

Pol Sci 487
Electronic Democracy: Cyber Politics

Fall 2004, 3 cr.

Class Meeting- Tues & Thursday, 9:30-10:45, Ross 518

Instructor: Prof. Steffen Schmidt

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Office hours: To be announced and by appointment

Overview

This course will focus on selected aspects of the impact of information technology (IT), the Internets and computers on government and politics in the United States and worldwide. Our objective is to identify the most important factors in the growth and widespread use of massive computing and digital information systems and platforms on issues such as:

- ✓ The amount of control that geography and the traditional nation-state and government have on people.
- ✓ How technology can empower people and give them greater knowledge and access to leaders and government.
- ✓ The role IT can play in making it easier for people to participate in elections, vote, and be informed about candidates and issues.
- ✓ How technology can create and strengthen groups of people with similar interests and creates "virtual communities".
- ✓ Cyber terrorism, sabotage, and cyber warfare.
- ✓ Privacy and the rights of people as all technology becomes more widely used by government and by corporations, individuals, and the entertainment industry.
- ✓ How government should and should not regulate e-commerce.
- ✓ What role the bureaucracy in government should play and will play in managing the IT revolution and IT applications and systems.
- ✓ What role the private sector and NGO's (non-Governmental Organizations).

One of these areas and a specific aspect of the subject would also make an excellent topic for your research project in this class.

Attendance is required. Class will **not meet every week** - days we do not meet when you will engage in research or other assigned activities will be announced in class and by e-mail. This is a seminar and You will assume responsibility for doing the assigned work in atimely manner.

Books

The required readings are the following books: (these will be available in the bookstores)

1. **The World of E-Government**, Curtin, et. al

2. ***Congress and the Internet***, Thrber and Campbell
3. Select one of the major books in IT and politics available from bookstores or at Amazon.com
 - ✓ **The Web of Politics: The Internet's Impact on the American Political System** by Richard Davis
 - ✓ **Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide**, by Pippa Norris
 - ✓ **Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule**, by Shanthi Kalathil, Taylor C. Boa
 - ✓ **Click on Democracy: The Internet's Power to Change Political Apathy into Civic Action**, by Steve Davis
 - ✓ **Electronic Democracy: Using the Internet to Transform American Politics** by Graeme Browning
 - ✓ **Democracy and the Internet: Allies or Adversaries? (Wilson Forum)** by Leslie David Simon
 - ✓ **The Revolution Will Not Be Televised : Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything** by Joe Trippi

Every week you must also go to the New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/technology/index.html>, Wired <http://www.wired.com> and <http://www.cpsr.org> (Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility), "One Planet, One 'Net.":" <http://www.cpsr.org/onenet/>, The Electronic Frontier, or other sources at least every Tuesday before class (I would actually recommend that you log in every day for a few minutes and copy out stories). Review and print relevant hot news stories that are appropriate to our interest in government, human rights, politics and technology. (i.e. to our class). Bring these to class each week and you may be required to share the latest development with the class.

Evaluation of your performance in this class.

Tests (50% of the grade)

There will be three tests covering the material from each book and in-class discussion. These will be multiple choice, short-answer (identification), and or short essay exams. Each test will be worth 20 percent of the grade. There is no final exam in this class.

Research Project (40% of the grade) – I want this to be a serious project.

You will also do a research project of your choice. The project will be approximately 15 pages in length, normal margins, 12-point type (Ariel or Times New Roman). The research paper and your presentation of the results of your research will be worth 30% of the grade. The topic should be directly related to the impact of Information Technology and/or the Internet and World Wide Web on government policy (domestic or international) or on politics (elections, citizen access to government information, to their representatives, etc). I hope you will spend a lot of time the first week exploring potential topics. Choose a topic that fits into your personal future professional or current academic interests. I need to approve the topic so when you are ready write up a one or two

paragraph summary of the topic and why you chose it. You will be required to do a short progress report on the project every 4 weeks.

Class attendance, presentations, and discussion (10% of the grade)

This class is not only an academic course on issues related to IT, the Internet, and policy/politics. It is also an opportunity for me to help you improve your leadership and personal effectiveness skills through class participation and presentations. Most of this 10% of the grade will be awarded for your report on the extra (outside) book that you select.

Assignments E-Democracy Class

Class scheduled Tuesday and Thursday, 518 Ross at 9:30-10:45

Week & Date	Topic	Reading Assignments	Other
1. August 8/24 & 26	Overview and orientation	What we study exercise	
2. 8-31/ September 2 NO Class Thursday	Introduction	Curtin pp 1-49	Thursday is research paper day. Work on your Topic.
3. 9/7 & 9	Governance	Curtin 51-88	
4. 9/14 & 16		Curtin 89-145	Test 1
5. 9/21 & 23	The business of e-Govt	Curtin 147-184	
6. 9/28 & 30	Researching e-govt	Curtin 185-233	
7. October 10/5-7	Evaluating e-gov	Curtin 235-end	
8. 10/ 12-14	Campaigns/representation	Congress pp 1-51	Test 2
9. 10/ 19-21	Wired Congress	Congress pp 52-98	
10. 10/ 26-28	Communicating w citizens	Congress 99-160	
11. November 11/2 & 4	Conclusions on e-govt	Congress 161-end	
12. 11/9 & 11		What we've learned	Test 3
13. 11/16 & 18	In-class presentations/discuss		
14. 11/23-25			Thanksgiving Break.
15. 11/30 – December 2	In-class presentations/discuss		
16. 12/7-9	In-class presentations/discuss		
17. 12/13-17	Final exam week.		There is no final exam In this class.

