INF 1005/1006: Information Workshop

University of Toronto ; Faculty of Information; Winter 2017
Thursdays 9 AM - noon; Bissell 507

Interventions in Surveillance Infrastructure

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I acknowledge the land on which the University of Toronto operates.
For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. It is still home to many Indigenous people from across the continent.
djp

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this workshop we will develop interventions into the infrastructure of surveillance.

By "surveillance" I refer to the ways in which we are coerced into producing data that is somehow understood to represent our daily lives. That data is then commodified, collated, analyzed, and used to structure our daily lives in the interests of powerful actors.

By "infrastructure" I refer to more or less stable configurations of law, culture, economics, and technology that both mediate and are the product of social relations.

Surveillance and infrastructure are both complex – theoretically and practically. This gives us lots of space to engage on many levels – cultural, political, economic, or technical. We will find points of entry where surveillance infrastructure may be responsive to various kinds of activist intervention.

CALENDAR

Date	Topic
Week 1	Intro to surveillance infrastructures
Week 2	Identification
Week 3	Data creation
Week 4	Analysis
Week 5	Catch-up and review
Week 6	djp absent; work for yourself on final project
Afterweek	Final celebration

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course objectives and intended learning outcomes are:
   a) to develop 'surveillance literacy' - the ability to understand, analyze, and discuss complex surveillance practices and their roles in mediating everyday activities, and to address the power relations they create and mediate.

   b) to critically evaluate the rationales and implementation of surveillance strategies
   c) to recognize and create opportunities for intervention into complex surveillance infrastructures and practices
   d) to present the outcomes of their investigations in various written, visual, and oral forms

These objectives and course outcomes support the MI program's learning outcomes (http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/studies/learning-outcomes), in that they

1. help students understand and become conversant with fundamental concepts, theories, practices, and the diverse horizons of information disciplines, and respond to changing information practices and needs of society.

2. help students develop knowledge and values appropriate to their future exercise of economic, cultural, and/or social leadership, and thereby provide leadership in defining the social responsibility of information professionals to provide information services for all, regardless of age, educational level, or social, cultural, or ethnic background.

3. help students develop the ability to contribute through research and publication, to the continuous expansion and critical assessment of the body of knowledge underlying the information and archives sciences.

4. help students develop an understanding of the development of theory concerning information, where it is found, and how it is used.

5. help students develop an understanding of the application of new technological developments to the preservation and communication of information, and in the identification of the impact of such developments on society.

6. help students continue in life-long intellectual growth beyond graduation.

PROJECTS:

Title	Weight	Description	Due date
Individual paper #1	10%	What would an intervention look like? Pick a surveillance practice; give 2 examples of interventions in different primary modes (techno, economic, legal, cultural)	Week 2
Group presentation #1	15%	Link entities to databases through identifiers; analyze the requirements for stability of those relations; investigate interventions	Week 3
Group presentation #2	15%	Construct models of entities, actions, phenomena, …; imagine ways of coercing that activity into legibility; describe the choices made and the possibilities for intervention	Week 4
Group presentation #3	15%	Sense-making, choices, alternatives	Week 5
Group presentation #4	15%	Final project; bringing it all together	TBD; after week 6
Individual paper #2	15%	Respond to and critique your group's final project	TBD; after final project presentation
Participation	15%		TBD; after final project presentation

GRADING
Please consult the iSchool's Grade Interpretation Guidelines
(http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/grade-interpretation) and the University Assessment and Grading
Practices Policy
(http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf). These documents will form the basis for grading in the course.

WRITING SUPPORT
As stated in the iSchool's Grade Interpretation Guidelines, "work that is not well written and
grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless
of its quality in other respects". With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to
graduate students by the SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support
(http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/English-Language-and-Writing-Support.aspx).
The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all
programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule
(http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx) for more
information.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Please consult the University's site on Academic Integrity (http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/).
The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the University's
Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters
(http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf). You should acquaint yourself with the Code. Please review the material in Cite it
Right and if you require further clarification, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize
(http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize).
Cite it Right covers relevant parts of the U of T *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (1995). It is
expected that all iSchool students take the Cite it Right workshop and the online quiz. Completion of
the online Cite it Right quiz should be made prior to the second week of classes. To review and
complete the workshop, visit the orientation portion of the iSkills site: uoft.me/iskills

ACCOMMODATIONS
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or
a health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the
Accessibility Services Office (http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as) as soon as possible. The
Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and
arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and I know your needs, the quicker
we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.