# syllabus
# Digital Cultures | Digital Divides
# American Studies 522
# Mondays 10-1; Wilson 6; Fall 2010

www.amst522.wordpress.com

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**Comparative Ethnic Studies**
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Office hours: after class or by appointment

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Digital Cultures | Digital Divides* interrogates the often claimed but unexamined implications of a "digital age" and "digital divide." This class examines the emerging institutional landscape of digital culture as it intersects with national histories, new global markets, and ideologies of race, class and gender.  We will explore a wide range of materials—from United Nations discussion papers that limit what and who counts within international legal structures and the digital domain (the Internet), to national legislation that seeks to redefine digital "creators" and their knowledge through a liberal intellectual history aimed at delineating "information," "culture" and the public good. We will probe the limits and the possibilities afforded by emergent technologies for both the preservation and creation of cultural products and emergent forms of social and political disobedience.  Reading critical legal accounts of digital legislation alongside ethnographies that specifically deal with uses of digital technologies, we will frame our discussions in both global and local terms—being careful to outline their intersections and points of disjuncture.  We will focus on the intended and unintended uses of new technologies to create and control "culture." Our discussions will push at the limits of technological and social determinism to reframe the "culture wars" at the intersection of emergent technologies, cultural reproduction, and the contingent circuits of capital in which they circulate.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. This course aims to familiarize students with the literature pertaining to web 2.0 technologies and their cultural, legal and ethical formations, structures, limits and practices.
2. Students will become conversant in the legal and cultural battles that have been and continue to be waged in the name of technology.
3. Familiarize students with the dominant discourses that frame these debates and be able to critically analyze their limits and possibilities.

4. To achieve an overview of the complex relationships between digital cultures and digital divides.
5. Understand how race, class and gender plays into the digital divide. This includes current events in the digital arena

# REQUIREMENTS

## 1. PARTICIPATION:
Come to class with the readings done prepared to actively participate in class discussions. Class will be run in a seminar-style with the expectation that students will actively engage in and drive the discussions.

## 2. BLOGGING
Actively participate in online blogging, which includes adding your own posts and commenting on other student's posts.

## 3. SHORT PAPERS
Summarize readings in 1-2 pages, providing insight into what you learned from the reading.

## 4. FACILITATIONS
Come to class prepared to discuss what you read and have questions prepared to facilitate discussions with the class.

## 5. PROJECT PROPOSALS
Students will also produce a final research project proposal that engages the themes of the class, presents a literature review and develops research questions, a methodological framework and a schedule for completion.

# ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

## BLOGGING:
1. Students will post short paper to the blog weekly, prior to class on Monday morning.
2. Students will rotate by week and put up a question by Thursday that provokes discussion for Monday's reading.
3. Students will post links to the current events tab or main page of the blog as topics emerge that relate to the readings, class discussions or current events.

## SHORT PAPERS:
1. Students will write a 1-2 page synopsis of assigned readings, focused directly on specifics assigned chapters.
2. Provide questions to promote discussion.

## FACILITATIONS:
1. Come to class prepared to discuss your required reading and facilitate with questions.
2. Students facilitating will be expected to lead the discussion, engage others with comments and guide us through the readings.

## PROJECT PROPOSALS:
**Proposals should include:**
1. Statement of guiding research questions
2. Literature review
3. Methodology
4. Trajectory of research
5. Specific links to class readings, discussions and themes

## COURSE READINGS
**\*Books at the Bookie**
1. Martin Lister ed. 2009. *New Media: a Critical Introduction*
2. Armand Mttelart. 2000. *Networking the World, 1794-2000*
3. Mark Poster. 2006. *Information Please: Culture and Politics in the Age of Digital Machines*
4. Joe Karaganis ed. 2008. *Structures of Participation in Digital Culture*
5. Heather Horst. 2006. *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication*
6. Craig Watkins: 2009. *The Young and the Digital*
7. Lawrence Lessig. 2005. *Free Culture*
8. Michael Brown. 2003. *Who Owns Native Culture?*

## STUDENT EVALUATION
Students will be evaluated based on their critical engagement with the reading assignments, the sophistication and rigor of their written assignments and the professional quality of their oral presentations.
1. PARTICIPATION: 30%
2. BLOGGING:          15%
3. SHORT PAPERS: 15%
4. FACILITATIONS:  30%
5. PROPOSAL: 10%

**NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS** are accepted except in the case of a **documented** emergency, a **documented** university sponsored event or a **documented** observance of a religious holiday.

**PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**
Students who violate the University's policies on plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action including: failure of the specific assignment and/or failure of the class.  Plagiarism includes not providing proper citation for ANY work including information found on any website, book, pamphlet, etc. Or copying in full or part someone else's work (including fellow students).

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**
Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist**.**

**CAMPUS SAFETY PLAN/EMERGENCY INFORMATION**
 In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the WSU-provided websites. Also, please register your emergency contact information at *myWSU*.

- http://safetyplan.wsu.edu, Campus Safety Plan
- http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies, Emergency management web site
- http://alert.wsu.edu, WSU Alert site.

# READING SCHEDULE
**week one: 8.23**
intro: digital cultures| digital divides
*sign up for facilitations
*create syllabi

**week two: 8.30**
reading: Mark Poster. 2006. *Information Please: Culture and Politics in the Age of Digital Machines*
*Eric: 1-3*
*Priyanka: 7, 9 ,10*
*Alli: 4-6*
*Dell: 8, 11, 12*

**week three: 9.06**
NO CLASS—LABOR DAY

**week four: 9.13**
reading: Armand Mttelart. 2000. *Networking the World, 1794-2000*
*Priyanka: 1-3*
*Dell: 4-5*
*Mary: 6-7*

**week five: 9.20**
reading: Martin Lister ed. 2009.  *New Media: a Critical Introduction*
*Sections 1-4*
*Priyanka: 1*
*Dell: 2*
*Eric: 3*
*Mary: 4*

**week six: 9.27**
reading: Michael Brown, *Who Owns Native Culture?*
*Dell: 7-8*
*Alli: 1*
*Eric: 5-6*
*Priyanka: 3-4*
*Mary: 2*
**Online discussion with Kim

**week seven: 10.04**
PROJECT WORK WEEK + ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

**week eight: 10.11**
reading: reading: Lawrence Lessig. 2005. *Free Culture*
*Mary: Intro-2*
*Dell: 3-5*
*Alli: 6-8*
*Priyanka: 9-11*
*Eric:12-Conclusion*
–Spend an hour discussing our proposals and helping each other with ideas

**week nine: 10.18**
reading: Heather Horst. 2006. *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication*
*Eric:TBD*
*Alli:TBD*
*Mary: TBD*

**week ten: 10.25**
reading: Craig Watkins:  2009. *The Young and the Digital*
*Eric: 2 & 5*
*Alli: 1 & 3*
*Dell: 6 & 8*
*Priyanka: 4 & 7*
*Mary: conclusion*

**week eleven: 11.01**
PROJECT WORK WEEK + ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

**week twelve: 11.08**
reading: Joe Karaganis ed. 2008. *Structures of Participation in Digital Culture*
–Spend an hour discussing our proposals and helping each other with ideas
*Eric: 12 & 15*
*Dell: 14 & 16*
*Alli: 2 & 10*
*Priyanka: 4 & 8*
*Mary: pick 2 chapters*

**week thirteen: 11.15**
reading: *Current Events discussion- bring articles/links etc to class and be prepared to give an overview of the key points and link to class themes*
Send your reading to classmates for Current Events discussion in week 13 these will be posted to the blog

**week fourteen: 11.22**
NO CLASS UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY

**week fifteen: 11.29:**
IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS – Research Proposals

**week sixteen: 12.06**
FINAL CLASS WRAP UP (Food and discussion 🙂)