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Keio University Syllabus and Timetable

COMPUTERS IN JAPANESE SOCIETY AND BEYOND

Lecturer(s)	SEABORN, KATIE
Credit(s)	2
Academic Year/Semester	2025 Spring (2nd Half)
Day/Period	Tue.3/Thu.3
Campus	Mita
Classroom	422
Class Format	Face-to-face classes (conducted mainly in-person)
Registration Number	88725
Faculty/Graduate School	INTERNATIONAL CENTER
Year Level	2, 3, 4
Grade Type	S, A, B, C, D
K-Number ▼ Detail	CIN-CO-00313-212-83

Course Contents/Objectives/Teaching Method/Intended Learning Outcome

Course Description
This course will introduce students to fundamental theory and practice on the social, political, legal, and ethical implications of computer technologies in Japan and abroad. Through in-class activities, group assignments, and reflection work, students will gain a basic understanding of essential concepts, modern and historical cases, and guidelines for best practice. Key concepts include AI bias, privacy in the social media era, personal data and digital behaviour tracking, vectors of misinformation, stereotypes in design, digital inclusion, and more. The main objective is to inform and encourage critical thinking in students who will be playing key roles in deciding, creating, marketing, governing, and disseminating computer technologies in Japan.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Describe the key concepts in society relevant to computing in the modern era.
2. Explain the roles of social, political, legal, and ethical factors in contemporary computing research and technology innovation practice.
3. Critically reflect on these factors in their own thinking, orientations, and practice within the contexts of their education, daily lives, workplaces, and future aspirations for the development of new technologies.
4. Communicate these reflections to others as well as collaborate with others to evaluate and debate praxis and case studies.
5. Extend this knowledge and practice to future coursework and beyond.

Teaching Method
Typically, the first class each week will introduce a new topic, with interactive activities (e.g., hands-on demos, brainstorming, quick activities), individual reflection, and group discussion. Students will be given a homework assignment to be completed before the next week. That second class will introduce the next topic for that week. Attendance is taken randomly in every class.

Active Learning Methods Description

Presentations
Discussions, Debates

Group work

Preparatory Study

n/a

Course Plan

Lesson 1

Foundational Topics: Key Factors & Critical Frameworks
➤ Explain key concepts at a high level.

Lesson 2

Intellectual Property
➤ Explain what IP is and how it is managed, especially in the modern technosphere.

Lesson 3

Free Speech & Individual Rights
➤ Justify personal rights with modern examples.

Lesson 4

Privacy & Security
➤ Describe common challenges in cyberspace.

Lesson 5

Cyber Governance & Political Power
➤ Understand how power can operate through technology.

Lesson 6

Social Movements Online
➤ Understand how social movements use modern technologies.

Lesson 7

Ethical AI & Algorithmic Bias
➤ Describe ideas behind ethical AI and give examples of algorithmic bias.

Lesson 8

Dark Patterns & Deceptive Design
➤ Describe the variety of ways that user interfaces can deceive people.

Lesson 9

Information Liberation & Misinformation
➤ Discuss how misinformation occurs in technospaces in relation to the open information ecology.

Lesson 10

Cyberwarfare & Surveillance
➤ Explain how technology can be used to monitor citizens and attack nations.

Lesson 11

Digital Inclusion
➤ Explain the idea of inclusion with respect to modern technology, online and off.

Lesson 12

Education in the Digital Age
➤ Describe how computers have transformed education, including hybrid models.

Lesson 13

Economy & Lifestyle
➤ Describe how computers have changed our lives and economy, especially through automation.

Lesson 14

Agents & Identity
➤ Explain the concept of social identity and how it applies to computer agents, especially stereotypes.

Other

Presentations
➤ Groups present and discuss their project with their classmates

Method of Evaluation

The main graded components are homework assignments (35%), a group project (51%), and attendance (14%). Deliverables are typically due at 23:59. Late assignments will be penalized by 25%.

Textbooks

Baecker, Ronald M. (2019). Computers and Society: Modern Perspectives. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

Reference Books

Baase, Sara & Henry, Timothy M. (2017) A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology (5th ed.). Pearson: Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Lecturer's Comments to Students

Classes will be face-to-face on Mita campus. Office hours are by appointment on Zoom.