The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

HACKER CULTURE - 44162

Last update 31-07-2018

<u>HU Credits:</u>   2

<u>Degree/Cycle:</u> 1st degree (Bachelor)

<u>Responsible Department:</u> English

<u>Academic year:</u> 0

<u>Semester:</u> 1st Semester

<u>Teaching Languages:</u> English

<u>Campus:</u> Mt. Scopus

<u>Course/Module Coordinator:</u> Dr. Naomi Mandel

<u>Coordinator Email:</u> Naomi.Mandel1@mail.huji.ac.il

<u>Coordinator Office Hours:</u> Tuesdays 12:00-13:00

<u>Teaching Staff:</u>

Prof NAOMI MANDEL

Course/Module description:
   This course will trace the rise of hacker culture from its earliest incarnations in the Tech Model Railroad Club of MIT and the Homebrew Computer Club at Stanford to the cybercollective Anonymous. We will study literary and cinematic representations of hackers and hacking to identify anxieties about technology, the Cold War, globalization, consumer culture, and the Information Age. We will dwell with the cultural touchstones that inform hacker culture itself, and define the ethical and political issues that hacker culture incites.

Course/Module aims:
   Technology and culture are in a dynamic relationship, as technological innovation impacts cultural production and vice versa. Our focus on hacker culture will trace this interrelationship of culture and technology to its source: the people who looked at a counting machine and saw the potential for music, art, and interstellar travel. Through our focus on the figure of the hacker (guardian and interloper, freedom fighter and shadowy malevolence) we will articulate the cultural anxieties that inform each stage of the computer revolution.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
   Recognize terms and concepts pertaining to the Computer Revolution and the Information Age.
Connect these terms and concepts to their representation in literature, film, and art.

Design and implement an individual research plan via the presentation precis and presentation and final paper.
Integrate multiple sources by formulating questions via the discussion catalyst.
Formulate individual critical analyses via the discussion catalyst and presentation.

Attendance requirements(%):
   100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Seminar

Course/Module Content:

1. Kubrick, *Dr. Strangelove*
2. Levy, from *Hackers*; The Mentor, "The Hacker Manifesto"
3. Ullman, from *Close to the Machine.*
4. Badham, *WarGames*
5. Gibson, *Neuromancer*
6. Stephenson, *In the Beginning was the Command Line*
7. Masumune, Shirow, from *Ghost in the Shell*
8. Jonze *Her*
9. Eggers, *The Circle*
10. Coleman, "Our Weirdness is Free"
11. Wark, *A Hacker Manifesto*

Required Reading:
William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (1983)

Dave Eggers, *The Circle* (2013)

additional readings will be uploaded to course moodle.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 20 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 15 %
Assignments 15 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 50 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
Following are some of the course assignments:

Each week (after the first few weeks), one or two students in the class will be responsible for composing a suite of questions about the reading for that week, posting them to the class via the course website by midnight the night before class meets, and working with those questions in the first 10-15 minutes of class. You

may discuss and compose the questions with another person assigned for that week, or you may present them independently of each other. The number of times that you lead discussion will depend on the number of people who are in the class.