Title: Digital Privacy in Twenty-First Century America

Course Number: INTR 404 (1 credit)

Semester: Fall 2016

Instructors: Rick Stoddart, MLIS, Ed.D, and Annah Hackett, MLIS

Day/Time: TBD

Course Description:
This class will analyze the importance of privacy in philosophical, psychological and legal terms and will examine the current role of security theatre in America. Students will gain a better understanding of digital ethics (particularly regarding privacy) and how their everyday use of technology fits into the broader context of the national problem of privacy infringement.

The twenty-first century has already witnessed enormous leaps in digital content and access. In the words of Google CEO Eric Schmidt, “Every two days now we create as much information as we did from the dawn of civilization up until 2003.” Governments, companies and ordinary citizens have more information at their fingertips than ever before. Access to this information can lead to great increases in research and interpersonal connections. However, Wikileaks and the Edward Snowden revelations also illuminated the dark side to the increase of digital information. As Americans put more and more of their information online, they make themselves vulnerable to having their personal data scrutinized by government agents or stolen by extralegal means. How should we exist within this brave new world of information technology? Is it even possible to live a truly private life? These are the questions that lie at the heart of this course. Participants are encouraged to engage with the material not only as university students but also as users of information technology.

Expected Outcomes:

- **Learn and Integrate**: Students will become aware of the major arguments for the need for privacy and will begin to recognize privacy threats in their own everyday use of digital technology
- **Think and Create**: Students will analyze and critique statements made regarding the need or lack of need for personal privacy by politicians, tech companies, etc. and will consider how they can respond to these statements in their own plan for personal digital privacy
- **Communicate**: Through classroom participation and debates, students will learn how to articulate their own views regarding privacy while respecting the views of others
- **Clarify purpose and perspective**: Students will gain an understanding of their own power as users of technology and will understand that they have a responsibility to themselves and others to become aware of current policies regarding digital privacy
- **Practice Citizenship**: Students will become better informed citizens by recognizing the role of privacy within the broader context of national security and convenient access to information,
and they will take the first steps towards becoming leaders within their own technological communities by analyzing the role of security theater in America.

Methods of Evaluation:

- Strategic plan and poster for completely secure digital presence (40%)
- Compare/contrast essay; 3 pages, double spaced (20%)
- Debate participation and preparation based on group and individual evaluation (20%)
- News article reflection (500 words) and presentation (2 minutes) (10%)
- General class participation (10%)

Draft List of Textbooks (General)


Draft List of Possible Reading Assignments By Topic:

Note: May be shortened, lengthened or otherwise changed depending on class needs

Why Do We Need Privacy? A Philosophical and Legal Overview (Part 1)


Why Do We Need Privacy? A Philosophical and Legal Overview (Part 2)


The Current Situation: Wikileaks and Edward Snowden
Documentaries


The Guardian’s NSA Report


Digital Surveillance Technology


Information Warehouses: Libraries, Canary Warrants and Privacy


The Future of Privacy


Draft List of Writing Assignments:

- Compare and contrast Wikileaks (Julian Assange) and the Edward Snowden revelations
- Find a relevant news article regarding digital privacy and write a 500 word reflection. Present this article and your reflection in class in under 2 minutes. (2x/semester)
• Develop a plan for how YOU would manage your digital presence. How would you maximize security without completely doing away with convenience? Prepare a scholarly poster illustrating your plan.
• Prepare to debate on a team in class. You will be assigned a side to take regarding a topic relevant to the current state of digital privacy in the country.

Draft List of Possible Guest Speakers:
• Speaker from the College of Law regarding legal aspects of privacy
  o Helane Davis, Director of the Law Library
• Speaker from Political Science Department regarding political reasons behind privacy
• Speaker from Philosophy Department regarding philosophical arguments for privacy
  o Professor Graham Hubbs (moral psychology and philosophy)
• Another speaker from the Library
  o Anne Gaines, Scholarly Communications Librarian
• Speaker from Registrar’s Office regarding FERPA
  o Possibly substitute with someone from College of Education

CV: See attached

Memo from Lynn Baird, University of Idaho Libraries:
As Dean of University Libraries, I support the course, Digital Privacy in Twenty-First Century America (INTR 404) to be offered in fall 2016. The instructors have the credentials to successfully craft and deliver this course and it has been designed to support the University of Idaho’s learning outcomes. The course addresses a current topic that is not offered by other units.