Description

Social computing is an umbrella term for technologies and virtual spaces that allow users to create, describe and share content, and for the communities that arise around them. The goal of this course is to survey theoretical and practical instances of social computing such as blogs, social bookmarking, classification and recommendation systems, compare them with traditional professional equivalents, and evaluate how these diverse perspectives can inform one another.

Course structure

This is an online, asynchronous course. It is designed for graduate students who have a high level of internal motivation to extend their knowledge about social computing and related topics, and who will take full advantage of the opportunity to work both independently and in virtual groups. In keeping with the social nature of the course, staying current and participating actively and regularly in an online environment is critical.

Though no specific technical background is required, you should be comfortable with teaching yourself how to use Web 2.0 and related technologies, which may involve downloading and installing software on your computer, registering with various sites, and troubleshooting.

The course blog (http://ics691s09.blogspot.com/) will be the center for information exchange. You will create a blog, specific to this course (i.e. not your existing blog), and use an RSS aggregator to follow the blogs of your fellow students. We will use the Resources section of laulima (http://laulima.hawaii.edu/) to post readings not available online.

The course will be conducted as a series of seven two-week sessions, loosely organized by topic. Each session will adhere to the following schedule:

First week: On Monday, I will post the session’s readings--which may change from those listed on the syllabus—on the course blog, with a related assignment. The latter will usually take the form of questions to address and/or sites to visit and evaluate. Respond to the assignments with a post on your blog. Your response to the assignment must be posted by 11:59 pm Sunday, i.e. in one week.

An acceptable blog post will be between 500-1000 words (more is fine), will specifically and critically address a majority of the session’s readings, and will address all aspects of the associated assignment. An outstanding blog post will use the readings and assignments as starting points for further exploration. You may use a formal or informal tone, as long as the content is there.

Second week: Read as many of your fellow students’ blog posts as you like. Comment substantively on at least five per session. Acceptable blog comments will engage specifics of the blog author’s and/or paper author’s points, possibly including illustrative links to content from other sessions and elsewhere. Respond to other students’ comments on your own and other students’ posts as appropriate. Not all blog posts will generate long comment threads and lively conversation, but one of your goals in the second week of each session (and in the course as a whole) is to take every opportunity to move productive conversations forward, to both create and benefit from a collaborative learning environment.

You will propose a final project, which can be done individually or as a group. We will negotiate the details and expectations as the course progresses.
Evaluation

Though I cannot comment on every blog every week, throughout the course I will provide both individual and group feedback on your contributions. This is a student-driven course, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns.

- 50%: Blog posts and assignments for the seven sessions (overall grade)
- 30%: Final project
- 20%: Participation (quality and quantity of blog comments, timeliness of submissions)

99-100 A+ | 93-98 A | 90-92 A- | 88-89 B+ | 83-87 B | 80-82 B- | 78-79 C+ | 73-77 C

Schedule and readings (subject to change)

**I suggest you read these in the order listed.**

Unlinked readings are available in the Resources section of the laulima course page (http://laulima.hawaii.edu/)

Session 1: Monday Jan 12-Sunday Jan 25
Introduction and overview: Conceptions of social computing

http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html


http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/5/17.html

http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6510681.html?industryid=47130


Session 2: Monday Jan 26-Sun Feb 8
Social aspects of social computing

http://www.puaf.umd.edu/IPPP/fall1999/internet_community.htm


Session 3: Mon Feb 9-Sun Feb 22
Motivation for participation


Session 4: Mon Feb 23-Sun Mar 8
Social role, capital and trust


**Session 7: Mon Apr 13-Sun Apr 26
Management and conflict**


Reed, Mike (no date). Flame Warriors. http://redwing.hutman.net/~mreed/index.htm

**Final projects due: Sunday May 10**