HU 6074-16: Surveillance and Professional Communication
Fall 2024

Connotations of surveillance are labeled as largely nefarious, complicated by the ways in which surveillance is poised as a "necessity" for "safety," "security," and "compliance." Public response is often to dismiss issues of surveillance, security, and privacy; however, as writers, professional and technical communicators, and members of society, it is important to understand how we may become more empowered citizens. We become more empowered by understanding the impact of surveillance technologies in our lives, in our writing, and in our practices. In this Humanities II elective, we will examine sites of surveillance as they relate to professional and technical writing. We will read and respond to topics including (but not limited to), algorithmic bias, disability and AI, data mining, surveillance capitalism, privacy, and more. This course will emphasize critical reading, writing, and listening to scholarly and popular texts that center historically excluded and silenced voices. Assignments will include original research writing; responses to readings, case scenarios, and peer writing; collaborative discussions; and multimodal projects. Students will rhetorically analyze sites of surveillance as they relate to professional and technical writing and their career goals/trajectories, responding to them in socially relevant ways for a range of audiences.

Contact Information And Office Hours

Dr. Morgan Banville (you may call me Dr./Professor B or Dr./Professor Banville)

Office: Kurz 224
Office Hours (this is time for you!): I will be in my office Fridays from 9-9:50 a.m. and 11-11:50 a.m.. I will also be available virtually if you cannot meet during these hours, including virtual appointments Mondays between 3-4:00 p.m. Please email me to schedule an appointment.

Email: mbanville@maritime.edu

Fall 2024 Sections

HU-6073-17 Technical Writing
HU-6074-16 Surveillance and Professional Communication
HU-1111L-12 Writing Lab
HU-1111L-14 Writing Lab
HU-1110-13 Intro. to College Writing
HU-1110-11 Intro. to College Writing
Dual Enrollment

HU 6074 Course Description and Learning Outcomes

Some curriculum guiding questions may explore:
- What is surveillance, and how does it impact technical communicators?
- How, as digital users and technical communicators, does surveillance (and tools/technologies) impact professional writing?
- What are the implications of surveillance for historically excluded groups such as those who are marginalized due to race, class, gender, sexuality, and dis/ability?

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Learn how emerging technologies impact groups of people within specific sites of surveillance as they relate to students' future career paths and interests.
2. Acquire a conceptual toolkit for analyzing issues related to technology, accessibility, and social justice, as they relate to technical and professional communication.
3. Gain experience collaborating with other students to investigate the political, social, cultural, and economic impacts of emerging technologies.
4. Analyze both explicit and implicit messages in professional documents.
5. Think rhetorically about one's own writing choices and those of others.
6. Identify bias and consider its implications in workplace and organizational spaces.
7. Write for multiple audiences and purposes and in multiple media contexts.
8. Communicate effectively, ethically, and responsibly.
9. Demonstrate skills, strategies, and conceptual knowledge and practices related to composing and communication tasks (research, revision, collaboration, editing, organization, design, etc.)
10. Theorize a variety of reasons, using rhetorical language, for why a responsibility to the public is important for professionals in order for their writing practice to be useful and effective.

These outcomes contribute to the following course goals:
- Use writing to investigate complex, relevant topics and address significant questions through engagement with and effective use of credible sources.
- Produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience, particularly within the written genres (including genres that integrate writing with visuals, audio, or other multi-modal components) of their major disciplines and/or career fields.
- Demonstrate that they understand writing as a process that can be made more effective through drafting and revision.
- Proofread and edit their own writing, avoiding grammatical and mechanical errors.
- Assess and explain the major choices that they make in their writing.

Required Materials

We do **NOT** have a textbook for this course. Any materials we use will be linked and/or uploaded to our GoogleClassroom.
- PDFs, provided through GoogleClassroom.
- A laptop computer, equipped with video chatting capabilities.

Please bring your laptop to every class!

My role is to facilitate a productive learning environment that supports your growth as readers, writers, thinkers, and leaders. I will do this through careful course design, feedback on written assignments, and timely responses to questions. I am available for questions and will be in contact with you throughout this course. You can find all my contact information within the course.

You should check either your email or our classroom at least once per day while you are enrolled. I recommend email as your first line of contact with me as that is how I tend to respond most quickly, and it also provides us with a record of our conversation. We cannot discuss grades over email per FERPA. It is your responsibility to communicate with me if you are struggling or have questions. I can be available for appointments over Zoom.

Major Projects

Each of the writing projects for this course will have a specific due date during the semester. HU 6074 includes four major projects and a reflection, as well as informal writing and class participation. Our schedule is tiered day-to-day so that our in-class activities, group work, and informal writing will prepare you for each assignment. The formalized final drafts of each assignment will vary depending on the project. We will discuss the expectations with each project as we reach the point in the schedule. Here is the percentage weight of each assignment:

ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS	DESCRIPTION	GRADE BREAKDOWN
1: Blog Posts/Reading Responses	Weekly posts about current news related to security, privacy, and surveillance.	20%
2: Keyword Report	From the reading list, students will select one concept or keyword to further explore.	10%
3: Book Review	You will be expected to write one 4-page book review of a surveillance studies book. The goal of book reviews is to provide readers with an overall sense of the book's argument, contribution to the field, unique approach (methodological or theoretical), primary audiences, and	15%

	limitations. Book reviews should be engaging and detailed, offering readers with an accurate sense of the subject matter covered and the tone of the book as a whole.		
4: Short Paper/Current Event	Each analysis should be a 500-word essay that identifies the story and explains how it illustrates, complicates, or extends some of the ideas covered in the reading for the week. The goal is to show how the readings in the course help you to understand current events, so you will have to explain yourself thoroughly and provide sufficient detail to demonstrate the connections you are trying to make.	10%	
5: Technology Justice Project	The final project will be a team-based research project and presentation. Students will be asked to select a specific social justice concern with technology, formulate research questions, decide upon appropriate research methods to answer your questions, analyze collected data, and compose an accessible final deliverable (i.e., professional report, website, documentary video, podcast, community resources). Sample areas of inquiry might include labor automation/workplace surveillance, institutional surveillance (CCTV, etc.), algorithmic bias, healthcare inequities, (in)accessible spaces, borders and barriers (airport security, etc.), or other topics.	20%	15% Project 5% Presentation
6: Final Reflection	The final reflection asks students to analyze their coursework, aligning their work with course outcomes and expectations.	5%	
Participation, Homework, Peer Review, and Attendance	Active participation in peer response, collaborative group work activities, and in-class writing. This includes bringing homework to class. Not bringing rough drafts will be considered an absence. If	20%	

	for any reason there are quizzes, they will be included into this portion of your grade. Be aware that attendance is necessary in order to participate.	
Total		100%

Final drafts should illustrate the best product you have for each major assignment. The final draft should be polished and uploaded as a Word Document *only*. I will go in-depth on the grading criteria in class for each assignment, and you will have ample opportunity to ask questions and meet with me for feedback. Final drafts will be submitted to me directly via your GoogleClassroom.

Daily Schedule
The daily course schedule and more detailed assignment prompts will be available on GoogleClassroom. The course schedule is subject to change based on the needs and interests of the class. You are responsible for regularly checking GoogleClassroom for updates.

Grading Scale

A	93% and above	B-	80-83%	D+	67-69%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	D	64-66%
B+	87-89%	C	74-76%	D-	60-63%
B	84-86%	C-	70-73%	F	59% and below

Attendance

To be successful in this class, your regular attendance is essential. Beyond the damage absences can have on your class participation grade, missing assignments/responses will lower your course grade. I will send you a written (email) warning when your course grade begins to suffer due to missed assignments. Please note that if you are unable to attend class due to illness, email me and we will coordinate a plan, so you are able to stay on track in the course. It is imperative that you **do not attend class** if you are not feeling well (physically, mentally, emotionally).

You are allowed a total of **2 excused absences** over the course of the semester, with **1 additional** mental health day. After the 3 absences (essentially one week), your grade is subject to a full letter grade drop in the Participation/Attendance category.

Late Work

Late work will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. You are allowed 1 "life happens" for assignments, late work will **not** be accepted. Late work is accepted for projects *only*, with a 15 point deduction per day late. I understand issues arise, and life happens; however, you should communicate with me about potential issues **BEFORE** due dates (when appropriate).

Please communicate with me. I do not know what is impacting your courses unless you speak with me directly.

Accommodations

I am committed to maximizing your learning potential and making this course as accessible as possible. If there is any way that I can adapt this course to better meet your unique needs as a learner, please let me know! If you have a documented learning accommodation, I am especially interested in providing any help that has been best determined by you and the Office of Disability Resources. Here is the information for Disability Resources:

    ADA Coordinator: Dr. Elaine Craghead, Asst. Dean
    ABSIC 320
    x5120 (Karen Nahigian)
    ADAcompliance@maritime.edu
    Monday thru Friday, 8am - 4pm

Class Participation

When I say "class participation," I am referring to your efforts to make this a successful class for yourself, and for your fellow cadets.

Some things you can do to earn a high participation grade are:
- complete all assignments on time
- participate actively and productively in peer review sessions (instructions for peer review and for documenting your contributions to peer review will be provided)
- make sure you own a copy of your texts, and
- complete assignments thoroughly and on time.

Some things you can do to earn a low participation grade are:
- incomplete work
- miss peer review or bring insufficient work to peer review
- show disrespect for the views of others, and
- participate in any activities that do not contribute positively to the learning environment in the classroom (such as posting inappropriate content - see The Cadet Regimental Manual)

Please be aware that, in addition to the negative effects these poor citizenship practices will have on your participation grade, they can be grounds for more serious disciplinary action, including removal from the course. Be respectful to your classmates and instructor.

Please also make sure to have a plan for backing up all of your digital work in multiple places in case of computer failure. Please also make sure to save all of the writing you complete for class. I highly encourage you to compose in GoogleDrive, since it automatically saves your work to your Google account.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

"Massachusetts Maritime Academy expects all cadets and students to abide by its Honor Code, which states that "Cadets and students do not lie, cheat, or steal, nor do they tolerate these acts from others." The Cadet Regimental Manual clearly outlines the various actions that may be considered cheating. These include plagiarism, misrepresentation, and unauthorized notes, among other things.

Academic freedom has traditionally allowed instructors to address academic dishonesty in many ways, including (but not limited to) requiring the student to redo an assignment, assigning a grade of zero ro the test or assignment, or failing the student for the course. When the situation warrants, the instructor may also refer to the matter to the Honor Board, which may recommend suspension or dismissal from the Academy for violations of the Honor code." (p. 157, MMA 2018-2019 Catalog)

There will be a day in which we will discuss Academic Integrity further. However, a simple rule to follow in order to avoid Plagiarism is to be honest in your writing. If you borrow text/information from another source be sure to give credit to that source. When in doubt, cite it out.

A Note about AI and Chat GPT Writing
Technology, democracy, and writing are interwoven in our society. In this class, we rely heavily on technology to mediate our learning. With the recent advent of Chat GPT and other AI platforms that generate text, it is important to think about these technologies and how they can enter the classroom. <u>I ask that you do not turn in work generated by AI generators as your own</u>. We will talk about this in class, and make a plan to address AI in the classroom together.

Student Mental Health/Wellness

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may impact your ability to attend class, concentrate, complete work, take an exam, or participate in daily activities. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I am concerned and that help, if needed, is available. The University offers services to assist you with addressing these or ANY other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are experiencing any challenges, please reach out for support. If you or your friends would rather seek support off-campus, I'm happy to share what information I know.

Counseling Services. Located in the Main Deck, this office provides a wide range of health and counseling services. For more information, drop in or call 508-830-5048.

More Resources

- *Your classmates*. Rely on one another for the questions you have regarding the readings, the work we're doing in class, software we may be using, etc. You all, both individually and as a collective, embody a vast bank of knowledge and experiences.
- *Your Instructor*. I will do all I can to assist you in succeeding in this course. Feel free to meet with me during my office hours or another scheduled time. Email is a reliable way to contact me and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner.
- *IT Support*. While I will help as much as I can during our class time when technical issues arise (e.g. with GoogleDrive or your computer), there are technology services on campus that may offer assistance. https://www.maritime.edu/technology-services
- *Library and Writing Center*. The library and writing center will play an essential role in our time together. We will incorporate library time while learning research literacy and strategies, and engaging with outside source material. The writing is also available in order to offer assistance in the drafting of your assignments. It is my goal to demonstrate how both the library and the writing center are resources that will benefit you during 1111 and in your future classes at MMA. Here are their site links: https://www.maritime.edu/mmalibrary and https://www.maritime.edu/writing-center

This syllabus may change slightly throughout the semester to respond to the dynamic of the class. Any adjustments I make will be communicated to you via GoogleClassroom and/or email. As such, it is very important to check the GoogleClassroom and your email at least once per weekday.