

Syllabus
Social Change: Soc. 352-1001
Course Number: Lec 71365
Fall 2008

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Office Hours : By appointment

Course Description:

All would agree that our planetary society is changing rapidly in response to the forces of globalization, rationalization, and technology.

In the *McDonaldisation of Society*, George Ritzer argues that social change is being driven by an attempt to impose efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control on the world. Social change is imposed.

In marked contrast, Steven Johnson in *Emergence*--his analysis of the connected lives of ants, brains, cities, and software--shows how intelligence can arise from the play of the parts without any hierarchical control. Social change can emerge from below.

Tapscott and Williams in *Wikinomics* point out many examples of how the Internet has resulted in massive decentralized creativity.

We will use these different paradigms to explore challenges we as a society face and how we can envision them being resolved.

About the Instructor

William Foster, PhD. Has taught at ASU since 2001. His PhD is in Management Information Systems from the University of Arizona. His dissertation on *The Diffusion of the Internet in China* was published by CISAC at Stanford University.

Dr. Foster also runs a management consulting company, Foster and Brahm. His books and articles as well as his resume are available at <http://www.FosterandBrahm.com>.

Course Texts:

George Ritzer, "The McDonaldization of Society," (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2008) ISBN 978-4129-5430-3

Steven Johnson, "Emergence," (New York, NY: Scribner, 2001) ISBN-13: 978-0-684-86876-9 (Pbk).

Don Tapscott and Anthony Williams, "Wikinomics," (New York, NY: Penquin, 2008) ISBN 978-1-59184-193-7.

1) Discussion questions: 15 points per forum (180 total)

There will be one discussion question each week. The discussion Forums are on Blackboard. Discussion questions will be posted the Sunday of the assigned week (responses must be posted by the following Saturday at midnight).

You will get up to 15 points on each discussion question, broken down as follows:

8 points for addressing the discussion question. Points will be given for knowledge of the reading, and for thinking critically about the question. Thinking outside the box is encouraged.

2 points for making at least one reference to a website, video, or article that bears on the question at hand.

2 points for making two comments on your classmates' posts. You are expected to rate using stars the posts to which you are responding.

Baseline-3 points (you get 3 points just for posting on time. Please note that failure to post by due date will result in a zero point as late responses are not graded at all.)

Short Essay 1: McDonaldization: 100 Points

You will write a one page essay that extends the text book “The McDonaldization of Society”. Your essay should have a thesis that captures the reader’s attention. You should build your argument around this thesis. There is no need to recapitulate the book. You should make reference to one outside source. Submit the paper through SafeAssign.

Short Essay 2: Op Ed on Financial Crisis: 100 Points

You will write a 500 to 1000 word op ed on our “financial crisis”. Don’t be afraid to think out of the box. Submit the essay through SafeAssign.

Short Essay 3: Wikinomics: 100 Points

You will write a one page essay that extends the text book “Wikinomics”. Your essay should have a thesis that captures the readers attention. You should build your argument around this thesis.. There is no need to recapitulate the book. You should make reference to one outside source. Submit the paper through SafeAssign.

Final Group Project: Wiki on the role of Chinese Telcommunications Manufacturers on African countries: 205 Points

This is an experiment to see whether and how undergraduates can “create” knowledge in a Wiki environment. To this end, I am going to ask each of you to become an “expert” on something that no one on Wikipedia has yet focused on.

The instructor will break the class into groups of 3 to contribute to a Wiki on the impact of the Chinese manufacturers Huawei and ZTE on Internet and mobile phones in Africa. Each group will be assigned a particular country.

You will create a Wikipage on this subject on the stump for the country you have been assigned to. The country Wiki stubs are at <https://coursewikis.asu.edu/2008Fall-P-SOC352-71365-84997>. Note this Wiki requires you to log in and is only accessible by those with an ASU id.

On Blackboard you can access your group's info (what country you have been assigned to) and can use email, chat, or discussion board to communicate. Research has shown that virtual groups work best if you get together once in person at the beginning. This is not mandatory.

A strategy for this research along with a list of resources for doing studies of the impact of Huawei and ZTE in a country is at:

<http://libguides.asu.edu/soc352>

Some of you will find no evidence that Huawei or ZTE has been involved in your country. If you will note this on your country stub.

You will find some of the countries in Africa use French or Portuguese as their primary language of record. In this case, you will need to use the language tools available from Google (link on right of main Google menu).

You will keep a diary of how this experiment in Wiki creation worked or did not work. You will let me know how you divided the work up in the group and you should evaluate the role that each of your teammates played and how they contributed to the group process.

The Wiki project is due Nov. 22nd. The diary is due via Safe Assignment by Nov. 29th. I expect the diary will be between 100 and 500 words.

If you have a well documented diary, you can get full credit for this experiment even if you have come up with nothing on what the two companies are doing in your African country.

Your grade for this group project will be based primarily on this diary and the Wiki site.

Discussion beginning	Assigned reading	Assignment Due
August 25, 2008		Discussion 1: Introduce yourself by discussing your prospective on the most important social change for the planet of the next decade

Aug. 31st, 2008	Ritzer Chap 1 and Chap 2 McDonaldization and rationalization	Discussion 2:
Sept. 7 th ,	Ritzer Ch. 3, Ch. 4, Ch 5 Ch. 6 Efficiency, Calculability, Predictability, Control	Discussion 3:
Sept. 14th	Ritzer Ch. 7 The Irrationality of Rationality Ritzer Ch. 8 Globalization and McDonaldization Ritzer Ch. 9 Dealing with McDonaldization	Discussion 4 (cancelled) Essay on “McDonaldization” at midnight on Sept. 20th:
Sept . 21	Emergence: Introduction and Part One (pages 1-72)	Discussion 5
Sept. 28th	Emergence: Part Two (pages 73-194)	Discussion 6
Oct. 5th	Emergence: Part Three (pages 195-234)	Discussion 7 (cancelled) Op ed on financial crisis due on Oct. 11 th at midnight.
Oct. 12th	Wikinomics: Introduction, Wikinomics (Chap. 1), The Perfect Storm (Chap. 2)	Discussion Question 8
Oct. 19 th	The Peer Pioneers (Chap. 3) Ideagoras (Chap. 4), The Prosumers (Chap. 5), The New Alexandrians	Discussion Question 9

	(Chap. 6)	
Oct. 26 th	Platforms for Participation (Chap. 7), The Global Plant Floor (Chapter 8), The Wiki Workplace (Chapt 9), Collaborative Minds (Chap. 10), Enterprise 2.0 (Chap. 11)	Discussion 10 (cancelled) Essay on Wikinomics due Nov. 1 st at midnight
Nov. 2 nd	Technology and a Transformed world. (Chap 9) from Yunus Available on course documents	Discussion 11
Nov. 9 th	“The Rise of the Rest” Available on course documents	Discussion 12
Nov. 16 th	No Discussion Board	Group Wiki due by Nov. 22 nd at midnight
Nov. 23 rd	Thanksgiving (no discussion board)	Diary on Group Wiki project is due via Safe Assignment by Nov. 29 th at midnight.
Nov. 30 th	Assigned Reading Conclusion	Discussion Question 13
<u>Dec. 7th</u>	<u>Last day of class on 9th</u>	<u>(no assignments)</u>