IDH 2930, Fall 2024, Section KA01
"The Age of Surveillance Capitalism"
Instructor: Kevin Artiga
Office: TBA
Office hours: TBA
Class: Tuesdays at 4:05 PM – 4:55 PM in LIT 0117

Course Description

Shoshanna Zuboff's magnum opus is required reading for those living in the algorithmic age—whether you are technically literate or not. The Age of Surveillance Capitalism meticulously traces the evolution of our contemporary digital landscape, while underscoring the pressing challenges posed by algorithmic technologies, digital platforms, and surveillance practices to human agency and freedom. Zuboff reveals the sociotechnical and economic incentives behind the digital practices that collect data from users to modify and influence behavior. Zuboff's analysis also uncovers intriguing connections—from Pokémon GO's ties to U.S. intelligence agencies to the controversial rollout of Google Maps—offering invaluable insights into the transformative shifts occurring in our modern digital society. Her robust investigation is a structural critique of the current computational political economy of data collection and digital surveillance. As digital technologies increasingly mediate our daily lives, this work creates an opening for cultivating digital literacy in an algorithmic and computational culture.

Required Texts

Zuboff, Shoshana. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. PublicAffairs, 2019. ISBN: 1541758005

Assignments

Course Notes (25% of grade)

Before each class session, students will turn in course notes that engage with the selected reading for that week. These notes can be annotations, commentary, reflections, additional research, etc.

Reading Guide (25% of grade)

Each student is responsible for preparing a document outline for at least one assigned reading. Additionally, the student will lead and facilitate the discussion on the scheduled date for that reading.

Reflection Paper (50% of grade)

Each student will prepare a short document with research components. The paper topic should be directly connected to the high-stakes themes discussed in the course, providing critical insights and thoughtful analysis.

Grading

A 94-100	C 74-76
A- 90-93	C- 70-73
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 84-86	D 64-66
B- 80-83	D- 60-63
C+ 77-79	E 0-59

Course Schedule

Tuesday	Reading
8/27	Chapter 1: Home or Exile in the Digital Future
9/3	Chapter 2: August 9, 2011: Setting the Stage for Surveillance Capitalism & Chapter 3: The Discovery of Behavioral Surplus
9/10	Chapter 4: The Moat Around the Castle & Chapter 5: The Elaboration of Surveillance Capitalism: Kidnap, Corner, Compete
9/17	Chapter 6: Hijacked: The Division of Learning in Society & Chapter 7: The Reality Business
9/24	Chapter 8: Rendition: From Experience to Data & Chapter 9: Rendition from the Depths
10/1	Chapter 10: Make Them Dance & Chapter 11: The Right to the Future Tense
10/8	Chapter 12: Two Species of Power
10/15	Chapter 13: Big Other and the Rise of Instrumentarian Power
10/22	Chapter 14: A Utopia of Certainty
10/29	Chapter 15: The Instrumentarian Collective
11/5	Chapter 16: Of Life in the Hive
11/12	Chapter 17: The Right to Sanctuary
11/19	Chapter 18: A Coup from Above
11/26	**Holiday** (No class)
12/3	Conclusion

This schedule ensures all chapters are covered by the end of the semester, with the last class session reserved for review or final discussion.

Attendance

Attendance is required. If students miss more than three periods during the term without excuse, they will fail the entire course. Exempted from this policy are only those absences due to university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, quarantine, illness, or serious family emergencies. For absences due to quarantine or illness, your instructor may require a signed doctor's note or confirmation from UF Screen, Test, & Protect. Students are responsible for updating their UF-required Screen, Test, & Protect status. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies. Please note: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Tardiness: If students enter class after roll has been taken, they are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows: Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to: 1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. 2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code, which can be found at https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/ students/student-conduct-code/. Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came. Do not use AI/chatbots to write papers.

Classroom Behavior

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class. While it is acceptable to take notes on a laptop, being distracted, or causing distraction, by doing non-class-work is not, and you will be required to shut down your laptop. All other electronic devices are not permitted, except as specifically announced by the instructor beforehand.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Mode of Submission

Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class or online at the assigned deadline. Late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse. All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) documents to Canvas. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Writing Studio

The University Writing Studio is located in Turlington 2215 and is available to all UF students. Free appointments can be made up to twice a week. They are currently offering online appointments. See https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ to learn more.

Recording Policy

Class lectures may only be recorded for purposes defined by House Bill 233/ Section 1004.097. A class lecture does not include academic exercises involving student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. A recording of a class lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer. Publish is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a Recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Students in Distress

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues. U Matter We Care: http://umatter.ufl.edu, umatter@ufl.edu, 352-294-2273 (CARE) Dean of Students: https://dso.ufl.edu/, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261 Counseling and Wellness Center: https://counseling.ufl.edu/, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575 Field and Fork Pantry: https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208 Student Health Care Center: http://shcc.ufl.edu/, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161

Course Credits

This course is for the Honors College. It is a 1 credit courses centered around books from a variety of genres. Non-Honors students can register for an Honors course on a space-available basis starting the third day of each semester. See Honors College website for more details.

Student Learning Outcomes

Content: Demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies, and theories relating to surveillance capitalism, emerging technologies, digital technologies, etc.

Critical Thinking: Learning how to think critically about emerging technologies.

Communication: Effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning.