

# CS 407 – Politics of Cyberspace

M. E. Kabay, PhD, CISSP-ISSMP, Prof of Computer Information Systems  
School of Business & Management, Norwich University

## 1 Course Description

As computing and networking technologies increasingly pervade the worlds of business, government, science, law enforcement, the military and entertainment, political and policy considerations also increase in importance as the Internet reaches an ever-greater portion of humanity. Highly controversial subjects involving government actions, legal theory, ethical judgements, international relations, and economic analysis are introduced with reference not only to historical developments of the last several decades but also to recent news reports. The course assumes only a rudimentary familiarity with the basic concepts and terminology of modern Internet usage and computing and is not a technology-focused course. This course offers students from all majors the opportunity to explore policy issues in greater depth than in technology-oriented courses they may have taken. Information-technology courses are not a prerequisite and students from all majors are welcome.

All specifics of topics, schedule and deadlines are in the CS407 Syllabus.

## 2 Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to present summaries and intelligent arguments about the facts, the issues, the players and the costs and benefits involved in key political and cultural developments such as the following and others that develop through discussion in the course:

- History and geography of cyberspace
- Theory of nymity (identity)
- Social Media
- Online Abuse
- Privacy
- Entertainment
- Music
- Art & Pornography
- Games & Virtual Reality
- Net Neutrality
- Ad Blocking
- Disintermediation & resurgent intermediation
- Politics
- Astroturfing
- Censorship
- Digital Divide
- Intellectual Property
- Darknet
- Artificial Intelligence
- Robotics
- The Singularity

## 3 Course Schedule & Location

MWF in Dewey 211 from 12:00:03 – 12:49:57 and using NUoodle.

## 4 Course Web Site

Course materials including assigned readings and lectures are posted online on the instructor's Website at < <http://www.mekabay.com/courses/academic/norwich/cs407> >. There are links to these materials and more from the CS407 section on NUoodle for easy access.

## 5 Mechanics

- Classes will meet as stipulated in the syllabus. Attendance is mandatory; a record of attendance will be kept. More than three *unexcused* absences will result in expulsion from the course with an F grade.
- Readings, videos, and sound recordings (*required* and optional) are listed in the weekly assignments on NUoodle and on the course pages on the instructor's Website.
- Teaching materials are available through the classroom in NUoodle and on the course Web pages, which are < <http://www.mekabay.com/courses/academic/norwich/cs407/index.htm> >.
- Students should read, listen to or view specified *required* assigned readings, audio recordings or videos before coming to class.

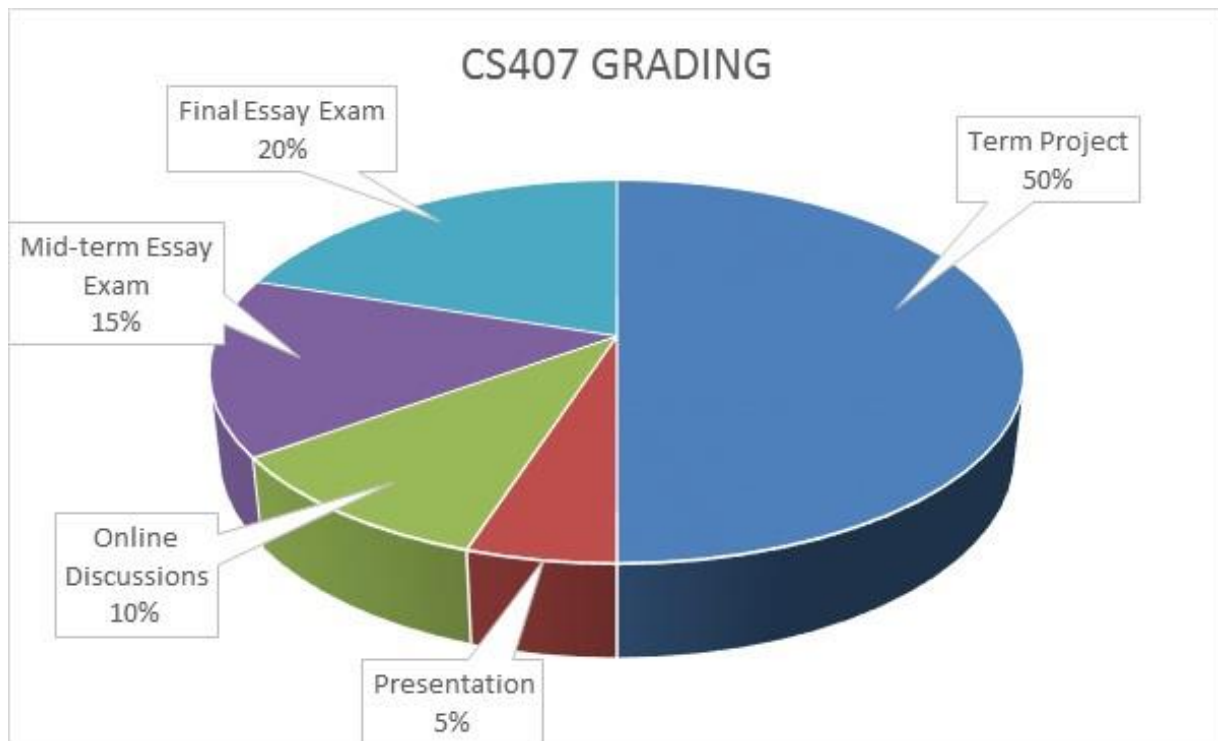
## 6 Methods of Assessment

All assignments and quizzes are submitted using NUoodle. Deadlines for each assignment are posted in NUoodle and on the class syllabus.

Responding punctually to professional responsibilities is part of the maturation of students. To encourage promptness, early submissions for any of the essay exams and assignments will result in bonus points of 1% per day for the total score allotted to the assignment. Late submissions are rejected and will result in scores of 0% for the exam or assignment.

For all NUoodle quizzes and exams, quizzes close at their deadlines and cannot be taken or retaken after closure.

The figure below shows the breakdown of elements of the final grade.



## 6.1 Term Project: 50% of final grade

Students will write a **5,500 ± 500 word** research paper on a suitable topic to be selected with approval of the instructor. Students should choose a topic they personally find *interesting*—why spend time on something boring? The minimum length is 5,000 words; the upper limit is a suggestion but longer work is not penalized. Papers with word counts lower than the minimum will be graded as a percentage of the minimum; for example a perfect submission (100% grade before penalty) with only 4,000 words would receive a grade of 80% (4,000/5,000).

Students must post their topic proposals in the public discussion group on NUoodle for consideration by the instructor by the deadline specified in the syllabus. Topics must be approved to avoid the problem of discovering that students have picked a topic so broad as to be worthy of writing a textbook or so technical that it doesn't apply to the management focus of this course. Approval also prevents duplicate topics among students, making for more interesting presentations at the end of the course.

Students should not hesitate to work with the instructor to review draft versions before submitting the final version. Students must submit the topic and final version of their project via NUoodle no later than the deadlines listed on the syllabus and on NUoodle. Students may discuss their drafts in person with the instructor before submitting the final version. The instructor may offer suggestions on corrections and may offer additional suggestions.

The deadline for full-grade submissions of the project report is specified in the syllabus. *Early* submission for the project report will result in bonus points of 1% point per day early for the total score allotted to the assignment; for example, a paper submitted 10 days before the deadline will be granted an extra 10% points on the project; the total may exceed 100%. In contrast, late submissions are penalized by 5% per day late. For example, a project report graded at 100% but submitted eight days late will lose 40% points from the maximum and thus be marked with a maximum grade of 60%.

Detailed instructions and suggestions about the term project are available in the “Term-Paper Guidelines” available online. The instructor encourages students to publish their work and provides advice and support to achieve that end. The instructor will *not* add his name to students' publications unless the students insist on inclusion due to unusual levels of contributions to the final published work.

## 6.2 Term-Project Presentation: 5% of final grade

Students will present interesting aspects of their research and stimulate discussion in class. Students usually prefer an informal chat with the class – no presentation notes are required. However, if students do want to prepare such notes, they are welcome to do so, and may ask the instructor for review to see if there are any improvements he can suggest before the presentation itself. The order of presentations is determined by the instructor to link topics together in an interesting way.

## 6.3 Online Discussions: 10% of final grade

Students will respond to questions posted in the online discussions for each week in NUoodle. For each posted topic, **every student is expected to contribute a thoughtful comment** about the issues raised using reason and include evidence to support their point of view; postings consisting of “I agree” and “Yeah, right” will not be penalized, but they won't earn points, either.

The instructor will grant extra points for contributions that present new ideas, which point to interesting information on the Web or in the Kreitzberg-Library databases, and which comment articulately on issues or arguments already presented.

The discussion *grading* will close *two weeks after they open* at the start of each week; i.e., the discussions for any given week will be graded from the start of that period and end on the second Sunday after the start. However, the discussion forums themselves will remain open until the end of the course, allowing additional electronic conversations to take place freely.

## 6.4 Mid-term Essay Exam: 10% of final grade

The mid-term *open-book take-home* essay exam will include

- Responses to four serious
- 500-word (minimum – no maximum) messages
- responding to realistic questions raised by ordinary people such as family members or friends without a technical background
- querying a student about cyberspace issues discussed in the first part of the course.
- The questions will be distributed as shown in the syllabus and submitted electronically via NUoodle in accordance with the schedule listed in the syllabus.
- Grading criteria for the essay exam are listed in the document “Grading Standards for Essay Exams” provided via NUoodle and the course pages of the instructor’s class Website.

The instructor may offer more than four questions, allowing extra credit for replying to more than the requirement.

## 6.5 Final Essay Exam: 15% of final grade

The final *open-book take-home* essay exam will include six questions and otherwise conform to the description of the mid-term essay exam. The instructor may offer more than six questions, allowing extra credit for replying to more than the requirement.

## 6.6 Extra Work for Extra Points:

- Students may submit extra work for extra points on their final grade with permission of the instructor.
- For example, the instructor will agree to accept suitable short essays such as summaries of interesting incidents, articles or books relevant to the course materials.
- The rate granted for extra work is one percentage point added to the *final grade* for 500 words of professional-grade writing. Thus a 1,000 word essay could improve the final grade by up to two points; a student who achieved 93% in her work throughout the course (an A- grade) could thus achieve a 95% grade (an A) by submission of a good 1,000 word extra essay.

## 7 Cheating and Plagiarism

Students are graded on an individual basis and must therefore complete their own work. Students are reminded of the University’s Policy against cheating and plagiarism:

< <http://www.norwich.edu/about/policy/academic/appendix1.html> >.

If in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, students should ask the instructor for a review of their work before submitting an assignment. Failing to acknowledge the source of quoted or paraphrased material is viewed as plagiarism.

All instances of cheating and of plagiarism must be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee by the instructor or by students who have observed the dishonesty. Penalties include failure in the course, temporary suspension for one or more semesters, and permanent expulsion from the University.

Ignorance of the University’s Rules is not a valid defense against accusations of academic dishonesty.

## 8 Attendance Policy

Students are permitted to miss no more than six class sessions in this course because it meets thrice a week.

University regulations stipulate that

“Faculty are responsible for clearly stating the course attendance policy on the syllabus. Unless stated otherwise, the maximum number of all permitted absences (excused or unexcused) is *twice the number of times the course meets per week*. [italics added]

If this policy is stated on the syllabus faculty members may remove students from his/her class roster whose total absences, excused or un-excused exceeds the number of permitted absences. The students will be assigned a grade of W if the report of their absences is made no later than the withdrawal date (60% day of the term), and a grade of F if the absences are reported after that date..’ (See < <http://tinyurl.com/n8v9lew> >.)

Thus, students may miss one, two or three sessions of this course without needing to submit any explanation to the instructor. If students *plan* to be absent, they should discuss the absence with the instructor in advance to be excused; after an absence, the instructor requires a written explanation for consideration. The instructor always provides a space on the sign-in sheets for explanation of a previous absence.

The fourth and subsequent unexcused absences will be reported as stipulated in the academic regulations and may lead to immediate dismissal from the course with an F grade.

## 9 Policy on Electronic Distractions

Some students constructively use computers to take notes or to research discussion points to contribute to class sessions. However, some students have displayed immature and rude behavior by using their mobile phones, tablets, and laptop computers to access services such as online games, chat services, social-networking sites, or other services that have no value for the class discussions or for their own learning. Some of these students have distracted other students and irritated the instructor. Students must understand that divided attention does *not* improve learning.

Therefore, in this course, **students are on notice that anyone using their electronic equipment (or for that matter, reading a novel, taking a sitz-bath, training a gerbil, or preparing breakfast on a camping stove) for non-class-related purposes will be interrogated in public with multiple questions about the current matter under discussion before being expelled from the class.** Anyone wishing to avoid embarrassment and potential humiliation will want to avoid such interactions with the instructor.

## 10 Office Hours & Contact Information:

Students are welcome to call the instructor at **(802) 479-7937** at *any time* (that number rings in his office or his cell phone but cannot disturb him at home); leave a voice-mail message with a return number if necessary. The same number may be used for SMS (text) messages. Similarly, Facebook texting using the Messenger app are accepted. Students are also encouraged to use Skype (ID is **mekabay**) and are also welcome to leave voice or video recordings using Skype. The instructor is almost always running Skype; the status icon turns yellow for away after five minutes of inactivity on his system.

Office hours are posted on the instructor’s Website home page < [http://www.mekabay.com/current\\_schedule.jpg](http://www.mekabay.com/current_schedule.jpg) >, class Web site, on NUoodle, and on the instructor’s office door (Dewey 209). The **Dewey 209** office door is almost always open when the instructor is present; all students are most welcome to drop in without having to make appointments – everyone is welcome at any time. It is *not necessary to make an appointment* – the instructor welcomes visits and usually responds to students with a cheery, “Hi! What can I do for you?” Many students have enjoyed cups of coffee, cocoa or herb tea and some hungry people have even been fed emergency granola bars. Do come and visit!

## 11 Additional Notes

- There will be no *grading on a curve*. There are no predetermined numbers of final letter grades. *Students do not compete with each other for grades*; if everyone gets A, great. If everyone fails, tough – the evidence will support the results. Remember that NUoodle keeps detailed log files showing the exact timing and duration of visits to that service; it's hard to claim that a 23% received as a final grade was unfair when the log files and submitted project show that the student wrote a mediocre 2500-word project, took only one quiz, never participated in online discussions, refused to submit mid-term and final exams, and was online in NUoodle for a total of eight visits lasting a total of 22 minutes over the entire length of the course.
- Students are encouraged to study together, to help each other by reviewing each others' drafts of term projects and making constructive suggestions for improvement, but *not* to collaborate in preparation of exam responses.
- Students are individually responsible for all assigned readings, lecture, and discussion material.

## 12 About your Instructor (not required reading)

M. E. Kabay began teaching his high school classmates how to use the slide rule in 1963 (NOT the best way to become popular) and began programming IBM 1401 computers in assembly language in 1965. In 1976, he received his PhD from Dartmouth College in applied statistics and invertebrate zoology (WHAT?!?) and taught statistics, programming and a few biology courses as a university professor in Canada and overseas. In 1979, he joined a compiler team for a new 4GL and RDBMS in the US and wrote the parser and code generator for a set of statistical functions. In 1980 he joined Hewlett-Packard Canada in 1980 as an operating systems and database performance specialist. He won the *Systems Engineer of the Year Award* in 1982. His teaching for HP was primarily on the MPE/3000 operating system, IMAGE/3000 database and VPLUS/3000 GUI-design courses. He served as support engineer to HP's hospital and university customers in Montreal and Ottawa; he also managed HP's bilingual call center (*Phone-In Consulting Service*) for Québec & the Maritime provinces.

He served as Director of Education for the National Computer Security Association (NCSA, later ICSA and then TruSecure and now Verizon's Business Security Solutions) from 1991 to 1999 and then worked with AtomicTangerine where he supported the *International Institute for Information Integrity*® (I-4®). He collaborated in the committees defining the *Common Body of Knowledge* for the *Certified Information Systems Security Professional* (CISSP) designation in the mid-1990s and earned his CISSP in 1997 and his ISSMP (*Information Systems Security Management Professional*) in 2005.

Since 1986 (and as of the end of 2016), he has published over 1,300 articles in operations management and security, written a college textbook on enterprise security (McGraw-Hill, 1996), and served as Technical Editor of the 4<sup>th</sup> (2002), 5<sup>th</sup> (2009) and 6<sup>th</sup> (2014) editions of the *Computer Security Handbook* (Wiley). He wrote two security-management columns a week distributed by *Network World* from February 2000 to September 2011 and

published one a week in the *InfoSec Perception* blog from October 2011 through November 2013.

He has been an invited lecturer at the United States War College, the Pentagon, NATO HQ in Brussels, and at NATO Counterintelligence training in Germany. He was inducted into the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA) *Hall of Fame* in December 2004.

From January 2002 to June 2009, he was the Director of the *Master's Program in Information Assurance* (MSIA, now MISA) in the School of Graduate and Continuing Studies (SGCS) at Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont where he was also the Chief Technical Officer of the SGCS from 2007 to 2009.

From June 2001 to April 2011, Dr Kabay was Associate Professor of Computer Information Systems in the School of Business and Management and became Professor of Computer Information Systems in May 2011. He was appointed Associate Director of the *Norwich University Center for Advanced Computing and Digital Forensics* in July 2011.

His LinkedIn page is < <http://www.linkedin.com/mkabay/> > and his Website is < <http://www.mekabay.com> >.

Students are welcome to *friend* him on Facebook (but to protect their privacy he generally does not follow students) for a stream of links to interesting information security and high-technology articles (mostly from *The Guardian*, *BBC News*, *National Public Radio*, *The Atlantic*, *the Washington Post* and so on) with frequent forays into politics, culture, science, cartoons and puns. He declines to post information on Facebook about what he ate for breakfast or what kind of toilet paper he prefers.

He will retire from Norwich on 30 June 2022 and will write six novels in a series to be called the *Parkerian Hexad Stories*.

