Overview
This course examines computer hackers to interrogate not only the ethics, diversity, and technical practices of hacking, but to examine more broadly how hackers and hacking have triggered and transformed changes in law, policy, computing, and journalism. We will examine how hacker values are realized and constituted by different legal, technical, and ethical activities of computer hacking—for example, free software production, gaming, hacktivism, security, among others. We will pay close attention to how ethical principles are variably represented and thought of by hackers, journalists, and academics and we will use the example of hacking to address variety of topics such as: surveillance, secrecy, play, gender and diversity, communication, security, direct action and more.

Learner Objectives
This will allow us to 1) demonstrate familiarity with variants of hacking 2) critically examine the multiple ways hackers draw on and reconfigure dominant ideas and practices around security freedom, and privacy through their diverse moral codes and technical activities 3) broaden our understanding of politics of the Internet by evaluating the various political effects and ramifications of hacking. Students will be responsible for leading discussions on the readings, preparing interview questions for our guest hackers and journalists, and critically engaging the readings and class conversations.
Course Delivery Guidelines and Core Course Logistics

The terms of this guide are subject to modification as conditions change, in order to provide for flexibility and to optimize course delivery. Course requirements set out in the Course Syllabus (to be distributed on the first day of class) will be final.

Class Delivery: This class will be taught entirely online and will be run as a seminar. We will meet for discussion at the seminar’s scheduled meeting time. These sessions will be around one and a half hours to reduce the burden of screen time during this pandemic. Participation is essential to a seminar and will count toward 10% percent of the final grade. Those unable to participate in the seminar’s fixed meetings due to connectivity issues, time-zone restrictions, etc. will be able to join the conversation via formal collaboration with classmates on presentations (see below), preparing for interviews with our guests, and through discussion posts or audio clips, in addition to meetings with the instructor (or interaction with me on our boards) and possible additional assignments. I will often open the seminar with some punctuated remarks and will record and posts these on MyCourses. Seminar discussion, however, will not be recorded.

Readings & Assigned Material: In designing this course, I have included a mix of academic and more popular and journalistic writing on hackers, the latter of which is some of the best writing on this topic. You will also be asked to watch movies and engage with material on Hack_Curio (https://hackcur.io/), a video exhibit on hackers. All of this material will be available on the web, MyCourses or the library website

Presentations: The seminar will feature student-led presentations. After the second week students will sign up in small groups to prepare a 20 minute pre-recorded presentation of the week’s material. All presentations will be recorded and made available on the course website. Detailed instructions will be provided the first day of class.

Guests: We are fortunate to welcome hacker and author guests to our seminar who will visit for roughly 30-45 minutes. Students will be assigned (randomly) to guests and will work together to prepare a set of questions for them. Everyone is always welcome to ask their own questions (which will count toward class participation) but we will have a set of 4-6 questions ready for the guests based on their work and/or writing. We will record sessions and share them for those who cannot make the session.

Some guests who have confirmed, scheduling permitting, are Steven Levy (author of Hackers), Joseph Menn (author of Cult of the Dead Cow), Chelsea Kolmo (Crypto-Volunteer for the Tor Project and Technical Advisor for the Zcash Project), Lodrina Cherne (security for Cyberreason and national champion powerlifter), Addie Wagenknecht (new media artist, hardware hacker, and security beautician), Kathryn Spiers (security hacker and former Google worker activist), and former members of Lulzsec and Anonymous.

Discussion Posts and Questions: To stay on top of the reading and class material, you will have to write a total of 7 discussion posts which should include one question. Three
of them will be due by the end of October and detailed instructions will be provided the first day of class.

**Final Project:** A final research paper or review essay will be due in the exam period. Details will be provided on the final syllabus.

**Instructor contact:** In addition to the scheduled course meetings, I will be available at weekly virtual office hours.

**Requirements and Methods of Assessment**

- Participation 10%
- Discussion posts (7) 25%
- Student-led presentation 15%
- Guest interview preparation 15%
- Final Project 35%

The full schedule will be available a week before the start of class and a partial schedule will be available by August 21. I’m working on scheduling guests and the readings/order will depend on their availability.