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Technology, Culture, and Mind

This course is designed to provide students with an interdisciplinary introduction to issues in the relationship between technology and human thinking. The course is divided into three separate “units” of approximately four weeks each. The first, Culture & Mind, is intended as a basic introduction to the study of human cognition, with a focus on Cultural and Mental Models as an approach to thinking about the connection between culture and mind. The second unit, Technology & Mind, will have a focus primarily on the design and use of technological artifacts. The final unit, Technology & Culture, will look at the various ways that technology affects society as well as the ways that culture and technology co-evolve over time.

Texts

NORMAN, D. A. 2002. *The Design of Everyday Things*, Basic Books.
SHORE, B. 1996. *Culture in mind*.

I intend to supply the readings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Blogging – Most weeks you will be required to produce a blog post of ~250 words that summarizes/reacts to reading. In some cases I will give a specific blog assignment instead. You will be responsible for producing 10 of these over the course of the semester and each will constitute 2% of your final grade for a total of 20%.

Leading Discussion – Twice during the semester you will be responsible for leading a class discussion. I will assign you to work in pairs to produce 7-10 discussion questions based on that week's reading, and the class will use these as a starting point for our discussion during the first half of the class period. Each of these will constitute 10% of your final grade, for a total of 20%.

Short Paper – At the end of the first unit you will be required to produce a short paper ~800 words that demonstrates your ability to discuss a non-technical aspect of culture in terms of models. This assignment will constitute 15% of your grade. Evaluation criteria will be forthcoming.

Presentation – At the end of the second unit you will give a 15 minute presentation in which you perform a critical analysis of the design and/or use of a technological artifact. Presentations will be scheduled over the course of two weeks. These will constitute 15% of your grade. Evaluation criteria will be forthcoming.

Final Project/Paper – the final component of your grade will be either a paper or project that builds on one of the previous end-of-unit assignments, or a new topic of your choosing (pending my approval). These will be delivered as 3000-4000 word papers, and comprise the final 30% of your grade.

SCHEDULE REVISED 10/11/12

Week 1
8/30

INTRODUCTION

Blog Assignment: Categorize our brainstorm

Week 2
9/6

Culture & Mind

Readings to discuss:
Shore introduction/Nuckolls/Barba

Blog Assignment: Find mental and cultural models in Nest.

Week 3
9/13

Culture & Mind

Readings to discuss:
Shore pp. 15-71/Kempton
ALSO be prepared to discuss the Nest videos and your blog post.

Blog Assignment:

- Week 4** **Culture & Mind**
- 9/20** Readings to discuss:
Shore Ch 5&6 / Manovich 19-61

Blog Assignment: modularity
- Week 5** **Culture & Mind**
- 9/27** Readings to discuss:
Clark Introduction and Ch 1&2/deLeon Building thought into things

Blog Assignment: NONE
SHORT PAPER DUE NEXT WEEK
- Week 6** **Technology & Mind**
- 10/4** Readings to discuss:
Norman 1-80

Blog Assignment:

SHORT PAPER DUE
- Week 7** **Technology & Mind**
- 10/11** Readings to discuss:
Norman 81-140/

Blog Assignment: Show and Tell (Presentation Preview)
- Week 8** **Technology & Mind**
- 10/18** Readings to discuss:
Norman 141-217/ Shneiderman The Eyes Have It
Blog Assignment:
- Week 9** **Technology & Mind**
- 10/25** Readings to discuss- Hutchins: How the cockpit remembers its speed/
Sengers: staying open to interpretation

Blog Assignment: NONE PRESENTING NEXT WEEK

Week 10 **Technology & Mind**
11/1
Readings to discuss: NONE presenting
PRESENTATIONS 10min/5min disucssion

Week 11 **Technology & Culture**
11/8
Readings to discuss:
Doing Cultural Studies intro, Sections 1&2
Blog Assignment: how is the ipod like the Walkman?

Week 12 **Technology & Culture**
11/15
Readings to discuss:
Doing Cultural Studies Sections 3-6
Blog Assignment:

Thanksgiving Break

Week 13 **Technology & Culture**
11/29
Readings to discuss:
Bjiker 20-100
Blog Assignment:

Week 14 **Technology & Culture**
12/6
Readings to discuss:
Wrap up TBD