

INFO 4113 / INFO 6113 / LAW 7113 TECH/LAW COLLOQUIUM

Department of Information Science, Cornell University / Cornell Law School

Fall 2018

Tue 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Myron Taylor Hall room 182 (in Cornell Law School)

[syllabus v.1: 20 August 2018]

Professor: Karen Levy
Gates 207
karen.levy@cornell.edu
office hours by appointment

Graduate TA: Fernando Delgado
fad33@cornell.edu

Course website: <http://tlc.cis.cornell.edu/>

OVERVIEW and GOALS

This course explores new developments at the intersection of law and information technology. The class is structured as a series of dialogues with a group of scholars investigating how law and new technologies interact with and shape one another across many different domains. Students will be exposed to innovative research about technology policy, privacy, platforms, design, law enforcement, the nature of expertise, and the changing nature of legal and technical practice.

The goals of the course are: (1) to acquaint students with cutting-edge research and analysis in law and technology; (2) to give students the opportunity to engage closely with scholars working in this field; (3) to give students a “backstage view” into the research process and to workshop scholars’ work-in-progress.

COURSE FORMAT

The class includes both a public lecture component and a smaller seminar discussion, both taking place in Myron Taylor 182. Typically, the public lecture will last from 7:00 pm to about 8:15 pm; then, after a break, we'll reconvene for the seminar. **You are required to attend and actively participate in both class components.** In some cases, the seminar discussion will be an in-depth continuation of the topics from the public lecture; in others, the seminar discussion will be an opportunity to workshop the guest lecturer's related work. The seminar discussion will draw in large part from your discussion questions (see below).

During each week, the guest lecturer will assign some background reading for the seminar. I'll circulate this to you by email in advance.

COURSE MATERIALS

No course materials are required. Papers to be workshopped will be emailed to you before the course meeting.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

There are four graded components of the course, accounting for the following proportions of the course grade:

Attendance and engagement	30%
Discussion questions (5)	20%
Critical responses (2)	20%
Synthetic analysis	30%

Attendance and engagement. Attendance in this course (both lecture and seminar) is mandatory. Because the course content is entirely delivered by the guest lecturers, there is no substitute for attending and actively participating in the class. You should plan to attend every session! I will keep track of this using a sign-up sheet in the seminar. Further, you must engage actively while in both components of the class, meaning that you are fully present and focused on the discussion.

On occasion, unforeseen events come up and you may have an unavoidable class conflict. Should this occur, the makeup policy to receive credit for that date is as follows: (a) you should let me know in advance, if at all possible; (b) you will need to complete a makeup assignment,

consisting of watching the recording of the lecture and writing a 2-page (double-spaced) critical assessment of the material presented. This assignment must be completed and turned in before the next class session, unless we mutually determine a different deadline in advance.

Discussion questions. Being prepared to ask good, thoughtful questions is, I believe, the best way to engage with an argument. Therefore, a key focus of the class will be to prepare questions for the speaker to guide our seminar discussion. 5 times during the semester, you will submit **two well-formed questions** for the week's speaker that you would be prepared to ask in the seminar based on the precirculated reading. Each week, Fernando (the course TA) and I will review the submitted questions and group them thematically. We'll use these questions to structure our conversation in the seminar.

With this in mind, your questions should aim to provoke productive discussion that extends and deepens our engagement with the presented research. Good questions should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the material. For some thoughts on why and how to formulate good questions, see our colleague Dan Cosley's blog post: <https://blogs.cornell.edu/danco/2013/02/18/on-asking-questions-and-academic-love/> and this guide from George Washington University: https://www2.gwu.edu/~capstone/symposium/asking_questions.htm#asking

You should **submit your questions via Blackboard by midnight on the Sunday** preceding the colloquium.

Critical responses. Twice during the semester, you will submit a 2 page (double-spaced) critical response to one of the guest lectures and/or seminars. Please do not mistake "critical" in this context for "negative"; the point is to be analytic, creative, and reasoned, regardless of whether you love or hate something. The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on and analyze the prior week's colloquium in more depth, to consider its implications, and/or to extend it to your own area of research. Please consider this a chance to impart your own informed perspective and analysis; you should not consider the response a summary of the previous week's material.

You must write one critical response in the first half of the class (before fall break) and one in the second half (after fall break). Each response **must be submitted, via Blackboard, before the following week's meeting** (i.e., you have a one-week window between the colloquium you're discussing and the response deadline).

Synthetic analysis. At the conclusion of the course, you will need to submit, via Blackboard, a synthetic analysis about the topics covered in the course. We will discuss this assignment in more detail as the course progresses. The synthetic analysis is due by **midnight on December 14.**

- **INFO 4113 enrollees:** Your synthetic analysis should be 5 pages (double-spaced) and focus on the implications of the course speakers' work for technology ethics and policy.

- **INFO 6113 and LAW 7113 enrollees:** Your synthetic analysis should be 10 pages (double-spaced) and focus on the implications of the course speakers' work for *your own research and/or practice*.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to observe Cornell's Code of Academic Integrity in all aspects of this course. The code states that:

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. ... Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources. ... A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

August 28	“Bias In, Bias Out” Kristian Lum, Human Rights Data Analysis Group <i>no advance reading</i>
September 4	“Refractive Surveillance: Monitoring Customers to Manage Workers” Karen Levy, Cornell, Information Science
September 11	“Danger Ahead: Risk Assessment and the Future of Bail Reform” David Robinson, Upturn / Cornell Initiative on AI, Policy, and Practice
September 18	“Outsourcing Privacy” Ari Waldman, New York Law School
September 25	“Must Privacy Give Way to Use Regulation?” Helen Nissenbaum, Cornell Tech, Information Science
October 2	“Hammer Down: The Network of Regulations that Shape Trucking” Anne Balay, Haverford College

October 9	FALL BREAK
October 16	<i>no class</i>
October 23	“Urbanism Under Google” Julia Powles, NYU Information Law Institute / Cornell Tech
NOTE SPECIAL DATE/TIME/PLACE: Friday October 26, 3:30-5:00 pm, Gates Hall G01	
October 26	“Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor” Virginia Eubanks, SUNY-Albany, Political Science <i>no separate seminar</i>
October 30	“Digital Punishment Through Online Criminal Records” Sarah Esther Lageson, Rutgers, Criminal Justice
November 6	“Fairness and Abstraction in Sociotechnical Systems” Andrew Selbst, Data & Society Research Institute
November 13	“Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions that Shape Social Media” Tarleton Gillespie, Microsoft Research New England / Cornell
November 20	in-class discussion: TBD based on class interest/current events
November 27	“Rebuilding Privacy Practices After <i>Carpenter</i> ” Natalie Ram, University of Baltimore, Law
December 4	in-class discussion: the ethics of facial recognition [readings TBD]

***** synthetic analysis must be submitted by December 14, midnight *****