

**Seattle Pacific University**  
**INF2000: Information and Attention**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11 a.m., Library Classroom  
 Fall Quarter 2018

Professors Michael Paulus and Steve Perisho

**Course Description:** This class considers the nature of information and the role of attention. In addition to exploring fundamental concepts and challenges associated with information, such as information overload and distraction, students will learn practical strategies for successfully navigating our informationally rich and technologically complex world.

**Learning Outcomes and Assessments**

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Related Assessment</i>
1. Students will engage with resources from the Christian tradition to explore the theological significance of the information society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Journal</li> </ul>
2. Students will reflect on the role of information and technology to become more intentional about their decisions in their personal, professional, and spiritual lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Practices Surveys, Information Journal, Information Ethnography Project</li> </ul>
3. Students will use information and technology to become more skillful and ethical participants in the information society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Paper and Presentation</li> </ul>

**Required Books**

Luciano Floridi, *The 4<sup>th</sup> Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), available as an [ebook](#) through the SPU Library

David M. Levy, *Mindful Tech: How to Bring Balance to Our Digital Lives* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), available as an [ebook](#) through the SPU Library

Additional texts in the schedule below are available via Canvas.

**Schedule**

<b>Module 1: Too Much to Know</b>		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Session</i>	<i>Due before next class (assignment instructions in Canvas)</i>

Tuesday, September 25	Introduction to course and topics	<b>Read</b> by 9/27: Jorge Luis Borges, “The Library of Babel”; Sam Wineburg and Sarah McGrew, “Reading Less and Learning More When Evaluating Digital Information”; <b>Assignment</b> due 9/27: Information Practices Survey (IPS) I
Thursday, September 27	Discuss texts; Visit Emmanuel Rare Book Room	<b>Assignment</b> due 10/2: Information Journal Entry (IJE) 1
<b>Module 2: What Is Information?</b>		
Tuesday, October 2	The meaning and history of information and technology; Campus technology tour	<b>Read</b> by 10/4: <i>The 4<sup>th</sup> Revolution</i> chapters 1-3
Thursday, October 4	Discuss text, tour, IPS, and IJEs; Information literacy workshop	<b>Assignment</b> due 10/9: Information Ethnography Project (IEP) Part I
<b>Module 3: Information and Culture</b>		
Tuesday, October 9	Hot topics; Guest: Cybersecurity analyst	<b>Read</b> by 10/11: <i>The 4<sup>th</sup> Revolution</i> chapters 4, 7, 10
Thursday, October 11	Discuss text and IEP observations; Information environmentalism workshop	<b>Assignment</b> due 10/16: IJE 2; <b>Optional assignment</b> due 10/16: Sign up to lead a discussion about the Day of Common Learning
<b>Module 4: What Is Attention?</b>		
Tuesday, October 16	Visit St. James Cathedral	<b>Read</b> by 10/18: Adam Gazzaley and Larry D. Rosen, <i>The Distracted Mind</i> chapters 1-2
Thursday, October 18	Discuss cathedral visit, text, IJEs, and Day of Common Learning topic “Creation Care”	<b>Assignment</b> due 10/23: IEP Part II
<b>Module 5: Attention and Culture</b>		
Tuesday, October 23	Views of attention and cultural considerations; Guest: AI developer	<b>Read</b> by 10/25: Sherry Turkle, “ <a href="#">Stop Googling. Let’s Talk</a> ”; John Naughton, “ <a href="#">Tim Wu: ‘The internet is Like the Classic Story of the Party That Went Sour’</a> ”
Thursday, October 25	Discuss texts and IEP observations	<b>Assignment</b> due 10/30: IJE 3
<b>Module 6: Practical Disciplines</b>		
Tuesday, October 30	Strategies for reflection and resistance; Explore centers of resistance	<b>Read</b> by 11/1: <i>Mindful Tech</i> chapters 1-3

Thursday, November 1	Discuss text and IJEs; <i>Mindful Tech</i> exercises	<b>Assignment</b> due 11/6: IEP Part III
<b>Module 7: Information and Theology</b>		
Tuesday, November 6	Theologies of information and technology; Explore ethical frameworks	<b>Read</b> by 11/8: Diogenes Allen, <i>Spiritual Theology</i> chapter 8; Heidi A. Campbell and Stephen Garner, <i>Networked Theology</i> chapter 1
Thursday, November 8	Discuss texts and IEP; Project proposal workshop	<b>Assignments</b> due 11/13: Project proposal; IJE 4
<b>Module 8: Spiritual Disciplines</b>		
Tuesday, November 13	Guest: School of Theology faculty member; Spiritual practices of attention and attentiveness	<b>Read</b> by 11/15: Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> Book XI; Simone Weil, “Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God”
Thursday, November 15	Discuss texts and IJEs; Practice disciplines	<b>Read</b> by 11/20: Kate Crawford and Vladan Joler, “ <a href="#">Anatomy of an AI System</a> ”; <b>Assignments</b> due 11/20: Project summary post; IJE 5
<b>Module 9: Information and Formation</b>		
Tuesday, November 20	Discuss “Anatomy of an AI System”; Guest instructors of “Digital Literacy and Life” and “Information and Society”	<b>Assignment</b> due 11/27: Comment on project posts
Tuesday, November 27	Visit Axon for ethics discussion	<b>Assignment</b> due 11/29: Presentation
Thursday, November 29	Discuss visit and IJEs; Student presentations	<b>Assignment</b> due 12/3: IPS II
<b>Final paper due 12/7</b>		

## Assessments

1. Participation (20% of grade)
2. Information Practices Surveys (5% of grade)
3. Information Journal (25% of grade)
4. Information Ethnography Project (15% of grade)
5. Research Project (35% of grade)
6. Extra credit: Lead discussion of Day of Common Learning topic (additional 5%)