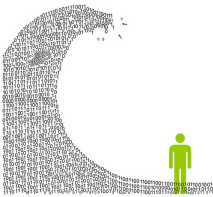- Class Meeting
- Fridays, 4-5:30 in 105 Stanley

- Office Hours
- John DeNero (781 Soda):
  10am-12pm Wednesday [Friday by appointment](#)
- Andy Wunder: TBD

Social Implications of Computing

CS 195, Spring 2015

Course description and policies

CS 195 is a discussion-intensive course about the social implications of computing. The purpose of this course is to help computer science students make informed and thoughtful choices about their careers, participation in society, and future development activities. Readings and lecture topics are drawn from a range of fields that together seek to describe our contemporary global society: sociology, philosophy, economics, public policy, etc.

Weekly Schedule

The week before each Friday class meeting will be used to prepare for the upcoming discussion-oriented class section.

- Over the weekend, any student who is attending discussion sections and writing commentary for the upcoming topic should complete the readings.
- Small-group discussions will be held Monday through Wednesday to develop commentary topics and assign students to commentaries.
- Commentaries will be completed and shared with the class by Thursday at noon.
- On Friday, class will consist of lecture and discussion on the weekly topic. All

students should complete the readings and weekly survey before class.

Discussions

Each student will select *one* weekly topic that interests them the most and contribute commentary on a reading for that topic. You are required to attend a small-group discussion section during the week before the topic is discussed in lecture, in order to clarify your commentary ideas. A schedule of discussions will be published each week.

Monday 11am-12pm discussions will be held in 606 Soda.

Wednesday 1pm-2pm and 2pm-3pm discussions will be held in the Goldman School of Public Policy's "Quiet Study Room". To access the QSR enter GSPP from Hearst St. There are two buildings on the GSPP campus - the QSR is on the second floor in the east building (the building furthest from the ocean). Once you enter the east building immediately take a right - you'll walk through the living room to the far wall (south side of the building). There you will find stairs to the second floor - once on the second floor walk past the desk and the only doors on that level provide access to the QSR. Ask if you're lost.

Commentaries

For the topic of interest you select, you will collaboratively author a commentary document about the topic & chosen reading. A commentary is a short (~300 word) analysis or opinion statement related to a reading. Each commentary should begin with a thesis or topic sentence that clearly states which reading is being addressed. For example, a commentary related to the privacy reading "Addicted to Apps" could critique the article's statement that, "Inside tech companies, engineers would rather set aside pesky impediments like government regulations, social mores and people's fear of change."

Topics of commentaries will be chosen during small-group discussion, which you need to attend during the week that you choose to write a commentary. Each commentary will be edited collaboratively as a Google Doc by a subset of the students who have selected to attend discussion that week. In order to contribute to a commentary (and thereby fulfill your course requirement), you must improve the Google Doc in some way and add your name to the bottom.

The text of each commentary (without author names) will be posted to Piazza on Thursday at noon before class, so that other students can read it and discuss it. Some commentaries may be selected for a short in-class presentation. The instructor will contact authors via email about these optional presentations.

Surveys

Lecture topics will not be determined only by the wisdom of your instructor. Instead, you will collectively choose your own adventure through the material. A brief survey about each upcoming topic will be emailed to the class each week. Before class begins, please complete the survey, in which you can vote on the issues or questions most interesting to you. The results of these surveys will guide our discussions.

Essays

In addition, you will write three short essays (500-1000 words) that contain your original thoughts about issues from the class. All students will write about the same topics, and your work will be reviewed by your peers. Essay assignments will appear in the reading list and be announced in class.

Grading

The course is graded P/NP. The reason for that policy is to ensure that you can feel free to express opinions different from those of the instructors, both in class meetings and in written work.

In order to receive a passing grade in CS 195, you must:

- Complete at least 10 surveys
- Participate in 1 collaborative commentary and attend its small-group discussion section
- Submit 3 essays and receive a passing peer review (3/5) on all of them
- Provide peer reviews for 9 essays

Students who attend at least 10 class sessions and respond to discussion questions during class may skip/drop one of the essays and 3 peer reviews.