FIT5090
Social informatics

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2013

The information contained in this unit guide is correct at time of publication. The University has the right to change any of the elements contained in this document at any time.

Last updated: 04 Mar 2013
FIT5090 Social informatics - Semester 1, 2013

This unit provides students with a critical understanding of the impact of information technology (IT) within contemporary social relations. Using case studies drawn from different social spheres, the unit explores the ways in which the diffusion of IT has reshaped thinking and practice concerning social collaboration, the production of knowledge and community building. Particular attention is paid to the emerging field of community informatics, and the implications that this field holds for the work of information and knowledge management professionals.

Mode of Delivery

- Caulfield (Day)
- Caulfield (Off-campus)
- South Africa (Day)

Contact Hours

2 hrs lectures/wk, 2 hrs tutorial/wk

Workload requirements

For FIT5090 on-campus students, weekly workload commitments are:

- two-hour lecture and
- two-hour tutorial (requiring advance preparation)
- a minimum of 3-4 hours of personal study per one hour of contact time in order to satisfy the reading and assignment expectations.
- You will need to allocate up to 5 hours per week in some weeks, for use of a computer, including time for newsgroups/discussion groups.

Off-campus students generally do not attend lecture and tutorial sessions (although they are welcome). However, you should plan to spend equivalent time working through the relevant resources and participating in discussion groups each week, as well as regular chatroom sessions. Audio recordings of lectures are accessible from the unit Moodle site.

Unit Relationships

Prohibitions

IMS5023

Chief Examiner

Dr Steven Wright
Campus Lecturer

Caulfield

Steve Wright

South Africa

Sheelagh Walton
Academic Overview

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- analyse the nature and operation of information communities within contemporary society;
- evaluate community informatics as an emerging discipline and professional practice;
- assess contemporary debates concerning the social impact of information technology use;
- distinguish the collaborative behaviours and interdependencies which contribute to notions of community;
- analyse and critique cases from the information industry.
## Unit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Students will need to familiarise themselves with the information contained in this unit guide, as well as materials on the unit website (e.g., lecture notes and tutorial activities).</td>
<td>No formal assessment or activities are undertaken in week 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to social informatics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communities &amp; networks in society</td>
<td>Assignment 1 due each Monday of Weeks 2 to 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agency &amp; structure in society</td>
<td>Assignment 2 due between Weeks 3 to 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>IT &amp; social relations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The nature of information communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; knowledge workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Memory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The challenge of peer-to-peer production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Web 2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Community informatics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Social informatics in a global context</td>
<td>Assignment 3 due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Emerging issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SWOT VAC</td>
<td>No formal assessment is undertaken in SWOT VAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unit Schedule details will be maintained and communicated to you via your learning system.*

## Assessment Summary

Examination (3 hours): 50%; In-semester assessment: 50%;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 - Reflective pieces</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Each Monday of Weeks 2 to 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 - Class paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Between Weeks 3 to 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3 - Reflective essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination 1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>To be advised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Approach

Lecture and tutorials or problem classes

The teaching and learning approach provides facilitated learning, practical exploration and peer learning, equipping you with the ability to apply skills upon completion.
Assessment Requirements

Assessment Policy

Faculty Policy - Unit Assessment Hurdles

Academic Integrity - Please see the Demystifying Citing and Referencing tutorial at
http://lib.monash.edu/tutorials/citing/

Assessment Tasks

Participation

• Assessment task 1

  Title: Assignment 1 - Reflective pieces
  Description: Assignment 1 consists of 10 short reflective pieces by individual students.

  For 10 successive semester weeks, starting in Week 1, you will be required to address a question posed at the end of that week’s lecture.

  Your weekly answer of no less than 150 of your own words is due each Monday of the following week (Weeks 2 to 11).

  Upload each of your reflective pieces to the folder for your tutorial group.

  Label each piece ‘Exercise Week X’, and don’t forget to include your name.

  Weighting: 5%
  
  Criteria for assessment: The criteria used to assess submissions are:

  1. Correctness and understanding - there may be more than one “right” answer in many cases. We will look for answers that reflect understanding of the underlying principles and theories.
  2. Completeness - that you have answered all parts of each question.
  3. Presentation - that you have presented your answers in a suitably formatted report style.
  4. Use of evidence and argument - you are able to explain your position by using logical argument drawing on the theory presented in the unit.

  Specific tasks and marking criteria will be distributed at the appropriate time during the semester.

  Due date: Each Monday of Weeks 2 to 11
Assessment Requirements

• Assessment task 2

Title:
Assignment 2 - Class paper

Description:
Each student will choose one of the 20 readings for the assignment, and make a presentation and write a follow up critical assessment of that reading at one point between Weeks 3 to 12.

In the case of on-campus students, this exercise will include a class presentation worth 10%, while off-campus students will instead supply relevant materials (PowerPoint or equivalent slides, including explanatory notes) to support a presentation.

Weighting:
25%

Criteria for assessment:
The criteria used to assess submissions are:

1. Correctness and understanding - there may be more than one "right" answer in many cases. We will look for answers that reflect understanding of the underlying principles and theories.
2. Completeness - that you have answered all parts of each question.
3. Presentation - that you have presented your answers in a suitably formatted report style.
4. Use of evidence and argument - you are able to explain your position by using logical argument drawing on the theory presented in the unit.

Specific tasks and marking criteria will be distributed at the appropriate time during the semester.

Due date:
Between Weeks 3 to 12

• Assessment task 3

Title:
Assignment 3 - Reflective essay

Description:
Individual students are required to provide a reflective piece relevant to the field of social informatics.

Weighting:
20%

Criteria for assessment:
The criteria used to assess submissions are:

1. Correctness and understanding - there may be more than one "right" answer in many cases. We will look for answers that reflect understanding of the underlying principles and theories.
2. Completeness - that you have answered all parts of each question.
3. Presentation - that you have presented your answers in a suitably formatted report style.
4. Use of evidence and argument - you are able to explain your position by using logical argument drawing on the theory presented in the unit.
5. Evidence of reflection - you are able to review in a critical manner the materials and points of view presented in the unit, drawing where appropriate upon your own experience and knowledge.
Specific tasks and marking criteria will be distributed at the appropriate time during the semester.

Due date:
Week 11

Examinations

• Examination 1

Weighting:
50%

Length:
3 hours

Type (open/closed book):
Closed book

Electronic devices allowed in the exam:
None

Learning resources

Monash Library Unit Reading List
http://readinglists.lib.monash.edu/index.html

Feedback to you

Types of feedback you can expect to receive in this unit are:

• Informal feedback on progress in labs/tutes
• Graded assignments with comments

Extensions and penalties

Submission must be made by the due date otherwise penalties will be enforced.

You must negotiate any extensions formally with your campus unit leader via the in-semester special consideration process:

Returning assignments

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

Referencing requirements

Assignment submission

It is a University requirement ([http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-procedures.html](http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-procedures.html)) for students to submit an assignment coversheet for each assessment item. Faculty Assignment coversheets can be found at [http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/](http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/). Please check with your Lecturer on the submission method for your assignment coversheet (e.g. attach a file to the online assignment submission, hand-in a hard copy, or use an online quiz).

Online submission

If Electronic Submission has been approved for your unit, please submit your work via the learning system for this unit, which you can access via links in the my.monash portal.

Required Resources

Please check with your lecturer before purchasing any Required Resources. Limited copies of prescribed texts are available for you to borrow in the library, and prescribed software is available in student labs.

There is no textbook for this unit. Readings required for Assignment 2 will be accessible through the unit reading list.

Recommended Resources

There is no specific software requirement beyond access to word processing and web browsing facilities.

Field trips

Not applicable.

Additional subject costs

Not applicable.

Examination material or equipment

Pen and pencil.
Other Information

Policies

Monash has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University’s academic standards, and to provide advice on how they might uphold them. You can find Monash’s Education Policies at:

Key educational policies include:

- Plagiarism;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-policy.html
- Assessment in Coursework Programs;
- Special Consideration;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/special-consideration-policy.html
- Grading Scale;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/grading-scale-policy.html
- Discipline: Student Policy;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/student-discipline-policy.html
- Academic Calendar and Semesters; http://www.monash.edu.au/students/dates/
- Orientation and Transition; http://intranet.monash.edu.au/infotech/resources/students/orientation/
- Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/complaints-grievance-policy.html
- Code of Practice for Teaching and Learning;
- Graduate Attributes Policy
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/monash-graduate-attributes-policy.html

Student services

The University provides many different kinds of support services for you. Contact your tutor if you need advice and see the range of services available at http://www.monash.edu.au/students. For Sunway see http://www.monash.edu.my/Student-services, and for South Africa see http://www.monash.ac.za/current/.

Monash University Library

The Monash University Library provides a range of services, resources and programs that enable you to save time and be more effective in your learning and research. Go to www.lib.monash.edu.au or the library tab in my.monash portal for more information. At Sunway, visit the Library and Learning Commons at http://www.lib.monash.edu.my/. At South Africa visit http://www.lib.monash.ac.za/.
Disability Liaison Unit

Students who have a disability or medical condition are welcome to contact the Disability Liaison Unit to discuss academic support services. Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) visit all Victorian campuses on a regular basis.

Website: http://www.monash.edu/equity-diversity/disability/index.html
Telephone: 03 9905 5704 to book an appointment with a DLO; or contact the Student Advisor, Student Community Services at 03 55146018 at Sunway
Email: dlu@monash.edu
Drop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1, Building 55, Clayton Campus, or Student Community Services Department, Level 2, Building 2, Monash University, Sunway Campus

Your feedback to Us

Monash is committed to excellence in education and regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units (SETU) survey. The University’s student evaluation policy requires that every unit is evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys. The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

For more information on Monash’s educational strategy, see:

www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions and on student evaluations, see:
www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/student-evaluation-policy.html

Previous Student Evaluations of this Unit

Previous feedback has highlighted the following strength(s) in this unit: its intellectually stimulating nature; its encouragement of student participation.

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to