Thanks to Yale, the 2015 FemTechNet Summer Workshop and the Simpson Center for the Humanities at the University of Washington for making this collaboration possible. Thanks to all the DOCC instructors before me that have helped shape this syllabus and DOCC node. I would especially thank Dr. Sharon Irish from UIUC for sharing her wisdom and lessons learned which I borrowed to include in this syllabus. Sharon your scholarship, friendship, and wisdom are greatly appreciated. Additionally, I would like to thank the [Selfie Research Network](https://selfiern.com) for their contributions to the Selfie Course and to this class.

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Collaborations in Feminism and Technology

A FemTechNet 2015 DOCC Nodal Course

Fall 2015 COLLABORATIONS IN FEMINISM AND TECHNOLOGY
University of Washington
GWSS 390  | 5 credits hours | 15397; no pre-requisites
Monday and Wednesday, 10:30am-12:20pm PST
Location: MEB 103
Instructor: Ivette Bayo Urban, ibayoATuwDOTedu
Office hours by appointment: Wednesday 9-10:00 am PST
**Course Description:**

*Collaborations in Feminism and Technology* is a cross-disciplinary course that is part of an international network of institutions and scholars called FemTechNet (FTN). femtechnet.org The FemTechNet distributed open collaborative course (DOCC) is part of a consortium of networked feminist scholars and cultural producers teaching related topics in theory and practice at the intersections of feminism and technology. Our specific DOCC nodal course will explore intersectionality/socially defined identities as frameworks and how they intersect with economies, infrastructures, movements and power.

The course is designed to provide an overview of contemporary theorizing about gender, race/ethnicity, technology, and power. We will consider the implications, possibilities, and limitations of digital tools as platforms and methods for grassroots organizing and coalitional politics and will problematize issues of community building, access, identity, and representation. Further, we will look at the multiple ways that individuals and groups use new media to represent gender, racial, ethnic and/or sexual identities. And finally, we will explore how digital mapping and archiving can contribute to the building of an online feminist scholarly community.

This course is the practice of collaborations in feminism. The first iteration of the DOCCs took place in 2013, and in the first year alone there were 27 instructors, 18 nodal sites (16 institutions + 2 community groups), 12 fields/departments, and over 200 students. This Autumn 2015 course at the University of Washington one of 14 nodal sites, will explore scholarly dialogue surrounding current themes of feminism and technology from multiple perspectives and disciplines. In this course we will use technology as a tool to facilitate collaboration and peer-to-peer sharing within and across the network, while privileging local issues and face-to-face connections.

Through readings, discussions, and self-reflections, students will review the history and practice surrounding our embodied relationships with technology in theory and practice. Students will add to a growing archive of materials relating to feminist technologies. The course is built around 5 interconnected concepts with relation to technology: Privacy, Security, Self-representation, Identities, and Archives. We will pull from video dialogues with preeminent thinkers and artists who consider technology through a feminist lens. One of the course’s basic pedagogic instruments is the use of Boundary Objects that Learn, a concept indebted to the work of former University of Illinois faculty member S. Leigh Star, and further developed by Anne Balsamo. Through reading, discussion, writing, and making, we will add to a growing and global database of materials that “learn” through implementation, reflection, revision, and/or deletion.

**Objectives**

- Students will think critically about the implications of different forms of digital consumption, creation and data acquisition in everyday contexts.
- Develop an understanding of information beneficiaries.
- Shift in the way students think about and respond to emerging issues of online information.
- Build capacities to think critically about identities, representation and policies, with particular attention to race, class, gender and abilities.

**Goals**

During our time together we will focus on collaboration and creating a learning community that possesses diverse distributed expertise, within the classroom as well as across our networks. The goals for this class are for students to actively, through all class requirements:

- gain information about the intersections of feminism and technology (close reading, listening, and
comprehension)
• apply current framework to our understanding of technology (analytical skills)
• critically examine how intersectionality / socially defined identities affect the experiences of technology adoption, innovation and uses (critical thinking skills)
• become familiar with the power and limits of feminists’ theoretical and activist work
• create and participate in a community of critical learners (collaboration skills)

FemTechNet’s (Fem)Manifesto as our Guiding Principles:
FemTechNet is “an activated network of scholars, artists and students who work on, with, and at the borders of technology, science and feminism in a variety of fields including STS, Media and Visual Studies, Art, Women’s, Queer and Ethnic Studies.”
I am part of the FTN collective and invite you to become familiar with the (Fem)Manifesto as our shared guiding principles which serve as a starting place for our learning together.

Our shared understanding is that:
• Learning is bidirectional—students and community members are learners and teachers.
• We are working together to develop critical consciousness, democratic citizenship, and social justice.
• We are building capacities to think critically about identities, representations, policies and systems, with particular attention to race, class, gender, and other socially devalued identities.

Specific Skills Outcomes:
• Critical and contextual reading skills
• Information Literacy and research skills
• Synchronous & Asynchronous communication skills
• Cross Cultural Approaches to Information
• Develop and build skills presenting and responding in and among diverse audiences.

Course Delivery Method:
Classes meet face to face, Monday and Wednesday, 10:30-12:20 pm,
Office Hours are by appointment and will be held Wednesdays from 9:00-10:00am.
Drop in office hours Fridays from 10:30 – 12:20 pm.

There is NO expectation that you use social media platforms, but if you are interested: Twitter: #femtechnet #DOCC15 #UWGWSS390;
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/FemTechNet/

Assignments and grading
Every student is responsible for completing the required reading for each class period and coming to class prepared to discuss them. Additionally, you will be responsible to discuss and bring into dialogue your selected readings. Your discussion (summary) should help identify and facilitate a discussion around the core themes of a given reading and how it relates to other things (which will include readings for this course and other readings/experienced you bring. The recommended readings are a way to maximize the collective knowledge of the class, and at times it may be helpful for you make a handout (or other visual, diagram, overview) to distribute about the core themes of the readings.

Table of Assignments & Grading
At the end of the course, students will have completed the following products:
**Working Groups**

FemTechNet runs by committees. Our class will echo the committee structure and run our DOCC. By the end of class on October 5, you will sign up for one of the working groups. 

The working groups are:

- **Pedagogy**: this group will identify content for reading (especially in the required books), watching, discussing, or creating media, and help guide that process in relation to Boundary Objects that Learn.

- **Technology Praxis**: this group will use, pay attention to, and document the pluses and minuses of, the various digital methods we use in and across the DOCC, paying attention to privacy and safety.

- **Operations**: this group will keep us on track, via announcements, calendar posts, check-ins, and online discussion.

Parts of the contract will dovetail with responsibilities of these groups, such as contributing to knowledge about EdCast, taking leadership roles in the class, and/or moving toward your personal goals.

**Course Schedule**

Readings for each session should be read prior to class meeting.

**Schedule of activities, readings and conversations***

*Actual content is subject to change. This is a living document. The readings and topics will be reflective of the particular interests of our class.

**Week 0**

**9/30 0.1 Read prior to our first class meeting on Oct 5th:**

FemTechNet's Manifesto

9/30 0.1 Assignment / Introduction - Due 10/2 at 5pm
Post on the discussion board

Introduce yourselves via canvas.
1. Tell us your name and, if you have a nickname, let us know what you like to go by as well as your preferred gender pronoun.
2. Tell us what your major is, or what areas of study you are interested in pursuing.
3. If you feel comfortable, tell us a little about where you are from and any hobbies that you enjoy.
4. Tell us what you hope to get out of this class and how you hope it will help you in your future college courses.
5. Tell us about one technology option or choice to use (or not) an information and communication (ICT) device or platform and how does your use (or non-uses) help shape your identities.

Week 1

Date Week.Day

10/5 1.1 Theme: Privacy / Security

Read: Who Has Your Back? 2015: Protecting Your Data From Government Requests

Optional:
Nine facts about computer security that experts wish you knew.
https://www.eff.org/https-everywhere/deploying-https
http://motherboard.vice.com/read/the-eff-wants-to-help-you-avoid-pesky-online-advertisers
How to deploy https correctly: https://www.eff.org/https-everywhere/deploying-https

Extra Credit
Access to information as a human rights conference is on Oct 5th. If you attend any part of the conference (workshops or keynote) you can receive extra credit. http://humanrights.washington.edu/access-to-information-as-a-human-right/

10/5 1.1 Assignment / Praxis Due 10/9th at 5pm:
During this week, explore these 3 technologies as they relate to our sense of privacy and security when navigating the web and with meta-data. Post a reflection on the canvas site.

https://www.eff.org/privacybadger
https://disconnect.me/
https://immersion.media.mit.edu/

Write a response/reaction/reflection to this key word video. 500-600 words.
10/7  1.2 Theme: Privacy / Security


Optional:
http://teachingprivacy.org/

Week 2

10/12  2.1 Theme: Identity and Interpellation


10/12  2.1 Assignment / Praxis:


2.1.a Selfie 1 IMAGE PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT Due 10/16 at 5pm

Locate three (3) photos of yourself on your phone, computer or posted to social networks you think are flattering. Locate three photos of yourself that you find to be unflattering, funny or embarrassing in some way.

Label your six photos A-F, and then write a photo essay in which you explain which pictures would be the best and worst to use for the purposes below. In your explanations, be as specific as you can (e.g. don’t say “this photo looks professional,” explain how and why you came to that conclusion, based on signifiers like clothing, background details, and so forth.)

- Facebook profile page
- Company profile for someone who works in a bank
- Dating site profile page
- History book showing what everyday life was like in 2014 in your country

If you are following the class online, post the photo essay to the Flickr discussion group.

2.1.b Discussion questions:

Go back to your photo essay and take a look again at the photo you chose as best and worst for the category, “History book showing what everyday life was like in 2014." If you are submitting material online
(through a class site or in a Flickr group) take a look at the photo others have posted for this category. Now we are going to engage in a thought experiment: Pretend you are an archeologist from, say 5000 years from now, and these photos are the only existing records of human culture from 2014. What would you know about culture, based solely on these photos? What important information about our culture would be missing?

2.1.c  Case studies to think through theories:
1. Look over some examples from the "What I really do" meme at http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/what-people-think-i-do-what-i-really-do and be ready to discuss with regard to theories from Mead and Goffman on the “I and the me” and the self as performative.
2. Investigate the photos posted with the title, “Which Picture Would they Use?” at http://iftheygunnedmedown.tumblr.com/ Be ready to discuss with regard to Althusser on interpellation.
3. Read about the "Don't Shoot" Selfie taken at Howard University http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/style-blog/wp/2014/08/14/the-story-behind-the-viral-dontshoot-photo-at-howard-university/Be ready to discuss with regard to theories from Goffman on the self as performative and Althusser on interpellation

10/14 2.2  Theme: Identity and Interpellation

Week 3

10/19 3.1 Theme: Archive

10/21 3.2 Theme: Archive
TBD

Week 4

10/26 4.1 Theme: Dataveillance, Biometrics & Facial Recognition


4.1 Assignment / Praxis:
4.1.a Selfie (option 2a) IMAGE PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT Due 10/30 at 5pm
Plan and photograph one or more of the following selfies, and post it to the Flickr group with an explanatory text.
1. Find one of the categories of biometric analysis (gender, age, weight, race, etc.) and shoot a photo that you think might "fool" a non-human audience member into interpreting you as different from the way you typically present.
2. Photograph yourself in a way in which facial recognition software or similar techniques would not be able to identify as you, but that still expresses something meaningful about you.
3. Locate all of the cameras in your home, campus, workplace, neighborhood, or community and shoot a series of "sousvies" in which you shoot an image of yourself with a surveilling device — overhead camera in checkout line, camera in ATM machine, etc. — in the frame. How might the gaze of the device see you differently? Could you stage a "survie" that shows how cameras see you when you aren’t conscious of the fact that they are taking your picture? (Tip: Do not do this activity in places where photographing these technologies may be forbidden, such as airports or banks.)
4. Create a series of selfies over time that seems to document a process that could also be represented quantitatively. This can be difficult to do in a week, but might be an assignment to think about over time.

4.1.b Discussion Questions:
Think of some cases when people are forced to be photographed or to share photographs of themselves (police mug shots, immigration applications). What data could be extracted from the image? What data is captured by the camera on the digital file? How can we know where that digital file has traveled? How do biometrics gather information from facial proportions? Are there recognizable brand-names in the image?

4.1.c EXTENSION Assignment – DATA VISUALIZATION Due 10/30 at 5pm
Make a data visualization using a set of related selfies (being mindful of people’s privacy) and then curate both the individual selfies in the set and the patterns that you see in aggregate. For example, you might want to curate “images with beards” or “images with eyeglasses” or “images with drink cups” or “images with readable commercial logos” just to get started, and then come up with more subtle categorization patterns. How can you create patterns that resist the patterns sought by the interests of corporations and the state?

10/28 4.2 Theme: Dataveillance, Blometrics & Facial Recognition

Week 5

11/2 5.1 Theme: Space, Place & “Appropriateness” Debates


5.1.a Case studies to think through theories:

5.1 Assignment / Praxis:
5.1.a Selfie (option 2b) IMAGE PRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT Due 11/6 at 5pm:
Take a series of photos of yourself in a ‘faked’ environment, similar what you read about in the story of the
Dutch traveler, above. Use the photos to speak about Lefebvre’s notions of place as simultaneously
cconceived of by experts, lived in by everyday people, and perceived of by everyday people.

• Take a photo of yourself in a place that is unfamiliar to you or that is a contrast to your usual or
preferred surroundings. Does the photo still feel like “you”? How, or how not? How would you feel about it
circulating through what boyd calls super publics? Can you imagine a scenario where it might make you
uneasy to have such a photo viewed?

5.1.b Discussion Questions:

• Although they recently lifted their ban on exposed nipples in breastfeeding photos, Facebook
continues to ban photos of nipples in general. Using this example, discuss how “space” exists online
through the following frames: conditions under which a photo is taken; ways in which the photo is
described for viewers; Terms of Service contracts on providers where photos are displayed; laws
governing obscene material in various countries where photos are stored, posted, viewed, and forwarded,
and anything else you might think of.

• As the referenced story regarding President Obama’s “Mandela funeral selfie” and the “infamous
Holocaust selfie” demonstrate, there are plenty of times when a photo appears to be inappropriate for the
time and place, but with further context, seems acceptable, or at least understandable. With this in mind,
do you agree with the outrage expressed at the story about the selfies taken at the Kara Walker exhibit,
linked above? Why or why not?

11/4 5.2 Theme: Space, Place & “Appropriateness” Debates

http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2006/03/22/super_publics.html

Guest Speaker: Michelle Zeiser - Appropriateness in Practice: Voice from the field.

Week 6

11/9 6.1 Theme: Video Editing

Video Workshop / Skill Share

11/11 6.2 Theme: Theme: veteran’s day - No class

Week 7

11/16 7.1 Theme: Violence

women (pp. 1–45). Madras, India: Centre For Development And Women’s Studies.

http://archives.mtexpress.com/2001/01-01-10/01-01-10dorworth.htm


11/18 7.2 Theme: veteran’s day - No class

from https://www.hastac.org/blogs/lizlosh/2015/08/21/new-center-solutions-online-violence-
action-plan


Week 8

11/23  8.1 Theme: Users – work on final key word project


11/25  8.2 Theme: Users - work on final key word project

Selected Chapter. Chapter 3 Non-User Also Matter (p67-79)

Week 9

11/30  9.1 Theme: Innovation


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCzQNTL4-Rs

11/30  9.1 Assignment / Praxis - Due 12/4 at 5pm:
http://femtechnet.org/docc/feminist-mapping/situated-knowledge-map/

12/2  9.2 Theme: Bringing it all together

Week 10

12/7  10.1 Overflow / Final Presentations

12/9  10.2 Final Presentations

General Policies and Procedures

Grading

All assignments will be submitted via Canvas, and your grades will be visible via Canvas as well. See the Assignment List for a complete list of graded assignments, and the relative weights used when calculating your final grade. If you think your grade on an assignment was incorrect or unfair, you may request a re-grade, but the entire assignment will be re-graded, and the revised grade might be higher, lower, or the same. There is no guarantee of a grade increase in the case of a re-grade. Use re-grading judiciously,
because re-graded assignments quite often result in a lower grade.

Canvas tracks all grades on a percentage scale, but the UW requires grades to be reported on a 4.0 scale. At the end of the quarter, your final percentage score will be translated to a 4.0 score based on the iSchool’s standard conversion chart.

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Late Work
We recognize that unexpected things sometimes happen in life. If there is a situation that arises and you cannot complete an assignment you must inform your TA/Instructor at least 24 hours before it is due. When possible, we will attempt to grant an extension. Any late assignment not cleared will be reduced by 10% per 24-hour period the assignment remains late. After 4 days, the assignment will become a 0. If an emergency arises, contact the instructor as soon as you are able to, and explain the situation.

Evaluation of Student Work
You may expect to receive comments on and evaluations of assignments and submitted work in a timely fashion. In most circumstances, you should expect work to be returned to you, with comments, within one week of submission. All work from the course will be returned, with comments, within one week of the last class of the quarter. Late assignments generally do not receive comments.

Students with Disabilities
To request academic accommodations due to a disability, contact Disabled Student Services: 448 Schmitz, 206-543-8924 (V/TTY). If you have a letter from DSS indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need in the class. Academic accommodations due to disability will not be made unless the student has a letter from DSS specifying the type and nature of accommodations needed.

The following paragraphs discussing matters governing academic conduct in the iSchool and the University of Washington:

Academic Integrity
The essence of academic life revolves around respect not only for the ideas of others, but also their rights to those ideas and their promulgation. It is therefore essential that all of us engaged in the life of the mind take the utmost care that the ideas and expressions of ideas of other people always be appropriately handled, and, where necessary, cited. For writing assignments, when ideas or materials of others are used, they must be cited. The format is not that important—as long as the source material can be located and the citation verified, it’s OK. What is important is that the material be cited. In any situation, if you
have a question, please feel free to ask. Such attention to ideas and acknowledgment of their sources is central not only to academic life, but life in general. Please acquaint yourself with the University of Washington's resources on academic honesty.

Copyright
All of the expressions of ideas in this class that are fixed in any tangible medium such as digital and physical documents are protected by copyright law as embodied in title 17 of the United States Code. These expressions include the work product of both: (1) your student colleagues (e.g., any assignments published here in the course environment or statements committed to text in a discussion forum); and, (2) your instructors (e.g., the syllabus, assignments, reading lists, and lectures). Within the constraints of "fair use", you may copy these copyrighted expressions for your personal intellectual use in support of your education here in the iSchool. Such fair use by you does not include further distribution by any means of copying, performance or presentation beyond the circle of your close acquaintances, student colleagues in this class and your family. If you have any questions regarding whether a use to which you wish to put one of these expressions violates the creator's copyright interests, please feel free to ask the instructor for guidance.

Privacy
To support an academic environment of rigorous discussion and open expression of personal thoughts and feelings, we, as members of the academic community, must be committed to the inviolate right of privacy of our student and instructor colleagues. As a result, we must forego sharing personally identifiable information about any member of our community including information about the ideas they express, their families, life styles and their political and social affiliations. If you have any questions regarding whether a disclosure you wish to make regarding anyone in this course or in the iSchool community violates that person's privacy interests, please feel free to ask the instructor for guidance. Knowing violations of these principles of academic conduct, privacy or copyright may result in University disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

Student Code of Conduct
Good student conduct is important for maintaining a healthy course environment. Please familiarize yourself with the University of Washington's Student Code of Conduct at: http://www.washington.edu/students/hand-book/conduct.html.