

# Civic Technology

Fall 2020 Syllabus (v4.0)

Undergraduate Business Administration 39E - 2 units

University of California, Berkeley - Haas School of Business

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Reader: Jasdeep Hundal ([jasdeep.sh@berkeley.edu](mailto:jasdeep.sh@berkeley.edu))

Class meets: Wednesdays, 4:10-6pm

Final Exam: Thursday, 12/17, 8-11am

Office Hours: Wednesday afternoons by appointment via emails above.

## Course Description

“An election is to democracy as a wedding is to marriage”

- Unknown

As you prepare to cast a vote in what may be your first election, you will be invited to explore the ways in which social media and related technologies are reshaping political landscapes around the world. In the course, we will look at the ways in which politicians have already adopted social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, paying close attention to current developments in national, state and local politics as events unfold in real time during the semester. We will also closely examine an array of emerging “civic technologies,” including those developed by new political parties (Pirate Party, Partido de la Red, Flux Party), nonprofit organizations (Democracy.Earth, Participatory Democracy Foundation), for-profit startups (PopVox, Change.org, Countable) and government agencies (We The People, Tunisian and Icelandic crowdsourced constitutions, eStonia, Participatory Budgeting). Students will be encouraged to develop critical perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of new approaches to democracy from technical, political-economic and critical-theoretical perspectives.

## **Course Outline**

[Week 1 \(8/26\): Introductions, logistics, syllabus review, goals, expectations](#)

[Week 2 \(9/2\): Voting, Voter Access & Suppression + Civic Tech Overview](#)

[Week 3 \(9/9\): Blockchain Governance & New Political Parties](#)

[Week 4 \(9/16\): Taking Stock of Democracy](#)

[Week 5 \(9/23\): Civic Tech Startups](#)

[Week 6 \(9/30\): Issue Advocacy, Social Movements, Political Parties](#)

[Week 7 \(10/7\): Big Platforms, Big Problems](#)

[Week 8 \(10/14\): Election Hacking & Challenges of Online Voting](#)

[Week 9 \(10/21\): Conservatives & Digital Activism](#)

[Week 10 \(10/28\): Polarization, Misinformation, Microtargeting](#)

[Week 11 \(11/4\): Election Debrief, Corporate Social Innovation](#)

[Week 12 \(11/11\): No Class - Academic & Administrative Holiday](#)

[Week 13 \(11/18\): Data & Democracy](#)

[Week 14 \(11/25\): No Class - Instructional Holiday \(Thanksgiving\)](#)

[Week 15 \(12/2\): Truth Decay](#)

## **Pedagogical Goals**

Through this course, students will:

1. Develop a comparative analysis of civic technologies, how they are used today, and how they are likely to develop in the future.
2. Develop a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between a variety of social movements and social media technologies.
3. Build a comparative, trans-partisan understanding of the relationships between individual activists, informal movement networks, and formally constituted organizations and institutions, and the roles that each can play in campaign and building.
4. Explore the advantages and disadvantages of development of bespoke platforms for political organizing, as compared to utilizing existing social media platforms or easily customized movement-building tools.

## **Norms for Remote Instruction**

The following norms come from the Haas “[netiquette](#)” guidelines.

1. Camera-on by default.
2. Mute by default except when speaking.
3. Strive to learn from one another and build on one another’s contributions.
4. Treat our virtual classroom as you would a physical classroom, e.g., arrive on time, dress as you would in a physical classroom.
5. Don’t post or share (even privately) inappropriate material.
6. Try to find a quiet location for your zoom classroom; if you do not wish to have your background on camera consider using a Zoom virtual background (not all computers will support this feature). Be respectful and inclusive of one another both when speaking and in chat conversations.
7. Be aware of strong language, all caps, and exclamation points.
8. Do not drive while zooming into a classroom.
9. Students who are concerned about their ability to meet these norms (e.g., wifi too slow for camera), should communicate with their instructor to set agreements.

## Assignments & Grading

**Class Contribution (35%)** (this will replace Attendance and Participation in a normal semester)

**Attendance (15%):** Civic technologies represent a critical issue; it requires everyone to engage in thoughtful, respectful dialogue. For all these reasons, we expect you to attend classes. Students are required to attend seminar sessions and attendance will be taken. Where synchronous attendance is not possible, the student should reach out to the instructors. Instead of attending lectures directly, students should post their reflection. Reflections should highlight key takeaways from lectures (or readings) and write down at least 2 questions for instructors or peers.

**7 post-class quizzes (14%):** There will be 7 short pop quizzes released after lectures. These quizzes are to be completed before the next seminar session.

**Participation (5%):** The final 5% of the participation grade will be at the instructors' discretion and will be determined by your active participation, as far as possible, in synchronous discussion and participation over Zoom. (Obviously, if synchronous attendance is not possible for you, you may work out an alternate arrangement with your GSI). This also includes a 10-minute chat session with the instructor in the first two weeks of school.

**Syllabus Quiz (1%):** Students should complete the syllabus quiz on bCourses, due on 2 September 3.59pm (before the 2nd class).

**Midterm Exam (15%)**

A midterm will be held between weeks 6-9, and will be announced in advance. It will cover all material presented in the class and in readings up to the exam date, including guest speakers.

**Final Exam (20%)**

The final exam will cover all material presented in the class and in readings up to the exam date, including guest speakers.

**Wikipedia Research Project & Final Reflection Paper (30%)**

Students will contribute to articles on Wikipedia that are relevant to the course content. Students will create their own Wikipedia user pages and submit them for credit. Students are expected to interact with one another through Wikipedia discussion pages, and to revise and edit one another's work. Students will give a short presentation about their article and write a 3-page reflection paper about their experience editing Wikipedia, with appendices documenting each stage of their work on their article(s).

# Course Outline

Week 1 (8/26): Introductions, logistics, syllabus review, goals, expectations

## Topics

- Class expectations
- Student interests
- Assignments & Grading

Week 2 (9/2): Voting, Voter Access & Suppression + Civic Tech Overview

## Guest Speaker: Robin Carnahan

Robin Carnahan is the former secretary of state of Missouri and leader at [18F](#) within the US General Services Administration. She's a nationally recognized government technology leader and in 2017 was named one of the federal government's "Top Women in Tech." She's currently a Fellow at the Georgetown University [Beek Center for Social Impact + Innovation](#) and co-lead of the government team at [US Digital Response](#). At 18F, Carnahan helped federal, state and local government agencies improve customer facing digital services and cut costs. Using human-centered design and agile development, budgeting and procurement approaches, she worked in a wide-range of high impact sectors, including healthcare, child welfare, paid family leave services and deployment of smart cities technologies. As Secretary of State, Carnahan served as the state's Chief Election Official and State Securities Regulator during the 2008 financial crisis. An essential part of her job was leading the office's technology modernization efforts and managing a large service delivery team. She co-chaired the Elections and Securities Committees of the bi-partisan National Association of Secretaries of State. Robin serves on a number of non-profit and corporate boards and frequently speaks, writes and testifies about government innovation through smarter use of technology.

## Guest Speaker: Matt Stempeck, Civic Hall (recorded outside of class)

Matt Stempeck is a Senior Researcher at Civic Hall, where he curates the Civic Tech Field Guide. He's been researching and building civic technology since 2005, making creative contributions to electoral and social campaigns, national and city governments, and academia and journalism. In 2016, Matt led the Digital Mobilization team at Hillary for America, which included the campaign's voter registration, peer organizing, and SMS technologies and programs. Matt most recently served as Director of Civic Technology at Microsoft, and is now based in Berlin, where he works on projects with a creative collective appropriately known as the Bad Idea Factory. Matt became / earned a Master of Science at MIT Media Lab's Center for Civic Media. While at the Media Lab, Matt quantified global media attention to stories like Trayvon Martin's, designed a peer-to-peer humanitarian aid marketplace, and built an award-winning email product to fight misinformation online. He also holds a BA with high honors from the University of Maryland College Park, where he wrote a thesis on the disruption participatory media brought to political journalism.

## Topics

- Voter Access & Suppression

- Mail-in Voting
- Misinformation about voting
- Civic Tech Field Overview
- Introduction to Wikipedia Assignment

### Required Media:

- ❑ Voter Access & Suppression
  - ❑ Kroll, Andy, “The Plot Against America: The GOP’s Plan to Suppress the Vote and Sabotage the Election,” *Rolling Stone*, July 16, 2020.  
<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/trump-campaign-2020-voter-suppression-consent-decree-1028988/>
  - ❑ Erickson, Erick, “The Voter-Suppression Myth,” *National Review*, July 9, 2020.  
<https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2020/07/27/the-voter-suppression-myth/>
  - ❑ Voting in America: Trends  
[https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/05/voting\\_in\\_america.html](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/05/voting_in_america.html)
- ❑ Civic Tech Field Overview
  - ❑ “Civic Tech Field Guide,” Civic Hall. <https://civictech.guide/> (browse the guide for ~30 minutes, become familiar with it as a resource. Note possible platforms that could become Wikipedia Topics).
  - ❑ Scaling *Civic Tech: Paths to a Sustainable Future*, Knight Foundation, 2017. [Landing Page](#), [Link to Full PDF](#).
  - ❑ Wikipedia contributors. (2020, April 27). Comparison of civic technology platforms. In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 05:17, August 27, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Comparison\\_of\\_civic\\_technology\\_platforms&oldid=953359262](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Comparison_of_civic_technology_platforms&oldid=953359262)
- ❑ Get started on Wikipedia, WikiEdu. Passcode: ipjlymer  
[https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/courses/University\\_of\\_California,\\_Berkeley/Civic\\_Technology\\_\(Fall\\_2020\)?enroll=ipjly](https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/courses/University_of_California,_Berkeley/Civic_Technology_(Fall_2020)?enroll=ipjly)

Week 3 (9/9): Blockchain Governance & New Political Parties

**Guest Speaker: Santiago Siri, Democracy.Earth** (recorded at 9am, 9/9)

Founder of Democracy Earth Foundation, a non-profit organization backed by Y Combinator and Templeton Foundation building open source censorship resistant digital democracies. Also co-founder of Partido de la Red, a political party that ran for elections with candidates committed to people's will online in 2013. Partner of Bitex.la, leading bitcoin exchange in South America operating from Buenos Aires since 2014. Author of "Hacktivism", published in 2015 by Random House. Argentine.

### Topics

- Innovation in Civic Tech
  - App4Gov
  - Leapfrog Democracies

- Disruptive candidates

### Required Media:

- ❑ Leonard, Andrew. “Meet the Man With a Radical Plan for Blockchain Voting,” *Wired*, August 16, 2018. <https://www.wired.com/story/santiago-siri-radical-plan-for-blockchain-voting/>
- ❑ @DemocracyEarth. The Social Smart Contract. 14 July 2017, <https://github.com/DemocracyEarth/paper/blob/master/The%20Social%20Smart%20Contract.pdf>.
- ❑ Frauenfelder, Mark. Understand the Blockchain in Two Minutes. 2016, <http://www.iftf.org/future-now/article-detail/understand-the-blockchain-in-two-minutes/>.
- ❑ Harris, David E., “Open Source Government? Fork Me.” *Social Innovation in Practice*, Hivos 2014. [https://www.iftf.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/downloads/blog/social\\_innovation\\_in\\_practice.pdf](https://www.iftf.org/fileadmin/user_upload/downloads/blog/social_innovation_in_practice.pdf)
- ❑ Singer, P.W., and Emerson T. Brooking, *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media*, Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.
  - ❑ 1. The War Begins
  - ❑ 2. Every Wire a Nerve

### Optional Media:

- ❑ Campbell, Rebecca. “Australia to Make Blockchain Voting App a Global Democratic Movement.” *Coin Telegraph*, June 30, 2016. <http://cointelegraph.com/news/australia-to-make-blockchain-voting-app-a-global-democratic-movement>
- ❑ Chirgwin, Richard. “Australia Post Says Use Blockchain for Voting. Expert: You’re Kidding.” *The Register*, August 22, 2016. [https://www.theregister.co.uk/2016/08/22/australia\\_postblockchain\\_for\\_voting\\_proposal/](https://www.theregister.co.uk/2016/08/22/australia_postblockchain_for_voting_proposal/).
- ❑ Hardt, Steve, and Lia C. R. Lopes. Google Votes: A Liquid Democracy Experiment on a Corporate Social Network. Technical Disclosure Commons, 5 June 2015, [http://www.tdcommons.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1092&context=dpubs\\_series](http://www.tdcommons.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1092&context=dpubs_series).

Week 4 (9/16): Taking Stock of Democracy

### ***Guest Speaker: Daniella Wenger, Research Associate, Centre for the Future of Democracy, Bennett Institute for Public Policy, University of Cambridge***

*Daniella Wenger is a Research Associate for the Centre for the Future of Democracy at the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, housed at the University of Cambridge. Prior to completing her MPhil in Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, she was a Fulbright Scholar in Jerusalem where she studied freedom of expression and taught a research methods course. She also previously worked at Spotify where she worked on hate content moderation issues. She is a proud graduate from the Haas School of Business.*

### Required Media:

- ❑ Foa, R.S., Klassen, A., Slade, M., Rand, A. and R. Collins. 2020. "The Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report 2020." Cambridge, United Kingdom: Centre for the Future of Democracy.  
<https://www.bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/media/uploads/files/DemocracyReport2020.pdf>
- ❑ Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt, "This is how democracies die," The Guardian, January 21, 2018.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/commentisfree/2018/jan/21/this-is-how-democracies-die>
- ❑ "Larry Diamond: Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition & U.S. Complacency," Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, June 18, 2019.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s442chVPhG4> [Video]
- ❑ Mounk, Yascha and Kyle, Jordan. "What do Populists do to Democracies?". The Atlantic. December 26, 2018.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/hard-data-populism-bolsonaro-trump/578878/>
- ❑ Wampler, Brian, and Mike Touchton. "Brazil Let Its Citizens Make Decisions about City Budgets. Here's What Happened." The Washington Post, January 22, 2014.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/01/22/brazil-let-its-citizens-make-decisions-about-city-budgets-heres-what-happened/>.

### Optional Media:

- ❑ Fukuyama, Francis. "Why is democracy performing so poorly?." Journal of Democracy 26, no. 1 (2015): 11-20.  
[https://muse.jhu.edu/article/565635/pdf?casa\\_token=bAxEYL7utz4AAAAA:Omxw3Aj8RPNhL6eKnhgedzF\\_r-X0pSzmRrUsBceP5NqY-iC8ZKh7cQDP0x0qA9hjSxFH9HR7sTo](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/565635/pdf?casa_token=bAxEYL7utz4AAAAA:Omxw3Aj8RPNhL6eKnhgedzF_r-X0pSzmRrUsBceP5NqY-iC8ZKh7cQDP0x0qA9hjSxFH9HR7sTo)
- ❑ Wike, Richard, Katie Simmons, Bruce Stokes, and Janell Fetterolf. "Many across the globe are dissatisfied with the way democracy is working." Pew Research Center 16 (2017).  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/04/29/many-across-the-globe-are-dissatisfied-with-how-democracy-is-working/>
- ❑ Foa, Roberto Stefan, and Yascha Mounk. "Youth and the populist wave." Philosophy & Social Criticism 45, no. 9-10 (2019): 1013-1024.  
[https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0191453719872314?casa\\_token=KhFBmyNSWN8AAAA:Wg\\_uKESKwNVonbHjbmXmFKR\\_wGBrEuBlCEKAJudtf1cO4QCc4LEkqM0NZEKcJyDTIfScCgBN6UeZuw](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0191453719872314?casa_token=KhFBmyNSWN8AAAA:Wg_uKESKwNVonbHjbmXmFKR_wGBrEuBlCEKAJudtf1cO4QCc4LEkqM0NZEKcJyDTIfScCgBN6UeZuw)
- ❑ Wong, Wilson, and Eric Welch. "Does e-government promote accountability? A comparative analysis of website openness and government accountability." Governance 17, no. 2 (2004): 275-297.  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-0491.2004.00246.x>

Week 5 (9/23): Civic Tech Startups

### Guest Speaker: Marci Harris, Founder and CEO, PopVox

*Marci Harris is co-founder and CEO of POPVOX. She says that her "first startup was a town," after she led recovery efforts for Jackson, TN in 2004 following a devastating tornado, leveraging public and private resources in a community-wide effort for rebuilding. In 2007, she went to work in Congress, joining the personal staff of the Health Subcommittee Chair, covering tax, trade, and health. During the 2008-2009 health reform efforts, she was the Ways and Means Committee lead for program integrity and transparency. Marci grew frustrated with the absence of tools to help Congressional staffers manage information from constituents and advocacy groups. In 2010, she left Washington to co-found POPVOX, a "civic startup" with a mission to connect people and government,*



*empower effective participation, and create a transparent record that informs policy-making and fosters accountable, responsive governing.*

*Marci was appointed by Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam to the board of LaunchTN, public-private partnership focused on supporting the development of entrepreneurship and high-growth companies in her native Tennessee. She also serves on the advisory board of VoteRunLead, several startups, and the CityInnovate Foundation in San Francisco.*

*She received a B.A. from Franklin University in Lugano, Switzerland, a J.D. from the University of Memphis and an LL.M. in Law and Government from the American University Washington College of Law. She was one of Fast Company magazine's Top 100 Most Creative People in Business (2012), received a Tribeca Film Festival Award for Creative Disruption (2012), listed as a DC "Tech Titans" by Washingtonian magazine (2013), a 2013 "FastCase 50," and #13 on the 2014 list of "Digital Citizens of the Year." In 2016 she was an inaugural Technology and Democracy fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center and is currently a New America California fellow.*

### Topics

- WikiEdu: What's a content gap?
- [PopVox](#)
- [Cloakroom](#) (Capitol Bells)
- [Liquid.us](#)
- [Loomio](#)
- [Countable](#)
- [Change.org](#)
- [Fiscalnote.com](#)
- [Isidewith.com](#)
- [Voatz](#)
- [Councilmatic](#) (Participatory Politics Foundation)
- [D21](#)
- [Nation Builder](#)
- [Swing Left](#)

### Required Media:

- Use all platforms listed above for ~10-20 minutes each, or read about the ones that are not publicly accessible. Be familiar enough with platforms/organizations to compare thoughtfully.
- "Marci Harris, Popvox, Woman Entrepreneur," *Gotham Gal*.  
<https://gothamgal.com/2012/09/marci-harris-popvox-woman-entrepreneur/>.
- Glastris, Paul and Haley Sweetland Edwards, "The Big Lobotomy," Washington Monthly. June/July/August 2014. <https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/junejulyaug-2014/the-big-lobotomy/>
- Harris, Marci, "[Congress vs. the Pacing Problem\[s\]](#)," Medium.com, August 21, 2019
- C-SPAN, "Improving Constituent Engagement testimony to House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress" ([video](#)). Only required to watch Marci's opening statement (beginning at 00:15:00, and her follow-up comments. Interface below video allows skipping.)

### Optional Media:

- ❑ Smith, Graham. *Beyond the Ballot: 57 Democratic Innovations from around the World*. 2005, <http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/11541/>.
- ❑ Harris, Marci. “Bills in Congress about U.S. Refugee Policy.” *Huffington Post*, 18 Nov. 2015, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marci-harris/bills-in-congress-about-u\\_b\\_8584176.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marci-harris/bills-in-congress-about-u_b_8584176.html).
- ❑ Harris, Marci. “‘Disrupting’ Lobbying With the Power of People.” *Huffington Post*, 27 Apr. 2012, [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marci-harris/disrupting-lobbying-with-\\_b\\_1458608.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/marci-harris/disrupting-lobbying-with-_b_1458608.html).
- ❑ Glassman, Matt. “Why Congress Doesn’t Always Do the Right Thing,” *New York Times*, February 7, 2018. <https://nyti.ms/2BLq1NK>.

Week 6 (9/30): Issue Advocacy, Social Movements, Political Parties

### Guest Speaker: Josh Hendler, CTO Purpose, former CTO of the Democratic National Committee

*Josh Hendler is Purpose’s Chief Technology Officer & Head of Product. Josh joins Purpose after having worked at the intersection of social good and technology throughout his career. His sweet spot is technology leadership roles in politics, having served as the technology chief for the Democratic National Committee and Organizing for America. During the 2008 campaign, he was a consultant to the Obama campaign, managing technology for distributed organizing efforts. Most recently, Josh was the Chief Technology Officer at Hill+Knowlton Strategies, a global communications agency, where he led product and consulted with the Digital and Sustainability practice. Working across NGOs and startups, he has been at Rock the Vote, Jumo and Major League Baseball Advanced Media.*

*“My goal is to develop the next-generation of tools to empower people across the globe to build movements,” said Hendler. “Purpose is the place to do that. Its power lies in its incredible team—it’s a gathering place for world-changers, movement-makers and social entrepreneurs.”*

*Josh is a graduate of the Gallatin School at New York University. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, son and two cats.*

### Topics

- Advocacy and Lobbying - tactics, tools, how it works
- Demographic change
- Immigration as a case studies
- Technology and advocacy:
  - Organizing
  - Digital
  - Data

### Required Media:

- ❑ *The Tragedy of Political Advocacy*, Jake Brewer, *Huffington Post*, updated Dec 2017 [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-tragedy-of-political\\_b\\_773734](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-tragedy-of-political_b_773734)
- ❑ *The Secret of Scale*, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Fall 2013 [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the\\_secret\\_of\\_scale](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_secret_of_scale)

- ❑ Eric Lipton and Somini Sengupta, “Latest Product From Tech Firms: An Immigration Bill,” *The New York Times*, May 4, 2013.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/05/us/politics/tech-firms-take-lead-in-lobbying-on-immigration.html>
- ❑ Lapowsky, Iffie, “Inside the Democrats’ Plan to Fix Their Crumbling Data Operation”, *Wired Magazine*, April 2nd, 2019.  
<https://www.wired.com/story/democrats-fix-crumbling-data-operation/>
- ❑ Isenberg, Sasha, “How Obama’s Team Used Big Data to Rally Voters”, *MIT Technology Review*, Dec 19th, 2012  
<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/509026/how-obamas-team-used-big-data-to-rally-voters/>
- ❑ Movie: Knock Down the House, Netflix, 2019. <https://www.netflix.com/title/81080637>

Week 7 (10/7): Big Platforms, Big Problems

**Guest Speaker: Cesar Ruiz, Product Marketing Manager, Twitter**

*Cesar Ruiz is a small town born and raised first generation American and proud Cal grad (B.S 2017). He currently works at Twitter leading all product and policy launches for Civic and Information Integrity.*

*During his senior year at Cal, Cesar excitedly signed up for the hottest new class at Haas: Social Movements and Social Media. His highlights include a grassroots social media driven movement to cancel lecture on Nov 4 2016 so the class could collectively experience a live case study culminating in the climax of the ~~movement to elect the first woman president~~ MAGA movement.*

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Movie: The Social Dilemma, Netflix, 2020. <https://www.netflix.com/title/81254224>
- ❑ Twitter Thread from @Mozilla, Sep 22, 2020. <https://twitter.com/mozilla/status/1308542908291661824>
- ❑ Krontiris, Kate, John Webb, and Chris Chapman. “Understanding America’s Interested Bystander: A Complicated Relationship with Civic Duty,” Google Research, 2015.  
<http://research.google.com/pubs/pub44180.html>
- ❑ Singer, P.W., and Emerson T. Brooking, *Like War: The Weaponization of Social Media*, Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.
  - ❑ 3. The Truth is Out There
  - ❑ 4. The Empires Strike Back

**Optional Media:**

- ❑ Gordon, Eric and Baldwin-Philippi, Jessica and Balestra, Martina, Why We Engage: How Theories of Human Behavior Contribute to Our Understanding of Civic Engagement in a Digital Era, October 2013. *Berkman Center Research Publication* No. 21.  
<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2343762>
- ❑ Gibson, Cantijoch, and Galandini, *The Third Sector and Online Citizen Empowerment: the Case of mySociety*, 2014. University of Manchester.  
<https://www.mysociety.org/files/2014/12/manchester.pdf>

- ❑ Isaac, Marcus. “Facebook Overhauls News Feed to Focus on What Friends and Family Share.” *The New York Times*, 11 Jan. 2018, <https://nyti.ms/2EwOZPt>.
- ❑ “Inside Facebook’s (Totally Insane, Unintentionally Gigantic, Hyperpartisan) Political-Media Machine, *The New York Times*. August 24, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/magazine/inside-facebooks-totally-insane-unintentionally-gigantic-hyperpartisan-political-media-machine.html>
- ❑ Rosenstein, Perry “The Purpose driven Organizer,” Personal Democracy Forum, June 2016 <https://personaldemocracy.com/media/purpose-driven-organizer>

Week 8 (10/14): Election Hacking & Challenges of Online Voting

**Guest Speaker: Barbara Simons, Board Chair, Verified Voting**

*Barbara Simons has been on the Board of Advisors of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission since she was appointed by Sen. Reid in 2008. She published Broken Ballots: Will Your Vote Count?, a book on voting technology co-authored with Douglas Jones. She also co-authored the report that led to the cancellation of Department of Defense’s Internet voting project (SERVE) in 2004 because of security concerns. Simons is a former President of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), the oldest and largest international educational and scientific society for computing professionals. She is the only woman to have received the Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award from the College of Engineering of U.C. Berkeley, where she earned her Ph.D. in computer science. A fellow of ACM and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, she also received the Computing Research Association Distinguished Service Award, the ACM Outstanding Contribution Award, and the Electronic Frontier Foundation Pioneer Award. She is Board Chair of Verified Voting and is retired from IBM Research.*

**Topics**

- WikiEdu: Thinking about sources and plagiarism

**Required Media:**

- ❑ [The Great Hack](#), Netflix, 2019.
- ❑ Verified Voting ([verifiedvoting.org](http://verifiedvoting.org)) - review website and “The Verifier” tool.
- ❑ David Jefferson, “The Myth of ‘Secure’ Blockchain Voting,” Verified Voting, n.d. [Available in bCourses Files]
- ❑ Leovy, Jill. “The Computer Scientist Who Prefers Paper,” *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/12/guardian-of-the-vote/544155/>. December 2017.
- ❑ Wofford, Ben. “How to Hack an Election in 7 Minutes.” *POLITICO Magazine*. August 5, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/08/2016-elections-russia-hack-how-to-hack-an-election-in-seven-minutes-214144>
- ❑ Sanger, David E. and Catie Edmondson, “Russia Targeted Election Systems in All 50 States, Report Finds,” *The New York Times*, July 25, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/25/us/politics/russian-hacking-elections.html>
- ❑ Singer, P.W., and Emerson T. Brooking, *Like War: The Weaponization of Social Media*, Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.
  - ❑ 5. The Unreality Machine

❑ 6. Win the Net, Win the Day

**Optional Media:**

- ❑ Jefferson, David, Duncan Buell, Kevin Skoglund, Joe Kiriya, and Joshua Greenbaum, “What We Don’t Know About the Voatz ‘Blockchain’ Internet Voting System,” May 1, 2019. [Available in bCourses Files]
- ❑ Springall, Drew, Travis Finkenauer, Zakir Durumeric, Jason Kitcat, Harri Hursti, Margaret MacAlpine, and J. Alex Halderman. “Security Analysis of the Estonian Internet Voting System.” In *Proceedings of the 2014 ACM SIGSAC Conference on Computer and Communications Security, 703–15. CCS ’14*. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2014. doi:10.1145/2660267.2660315.  
<http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=2660267.2660315>

Week 9 (10/21): Conservatives & Digital Activism

**Guest Speaker: Andy Barkett**, VP of Engineering at REX Real Estate Exchange, has more than 15 years of experience in engineering and technology in a variety of fields, including databases, search, semiconductors, robotics, consumer electronics, and gaming. Andy worked on site reliability and search quality at Google, and managed Production Engineering for all major product groups at Facebook, including newsfeed, search, messaging, ads, mobile, and payments. His infrastructure engineering groups at Facebook tackled reliability, scalability, performance and automation for hundreds of services on many thousands of servers. Andy is also an expert in AI and its applications to marketing. At Rex, he oversees development and implementation of cutting edge AI and big data technologies for real estate.

Before working at Rex, Andy also served as the first-ever Chief Technology Officer for the Republican National Committee. In this capacity he led the strategic planning for data and technology across the Republican eco-system, working with counterparts in other committees, campaigns, and interest groups. He helped lead the Republicans to victory in the 2013-2014 election cycle before contributing his expertise to Jeb Bush's 2016 presidential campaign.

- Starting from the ground up in Tunisia
- Iceland’s attempt at a new constitution

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Brown, Hayes. “4 Ways Tunisia Is Now More Progressive Than The United States,” *ThinkProgress/Medium*, January 27, 2014.  
<https://thinkprogress.org/4-ways-tunisia-is-now-more-progressive-than-the-united-states-9879ae93d105>
- ❑ Landemore, Hélène, “Five Lessons from Iceland’s Failed Crowdsourced Constitution Experiment.” July 31, 2014.

[http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future\\_tense/2014/07/five\\_lessons\\_from\\_iceland\\_s\\_failed\\_crowdsourced\\_constitution\\_experiment.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2014/07/five_lessons_from_iceland_s_failed_crowdsourced_constitution_experiment.html)

- ❑ Gordon, Eric, and Gabriel Mugar. "Civic Media Practice: Identification and Evaluation of Media and Technology That Facilitates Democratic Process." No. 1., 2018.  
<https://elab.emerson.edu/projects/civic-media-practice>.
- ❑ Escobar, Oliver, and Elstub, Stephen. "A Typology of Democratic Innovations." Accessed October 24, 2017.  
<https://www.psa.ac.uk/conference/2017-conference/participatory-and-deliberative-democracy-digital-democratic-innovation>.
- ❑ "In Mexico, Collaborating on a Civic Engagement App." *Civicist*, Civic Hall. September 15, 2015.  
<https://civichall.org/civicist/in-mexico-collaborating-on-a-civic-engagement-app/>.
- ❑ Bier, Jess. "The Tech Bias: Why Silicon Valley Needs Social Theory," Aeon. February 14, 2018.  
<https://aeon.co/ideas/the-tech-bias-why-silicon-valley-needs-social-theory>.
- ❑ Bessoudo, Mark. "Plato for Plumbers: Philosophy and Engineering." *The Possible*, September 1, 2017.  
<https://www.the-possible.com/ethics-behind-engineering/>.
- ❑ Singer, P.W., and Emerson T. Brooking, *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media*, Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.
  - ❑ 7. LikeWar

Week 10 (10/28): Polarization, Misinformation, Microtargeting

**Guest Speaker (first half of class): Alex Leavitt, Facebook Research**

*I'm a computational social scientist at Facebook Research. I received my PhD from the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California, where I studied collaborative news aggregation practices in large online communities. At Facebook, I conduct research for the Civic Integrity research & product team, where I study the impact of social ties and algorithms on people's exposure to and engagement with politics, news, polarization, misinformation, violence, and trust. I use a range of mixed methods from survey experiments, machine learning, and social network analysis to traditional ethnographic interviews and observation. My research is published at venues such as the ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, the ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, and Social Media + Society. Previously, I was a researcher at Sony PlayStation, Disney Interactive, Microsoft Research New England and MIT.*

**Guest Speaker (second half of class): Aubrie Johnson** is the social media associate at Wikimedia Foundation, working with the Communications team on driving conversations around the "[last best place on the internet](#)," Wikipedia.

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Barbera, Pablo, "Social Media, Echo Chambers, and Political Polarization," Forthcoming in Persily, N. and Tucker J. (eds), *Social Media and Democracy: The State of the Field*, Cambridge University Press, 2020.  
<http://pablobarbera.com/static/echo-chambers.pdf>

- ❑ Klein, Ezra, *Why we're Polarized* (excerpt), 2020.  
<https://www.vox.com/2020/1/28/21077888/why-were-polarized-media-book-ezra-news>
- ❑ Smith, Jeff, Grace Jackson, Alex Leavitt, "Designing New Ways to Give Context to News Stories," Medium, April 3, 2018.  
<https://medium.com/facebook-design/designing-new-ways-to-give-context-to-news-stories-f6c13604f450>

### Optional Media:

- ❑ Moran Yarchi, Christian Baden & Neta Kligler-Vilenchik (2020) Political Polarization on the Digital Sphere: A Cross-platform, Over-time Analysis of Interactional, Positional, and Affective Polarization on Social Media, Political Communication, DOI: 10.1080/10584609.2020.1785067  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10584609.2020.1785067?journalCode=upcp20&#.Xw6oF5Ll6ZI.twitter>

Week 11 (11/4): Election Debrief, Corporate Social Innovation

*Guest Speaker: Adrian Schurr is the Regional Giving Lead for Google.org, which supports local nonprofit organizations innovating to provide greater access to opportunity for low-income and underserved communities. Prior to joining Google.Org, Adrian served as a program manager for Google Fiber supporting community engagement. Adrian received a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communication and Chicano Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. A Bay Area native, he currently lives in the East Bay.*

- Does GOTV work?
- Who voted and why in the 2016 US Election

### Required Media:

- ❑ Singer, P.W., and Emerson T. Brooking, *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media*, Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.
  - ❑ 8. Masters of the Universe
  - ❑ 9. Conclusion
- ❑ Rigoglioso, Marguerite "Research-Backed Ways to Get Out the Vote." *Stanford Graduate School of Business*. April 17, 2012.  
<https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/research-backed-ways-get-out-vote>
- ❑ Imai, Kosuke. "Do Get-Out-the-Vote Calls Reduce Turnout? The Importance of Statistical Methods for Field Experiments." *American Political Science Review*, no. 02 (May 2005): 283–300.  
doi:10.1017/S0003055405051658. **(Read abstract and skim article for key arguments)**  
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?jsessionid=A4E2E35C14998C83E7FCF02E883B72A6.journals?fromPage=online&aid=307717>
- ❑ Pereira Santos, João & Tavares, José & Vicente, Pedro C, 2019. "Can ATMs Get Out the Vote? Evidence from a Nationwide Field Experiment," CEPR Discussion Papers 13991, C.E.P.R. Discussion Papers. **(Read abstract and skim article for key arguments)** <https://ideas.repec.org/p/cpr/ceprdp/13991.html>

- ❑ Sunstein, Cass R. “Guest Post: Is Social Media Good or Bad for Democracy?” *Facebook Newsroom*, January 22, 2018. <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/01/sunstein-democracy/>.

**Optional Media:**

- ❑ Cohen, David. “The ‘I Voted’ Sticker Was Added to Instagram, Along With ‘We Voted!’ Stories,” *AdWeek*, November 1, 2018. <https://www.adweek.com/digital/the-i-voted-sticker-was-added-to-instagram-along-with-we-voted-stories/>
- ❑ Summers, Mike. “Online Voting Isn’t as Flawed as You Think—Just Ask Estonia.” *IEEE Spectrum: Technology, Engineering, and Science News*, October 26, 2016. <https://spectrum.ieee.org/telecom/internet/online-voting-isnt-as-flawed-as-you-thinkjust-ask-estonia>.
- ❑ Frye, Timothy, Ora John Reuter, and David Szakonyi. “Hitting Them With Carrots: Voter Intimidation and Vote Buying in Russia.” *British Journal of Political Science*, February 2018, 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123416000752>.
- ❑ Germann, Micha, and Uwe Serdült. “Internet Voting and Turnout: Evidence from Switzerland.” *Electoral Studies* 47 (June 1, 2017): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2017.03.001>.
- ❑ Goodman, Nicole J. “Internet Voting in a Local Election in Canada.” In *The Internet and Democracy in Global Perspective*, 7–24. *Studies in Public Choice*. Springer, Cham, 2014. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-04352-4\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-04352-4_2).
- ❑ “Brigade Launches First of Its Kind Social Ballot Guide for U.S. Voters.” *Brigade*, October 11, 2016. <https://brigade.news/brigade-launches-first-of-its-kind-social-ballot-guide-for-u-s-voters-21a69c7f6a75>.
- ❑ Carr, Nicholas. “How Social Media Is Ruining Politics.” *POLITICO Magazine*. September 2, 2015. <http://politi.co/1JLtKs8>
- ❑ Harrell, Eben, “Blindsided by Trump’s Victory? Behavioral Science Explains.” *Harvard Business Review*. November 9, 2016. <https://hbr.org/2016/11/blindsided-by-trumps-victory-behavioral-science-explains>
- ❑ Ilves, Toomas Hendrik. “Guest Post: Is Social Media Good or Bad For Democracy?” *Facebook Newsroom*, January 25, 2018. <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/01/ilves-democracy/>.
- ❑ Vromen, Ariadne. “Guest Post: Is Social Media Good or Bad for Democracy?” *Facebook Newsroom*, January 25, 2018. <https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/01/vromen-democracy/>.

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Lerner, Josh. “Participatory Budgeting: Building Community Agreement around Tough Budget Decisions.” *National Civic Review* 100, no. 2 (June 1, 2011): 30–35. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ncr.20059/abstract>
- ❑ Wampler, Brian, and Mike Touchton. “Brazil Let Its Citizens Make Decisions about City Budgets. Here’s What Happened.” *The Washington Post*, January 22, 2014. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/01/22/brazil-let-its-citizens-make-decisions-about-city-budgets-heres-what-happened/>.
- ❑ “Cryptocurrencies,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, HBO, March 11, 2018. <https://youtu.be/g6iDZspbRMg>



Week 12 (11/11): No Class - Academic & Administrative Holiday

Week 13 (11/18): Data & Democracy

**Guest Speaker: Bart Myers, CEO Countable**

*Bart Myers is the CEO of Countable – a civic tech company with the core mission to lower barriers to political and civic engagement. We provide a platform which empowers non-profit organizations, political campaigns, corporations, media companies, and celebrities to engage deeply with their audiences to drive action. Prior to Countable, Bart founded and sold SideReel to TIVO, was a developer with IBM, and has a liberal arts degree from Evergreen.*

- Building startups in the civic tech space
- Countable case study
- Election cycles vs traditional companies
- Opportunities in the eco-system

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Stephanopoulos, Nicholas. “A Feasible Roadmap to Compulsory Voting.” The Atlantic, November 2, 2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/11/a-feasible-roadmap-to-compulsory-voting/413422/>.
- ❑ Meneses, M.E., Nonnecke, B., Martin del Campo, A., Krishnan, S., Patel, J., Kim, M., Crittenden, C., & Goldberg, K. (2017). [Overcoming Citizen Mistrust and Enhancing Democratic Practices: Results from the E-participation Platform México Participa](#). Information Technologies & International Development, 13, 138-154.
- ❑ Nonnecke, B. (Sept. 2017). [Artificial intelligence can make our societies more equal. Here’s how](#). World Economic Forum
- ❑ Mokalla, Mateen, Taige Jensen, J. Alex Halderman. “I Hacked an Election. So Can the Russians,” *The New York Times*. April 5, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000005790489/i-hacked-an-election-so-can-the-russians.html>.
- ❑ Whitaker, Bill, “When Russian Hackers Targeted the U.S. Election Infrastructure.” *60 Minutes* (CBS) April 8, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/when-russian-hackers-targeted-the-u-s-election-infrastructure/>.
- ❑ “Voting Machines,” Last Week Tonight, YouTube. [https://youtu.be/svEuG\\_ekNT0](https://youtu.be/svEuG_ekNT0)

**Optional Media:**

- ❑ Epstein, D. & Nonnecke, B. (2016). Multistakeholderism in Praxis: [The Case of the Regional and National Internet Governance Forum \(IGF\) Initiatives](#). Policy & Internet, 8(2), 148-173.

Week 14 (11/25): No Class - Instructional Holiday (Thanksgiving)

Week 15 (12/2): Truth Decay

- Compulsory Voting
- Ownership of Technology - what's at stake?
- Reflection & synthesis

**Required Media:**

- ❑ Kavanagh, Jennifer, and Michael D. Rich. "Truth Decay." RAND Corporation, 2018. Chapters 1 & 2.  
[https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2314.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2314.html).
- ❑ Kavanagh, Jennifer, and Michael D. Rich. "Putting America's Civic Infrastructure on the Biden-Harris Agenda," RAND Corporation, November 19, 2020.  
<https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/11/putting-americas-civic-infrastructure-on-the-biden.html>
- ❑ Nichols, John, "Buttigieg Got the 'Priorities' Question Right: Start by Fixing Our Democracy," *The Nation*, June 28, 2019.  
<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/buttigieg-got-the-priorities-question-right-start-by-fixing-our-democracy/>
- ❑ Shear, Michael D., and Maggie Haberman. "Trump Claims, With No Evidence, That 'Millions of People' Voted Illegally." *The New York Times*, November 27, 2016.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/27/us/politics/trump-adviser-steps-up-searing-attack-on-romney.html>

**Optional Media:**

- ❑ Blow, Charles M. "No, Trump, We Can't Just Get Along." *The New York Times*, November 23, 2016.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/23/opinion/no-trump-we-cant-just-get-along.html>
- ❑ Wood, Elizabeth Holli. "An Open Letter to My Boss, IBM CEO Ginni Rometty." *NewCo Shift*, November 22, 2016.  
<https://shift.newco.co/an-open-letter-to-my-boss-ibm-ceo-ginni-rometty-cf40c3ed5ddb>
- ❑ Sydell, Laura. "We Tracked Down A Fake-News Creator In The Suburbs. Here's What We Learned." *NPR.org*. November 23, 2016.  
<http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/11/23/503146770/npr-finds-the-head-of-a-covert-fake-news-operation-in-the-suburbs>
- ❑ Appelbaum, Daniel Lombroso and Yoni. "'Hail Trump!': White Nationalists Salute the President Elect." *The Atlantic*, November 21, 2016.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/11/richard-spencer-speech-npi/508379/>

## **Additional Course Information & Policies**

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Please see me as soon as possible if you need particular accommodations, and we will work out the necessary arrangements.

### **Scheduling Conflicts:**

Please notify me in writing by the second week of the term about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts (such as religious observances, graduate or medical school interviews, or team activities). I will try my best to help you with making accommodations, but cannot promise them in all cases. In the event there is no mutually-workable solution, you may be dropped from the class.

### **Collaboration and Independence:**

Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do together with one's fellow students. We recommend this. However, homework assignments should be completed independently and materials turned in as homework should be the result of one's own independent work. Some assignments, namely the preparation for class presentations and work with community partner organizations, are meant to be done together in a group.

### **Cheating:**

Anyone caught cheating will receive a failing grade and will also be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct.

### **Plagiarism/Self-plagiarism:**

You must be original in composing the writing assignments in this class. To copy text or ideas from another source (including your own previously, or concurrently, submitted course work) without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see, for example:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism>

<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html>

### **Academic Integrity and Ethics:**

Cheating on exams and plagiarism are examples of violations in the realm of ethics and integrity. Honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior are of great importance in all facets of life. They are so important that it is generally assumed that one has learned and internalized these qualities at an early age. As a result, these issues rarely get explicitly addressed by the time one gets to be a university student. However, it cannot be overstated just how important honesty is to the academic enterprise.

This is particularly relevant to this course, as students will be contributing work to online communities such as Wikipedia, their own blogs, and possibly to collaborative class publications. Plagiarism in these communities places students and their collaborators at risk.

### **Turnitin:**

UC Berkeley's honor code states "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." As a tool to promote academic integrity in this course, written work submitted via bCourses may be checked for originality using Turnitin. Turnitin compares student work to a database of books, journal articles, websites, and other student papers. This creates an opportunity for students to improve their academic writing skills, by ensuring that other sources have been properly cited and attributed. For more information about Turnitin at UC Berkeley, visit <http://ets.berkeley.edu/academic-integrity>.

**Late Assignments**

10% of the total point value of the assignment, or roughly a full letter grade, will be deducted for every day late that an assignment is turned in.