	Presentations	
F, 4/27	Presentations	Reflection Paper Due