



Oregon State University
Ecampus

Course Name: Communications Security and Social Movements

Course Number: CS 175

Credits: 3

Instructor name: Joseph Jess

Instructor email: jessjo@oregonstate.edu

Teaching Assistant name and contact info: (see Canvas)

Course Description

Equipping students with the theory and practice of communications security, this course explores how social movements can remain effective in the context of mass surveillance and state repression. (Bacc Core Course, Difference/Power/Discrimination)

Prerequisites or Corequisites

None.

Communication

(see Canvas)

Time Expectations

This course combines approximately 120 hours of reading, online activities, assignments and projects.

Technical Assistance

If you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact 24-7 Canvas Support through the Help link within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or need assistance logging into a course, contact the IS Service Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit the [IS Service Desk](#) online.

Learning Resources

White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson. Bloomsbury. (any edition)

[Defend Dissent: Digital Suppression and Cryptographic Defense of Social Movements](#) by Glencora Borradaile. Oregon State University Open Educational Resource.

Computer running Apple, Microsoft or Linux that is still receiving security updates. Ability to record a talk (video & microphone). Ability to install keybase.io and Tor Browser.

All other readings and materials will be provided through the course page.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

1. Explain how difference is socially constructed;
2. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
3. Analyze ways in which the interactions of social categories, such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age, are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States;
4. Understand concepts of communication security and basic encryption;
5. Effectively use and explain to others secure online communication tools;
6. Describe and contextualize uses of surveillance to suppress social movements both historically and currently;
7. Identify existing and potential uses of secure online communication tools to enhance the effectiveness of social movements.

Bacc Core

This course fulfills the Baccalaureate Core requirement for Difference, Power and Discrimination category. It does this by exploring well-documented historic abuses of power in the state-sponsored surveillance and disruption of diverse, justice-oriented social movements of the Civil Rights Era. We look at the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) disruption of black power and civil rights movements beginning in the 1950s as providing context for present-day abuses of power under the PATRIOT Act and PRISM-related U.S. domestic mass surveillance, and the protective role encryption technologies might play today. In these discussions, those socially-constructed categories (such as race) used to justify such state abuses will be critically examined.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Technical quizzes covers your comprehension of the basic technical knowledge – *10 points*

Four Reading Analysis Assignments will have you use a framework for analyzing the content and reinforce the social concepts of the course – *20 points*

Three Short Shared Presentations is a form of interactive learning that will help us cover a lot of new material – *15 points*

Final Project will have you applying your knowledge from all aspects of the course in a group case study. The final project has a shared presentation component and a final hand-in component. – *30 points*

Final Exam will have multiple choice covering the courses technical material and short answer questions that, if you participated fully in your group assignments, you should do just fine. – *30 points*

Total – *100 points*

Note that the activities add to 105 and does mean that you can earn more than 100% in the course. The purpose for this is to allow for occasional mess-ups (forgetting about an assignment, a minor conflict with something not academically related, minor illness). For this reason, please only speak with the instructor for special consideration in the case of extended illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Letter Grade

Grade	Percent Range
A	93-105
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

Course Content

Alongside the weekly schedule, there will be a self-paced "Technical Module" whose completion is due in week 7.

Week	Topic	Assignments & Activities
1	Introduction	Using Keybase
2	White Supremacy in the US	Case for Reparations Reading Assignment
3	White Rage	White Rage Reading Assignment
4	Social Movements	Lightning Talks and Group Formation
5	COINTELPRO	Church Report Reading Assignment COINTELPRO Document Dive & Presentations
6	Threats and Disparate Impacts	Race, Surveillance, Empire Reading Assignment Final Project Threat Analysis
7	Digital Security	Technical Model Completion Part III of Defend Dissent
8	Modern Movement Suppression	Movie Screening Final Project Topic Approval
9	Global Surveillance	Snowden Document Dive & Presentation
10	Final project	Final Group Project
Finals	Final Exam!	

Course Policies

Discussion Participation

There are a few graded discussions that take place in Canvas and one graded discussion that takes place in Keybase (see the first assignment). We encourage students to use Keybase for course Q&A so that all students can benefit from your questions and the instructors' responses.

Late Work Policy

Work must be submitted on time. Since it is possible to earn more than 100% in the course, please use this to allow for a late assignment, which may be evaluated if submitted before grading is complete, but will not necessarily contribute toward your grade.

Makeup Exams

Makeup exams will be given only for missed exams excused in advance by the instructor. Excused absences will not be given for airline reservations, minor illness or common ailments since exams and quizzes do not take place at a particular time. Excused absences will generally not be given after the absence has occurred, except under very unusual circumstances.

Incompletes

Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 70% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final project). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don't wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

Statement Regarding Religious Accommodation

Oregon State University is required to provide reasonable accommodations for employee and student sincerely held religious beliefs. It is incumbent on the student making the request to make the faculty member aware of the request as soon as possible prior to the need for the accommodation. See the [Religious Accommodation Process for Students](#).

Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility. Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor. We will be developing a course code of conduct in the first week of class.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Unless indicated otherwise, please complete the readings and view other instructional materials for each week before participating in the discussion board.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the Student Conduct Code (<https://beav.es/codeofconduct>). Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

Academic Integrity

Integrity is a character-driven commitment to honesty, doing what is right, and guiding others to do what is right. Oregon State University Ecampus students and faculty have a responsibility to act with integrity in all of our educational work, and that integrity enables this community of learners to interact in the spirit of trust, honesty, and fairness across the globe.

Academic misconduct, or violations of academic integrity, can fall into seven broad areas, including but not limited to: cheating; plagiarism; falsification; assisting; tampering; multiple submissions of work; and unauthorized recording and use.

It is important that you understand what student actions are defined as academic misconduct at Oregon State University. The OSU Libraries offer a [tutorial on academic misconduct](#), and you can also refer to the [OSU Student Code of Conduct](#) and [the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standard's website](#) for more information. More importantly, if you are unsure if something will violate our academic integrity policy, ask your professors, GTAs, academic advisors, or academic integrity officers.

TurnItIn

Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin, and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited. Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information, visit [Academic Integrity for Students: Turnitin – What is it?](#)

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible with Keybase potentially being an exception depending on the nature of required access, in which case the instructor will accommodate the student. If you require accommodations please contact [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a [vendor statement](#) certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Writing Assistance

The Oregon State [Online Writing Suite](#) is also available for students enrolled in Ecampus courses.

Ecampus Reach Out for Success

University students encounter setbacks from time to time. If you encounter difficulties and need assistance, it's important to reach out. Consider discussing the situation with an instructor or academic advisor. Learn about [resources that assist with wellness and academic success](#).

Ecampus students are always encouraged to discuss issues that impact your academic success with the [Ecampus Success Team](#). Email ecampus.success@oregonstate.edu to identify strategies and resources that can support you in your educational goals.

If you feel comfortable sharing how a hardship may impact your performance in this course, please reach out to me as your instructor.

- **For mental health:**
Learn about [counseling and psychological resources for Ecampus students](#). If you are in immediate crisis, please contact the Crisis Text Line by texting OREGON to 741-741 or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).
- **For financial hardship:**
Any student whose academic performance is impacted due to financial stress or the inability to afford groceries, housing, and other necessities for any reason is urged to contact the Director of Care for support (541-737-8748).

Student Evaluation of Courses

During Fall, Winter, and Spring term, the online Student Evaluation of Teaching system opens to students the Wednesday of week 8 and closes the Sunday before Finals Week. Students will receive notification, instructions and the link through their ONID email. They may also log into the system via Online Services. Course evaluation results are extremely important and used to help improve courses and the learning experience of future students. Responses are anonymous (unless a student chooses to "sign" their comments, agreeing to relinquish anonymity) and unavailable to instructors until after grades have been posted. The results of scaled questions and signed comments go to both the instructor and their unit head/supervisor. Anonymous (unsigned) comments go to the instructor only.