

SI529 eCommunities

Winter 2012 Course Syllabus

Prof. Cliff Lampe

Overview

This course is intended to help students to analyze online interaction environments with an eye toward design. For the purpose of this course, a community is defined as a group of people who sustain interaction over time. The group may be held together by a common identity, a collective purpose, or merely by the individual utility gained from the interactions. An online interaction environment is an electronic forum, accessed through computers or other electronic devices, in which community members can conduct some or all of their interactions. We will use the term eCommunity as shorthand, both for communities that conduct all of their interactions online and for communities that use on-line interaction to supplement face-to-face interactions.

The course prepares students for roles as online community designers and managers. The first half of the course examines different types of online communities. In parallel, it introduces the Community of Practice analytic framework. While not all online communities are communities of practice, that framework provides a set of concepts and vocabulary that are very useful for understanding and describing the interactions that happen in online communities and the changes that happen over time, to the individual participants and the community as a whole.

The second half of the course connects social science theories with the goals of online community managers and with the alternative social and technical design alternatives available to them. The central construct is the design claim: Alternative X will help/hinder the achievement of goal Y, in contexts Z. Students will draw on these claims to make design suggestions for a new or existing online community.

Logistics

Meets Wednesdays 5:00pm -8:00pm in Room 1255 North Quad

Professor Cliff Lampe

Office Hours: Thursday 11-12 in Room 4388 North Quad

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, a student should be able to: 2

- Describe an online community using the concepts and vocabulary of Communities of Practice;
- Make principled design and management choices for online communities.

Pre-requisites

There are no formal pre-requisites.

This course assumes some familiarity with technologies and the ability to explore them on your own. This course will spend very little time explicitly teaching about technology, but will frequently assume it as background.

Texts

We'll be reading excerpts from a large number of books and articles. Links to electronic copies are provided through cTools.

The book you may want to buy is the Resnick and Kraut book on online communities. It won't be released until later in the semester, so details are forthcoming.

Additionally, there's a midterm book review on one of a number of popular press books about online communities. That list of eligible books is below in the assignment details.

Class Activities

Each week there will be assigned readings. Occasionally, there will also be optional readings. All of these will be available electronically through cTools. Our engagement with these readings will begin on-line, before the class session for which they're assigned, and continue in class. We will engage in four ways:

- Description: statements or questions about what the author claims.
- Critique: arguments about whether the author is correct or what the author has left out.
- Connection: how the claims or concepts relate to those in other readings.
- Application: how the reading applies to the communities we are studying.

The online engagement will be through generation of a wiki page about each of the readings, with a section for my intro of the reading, and for each of the four activities above.

You should sign your contributions with your name, so that at the end of the semester I can look back on all of them and tally your contributions.

In discussion, I will be cold calling people to discuss different aspects of the reading. I have a “three strike” policy for poor preparation. The first time it’s clear you haven’t prepared, I simply move to the next person and judge you in my head. The second time you’ll be asked to leave class to prepare better for next time. The third time you’re not prepared, you’ll fail the course right then and there.

We will be having several speakers during the course of the semester. The folks are doing us a favor coming in to talk about their work. We are representing our school when the visit. Do not shame our house. Be prepared with good questions, engage with them actively, and appreciate their time. Guest speakers are always energized by an engaged audience.

Assignments

Group design assignments: (300 points)

You will pick a group of four early in the semester to accomplish a range of group assignments. Most of these are socio-technical designs of online communities to fulfill various functions. We’ll have regular “design jams” where groups will get together in clusters to present their work and receive feedback. Specific details on deliverables will be available in CTools.

Sociotechnical design 1: create a new discussion community

Sociotechnical design 2: create a new learning community

Sociotechnical design 3: Top Hat Monocle feedback

Sociotechnical design 4: create a new health community

Sociotechnical design 5: advise the State of Michigan on their Services community

Evaluation of these assignments will be based on the quality of your group’s work, and individual grades will be affected by group scoring.

Individual assignments: 200 pts

There are a few individual assignments throughout the semester. Details on each is in CTools, but the ones planned are:

- Make a significant edit to Wikipedia and evaluate your experience doing that.
- Post to a discussion forum and record the results
- Post a new contribution to Everything2 and review the response you get.
- Post to Slashdot and review your experience doing that.

Participation: 100 pts

Participation is always fuzzy, but there are two main ways we'll be measuring it this semester. First, your participation in class discussions, jams, breakouts, speaker Q&A and so forth will be noted. Second, we'll be making a wiki with all of the readings, and your contribution to the wiki should be solid.

Mid-term book review: 150 pts

There are several books available to help people make online communities. Buy, read, and review one of the books in the list below. The idea is we're going to be able, as a class, to recommend which of these books is worth the time to pay attention to. This report should be consumable by lay-people interested in building online communities:

- Community 101: How to Grow an Online Community – Robyn Tippins
- Managing Online Forums: Everything You Need to Know to Create and Run Successful Community Discussion Boards - Patrick O'Keefe
- The Art of Community: Building the New Age of Participation – Jono Bacon
- Online Communities Handbook: Building your business and brand on the Web – Ann Buss
- Building Social Web Applications: Establishing Community at the Heart of Your Site – Gavin Bell
- The New Community Rules: Marketing on the Social Web – Tamar Weinberg

Final paper: 250 pts

There are two components to the “Final paper” assignment – an actual report about an online community and an Ignite-style 5 minute presentation on that community.

Final paper evaluating an existing online community. 10-20 pages. Due April 13.

Effort

This is a 3-credit course, so you should expect to spend, on average, 12 hours per week on the course, over the course of the 14 week semester. Here's my approximate estimate of how that time would be split up:

- required reading (3 hours)
- in-class time (3 hours)
- weekly online wiki pages reading and editing (2 hours)
- major assignments (4 hours/week averaged over the term)

Grading

All grades will be kept on CTools

- Participation (Online commenting/editing; in-class discussion) 16%
- Peer feedback (responses to 4 design suggestions) 4%
- Community description paper: 30%
- Design suggestions: 10%
- Design suggestions paper: 40%

Top Hat Monocle

We'll be using an online learning support system called Top Hat Monocle that will we will evaluate for it's ability to support learning communities.

An Important Note on Plagiarism

At the University of Michigan and in professional settings generally, plagiarism is an extremely serious matter. All individual written submissions must be your own, original work, written entirely in your own words. You may incorporate excerpts from publications by other authors, but they must be clearly marked as quotations and properly attributed. You may obtain copy editing assistance, and you may discuss your ideas with others, but all substantive writing and ideas must be your own or else be explicitly attributed to another, using a citation sufficiently detailed for someone else to easily locate your source.

All cases of plagiarism will be officially reported and dealt with according to Rackham policies. There will be no warnings, no second chances, no opportunity to rewrite; all plagiarism cases will be immediately reported to SI's Dean of Academic Affairs. Consequences can range from failing the assignment (a grade of zero) or failing the course to expulsion from the University.

For additional information about plagiarism, see the "Academic and Professional Integrity Policy Statement" in the SI Master's Student Handbook, the Rackham pamphlet on Academic Integrity, and the Plagiarism document from the UM Libraries. If you have any doubts about whether you are using the words or ideas of others appropriately, please discuss them with your GSI or professor.

Accommodations

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities

(SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; <http://www.umich.edu/sswd/>) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Deliverables
Week 1 January 4	Course Introduction; Process discussion; Approaches to understanding	IEEE Computing Magazine – Special Issue on Technology-Mediated Social Participation Lessig, L. (2006). <i>Code: And Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0</i> . New York, NY: Basic Books. [CHAPTER 7] Resnick, P. (2001). Beyond Bowling Together: SocioTechnical Capital. In J. Carroll (Ed.), <i>HCI in the New Millenium</i> : Addison-Wesley. Shirky, C. (2008). <i>Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organzing Without Organizations</i> : Penguin Press. [CHAPTER 2]
January 11	Theories and Online Communities	Wenger, E. (1999). <i>Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity</i> . Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. [INTRO and VIGNETTE 1] Oldenberg, R. (1999). <u>The Great Good Place</u> . New York, Marlowe & Company. Chapter 2 pages 20-42 Rheingold, H. (2000). <u>The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier</u> . Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. – Chapter 11 Grudin, J. (1994). Groupware and social dynamics: Eight challenges for developers. <i>Communications of the ACM</i> , 37(1), 93-104. DUE: Contribute to Wikipedia and

January 18	eCommunities and Social media – defining terms and trends What’s the difference between e-communities, social computing, and social media?	boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. <i>Journal of Computer Mediated Communication</i> , 13(1), article 11. Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2011). Connection Strategies: Social Capital Implications of Facebook-enabled Communication Practices. <i>New Media & Society</i> , 13, 873-892. doi: 10.1177/1461444810385389 Short Pew report on why Americans use social media. Hampton, K. N., Goulet, L. S., Rainie, L., & Purcell, K. (2011). Social networking sites and our lives Washington, DC: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. Very cool NPR audio story about social media use.
January 25	Discussion communities: Online discussion spaces are still the most common types of social interaction online, but understudied compared to other forms of online communities. Rob Malda – Founder of Slashdot	Lampe, C., & Resnick, P. (2004). <i>Slash(dot) and burn: distributed moderation in a large online conversation space</i> . Paper presented at the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), Vienna, Austria. Burke, M., Joyce, E., Kim, T., Anand, V., & Kraut, R. (2007). <i>Introductions and Requests: Rhetorical Strategies That Elicit Response in Online Communities</i> . Paper presented at the 3rd International Conference on Communities and Technologies, East Lansing, MI.

Whittaker, S., Terveen, L., Hill, W., & Cherny, L. (1998). *The dynamics of mass interaction*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 1998 ACM conference on Computer supported cooperative work, Seattle, Washington, United States.

Republic.com 2.0 – Cass Sunstein
[CHAPTER 3]

Check out: Slashdot, Digg, Reddit as well as comments in sites like Mlive.com and other news sites.

DUE: Participate in an online discussion and record interactions

February 1 Learning communities

GUEST: Nick Punt – VP Products at Inigral, Inc.

Gaming communities

[Pew Report](#) on digital technologies and higher education

Check out Khan Academy in case you've been living under a rock.
<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

Forte, A., & Bruckman, A. (2010). Writing, Citing, and Participatory Media: Wikis as Learning Environments in the High school Classroom. *International Journal of Learning and Media*, 1(4), 23-44.

OPTIONAL: Gerry Stahl's piece on CSCL in CTools is a nice intro

Williams, D., Ducheneaut, N., Xiong, L., Zhang, Y., Yee, N., & Nickell, E. (2006). From Tree House to Barracks: The Social Life of Guilds in World of Warcraft. *Games and Culture*, 1(4), 338-361.

DUE: Socio-technical design of a new discussion community (GROUP)

February 8 Peer Production Communities

Lampe, C., Wash, R?., Velasquez, A.,

& Ozkaya, E. (2010). *Motivations to participate in online communities*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing systems, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Ben Mako Hill is a smart PhD student from MIT. [Here he is](#) giving an interesting talk on a number of sites that were competitors to Wikipedia early on.

Benkler, Y. (2006). *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom* Stanford, CT: Yale University Press. [CHAPTER 3]

DUE: Submit a write up to E2 (INDIVIDUAL)

February 15 Cliff is at the CSCW conference – Paul Resnick special guest

Health communities

Newman, M. W., Lauterbach, D., Munson, S. A., Resnick, P., & Morris, M. E. (2011). *It's not that i don't have problems, i'm just not putting them on facebook: challenges and opportunities in using online social networks for health*. Proceedings of the ACM 2011 conference on Computer supported cooperative work, Hangzhou, China.

Hesse, B. W., Hansen, D., Finholt, T., Munson, S., Kellogg, W., & Thomas, J. C. (2010). Social Participation in Health 2.0. *Computer*, 43(11), 45-52. doi: 10.1109/mc.2010.326

DUE: Socio-technical design of your learning community (GROUP)

February 22 eCommunities to support offline communities

Carroll, J. M., & Isenhour, P. L. (2011). Moving from MOOsburg. *Int. J. Web Based Communities*, 7(1), 4-27.

Goals: learn about the use of online communities to support offline communities. How do we make change in “the real world” with online communities?

Paul Harmon – State of Michigan Department of Information Technology

doi: 10.1504/ijwbc.2011.038123

Dantec, C. A. L., & Edwards, W. K. (2010). *Across boundaries of influence and accountability: the multiple scales of public sector information systems*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing systems, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Lampe, C., & Roth, B. (2012). *Implementing Social Media in Public Sector Organizations*. Paper presented at the iConference '12, Toronto.

Review these websites:

<http://www.micheen.org/>

<http://www.greatplacenetwork.org/>

Review Michigan Shared Services Community

<http://sharedservices.michigan.gov/>

DUE: SocioTechnical Design of your health community

February 29 “SPRING” Break

March 7 Social Q&A
Historical perspectives

Adamic, L. A., Zhang, J., Bakshy, E., & Ackerman, M. S. (2008). *Knowledge Sharing and Yahoo Answers: Everyone Knows Something*. Paper presented at the AAAI World Wide Web (WWW), Beijing, China.

Optional:

Morris, M. R., Teevan, J., & Panovich, K. (2010). *What do people ask their social networks, and why?: a survey study of status message q&a behavior*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing

systems, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Optional: Lampe et al CHI2012

Pfaffenberger, B. (2002). A Standing Wave in the Web of Our Communications: Usenet and the Socio-Technical Construction of Cyberspace Values. In C. Lueg & D. Fisher (Eds.), *From Usenet to CoWebs: Interacting with Social Information Spaces*. New York, NY: Springer Verlag.

Smith and Kollock
Intro and Chapter 9

DUE: "client" report on strategies for MSSC

March 14 Lifecycles of users

Pancier, K., Friedhorsky, R., Erickson, T., & Terveen, L. (2010). *Lurking? cyclopaths?: a quantitative lifecycle analysis of user behavior in a geowiki*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing systems, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

Preece, J., & Shneiderman, B. (2009). The Reader-to-Leader Framework: Motivating Technology-Mediated Social Participation. *AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction, 1*(1), 13-32.

DUE: Midterm book review

March 21 Socializing newcomers

Kraut and Resnick chapter

Incentives for participation

Lampe, C., Wash, R., Velasquez, A., & Ozkaya, E. (2010). *Motivations to participate in online communities*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 28th international conference on Human factors in computing systems,

Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

March 28	Managing conflict in communities Robert Rozeboom – Community Manager for Slashdot	Group is its own worst enemy Anil Dash article DUE: Slashdot posting assignment
April 4	Ignite – eCommunities Cliff is in Singapore giving a talk. This week you'll do individual Ignite style presentations on your communities in your final paper. These will be recorded for Cliff to view. Also your classmates will be viewing and rating your presentations.	The best way to give a good talk is to watch good talks. Here are some favorites from TED and Ignite. I heart Jay Rosen: http://igniteshow.com/videos/abyss-observation-alone Matt Inman of TheOatmeal http://igniteshow.com/videos/oatmeal-how-get-5-million-people-read-your-website-ep-69 Howard Rheingold has a fun TED talk : So does Clay Shirky Review the Ignite rules at: http://igniteshow.com/howto DUE: Each student is going to present an Ignite style talk describing their e-Community
April 11	eCommunity Sustainability Nate Oostendorp: Funding models for eCommunities Last hour: papers workshop	Powazek on community death Velasquez, Lampe, Wash, Bjornrud JCSCW article
Friday April 13		Final Paper due 11pm

To learn more:

Many of you have specific interests in some of these topics, and would like to know more. The following list contains other good articles by topic, the articles but are all optional. This is just here for your further use if you would like.

Theories and online communities:

Walther, J. B. (1996). Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal, interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interactions. *Communication Research*, 23, 1-43.

Walther, J. B., & Parks, M. R. (2002). Cues filtered out, cues filtered in: Computer-mediated communication and relationships. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal communication* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.