9-2016

The Digital Society

PLACE

The Digital Society

How is the digital age affecting the human experience? How has technology changed our understandings of self and each other, whether on the scale of interpersonal relationships or of global society? How is it altering how we conduct business, in fields from education to government to the arts to health care? What ethical questions does it raise? What does the future hold? These two years of PLACE will engage students, faculty, and the Linfield community on these and other defining questions of the 21st century.

The two-year theme for 2016-2018, The Digital Society, will explore digital technology's effects on our society from a wide range of perspectives. In the first year, the sub-theme The Digital Self will direct our attention to the ways individuals engage with technology, including its effects on our identities, our physical bodies, our self-expression, our interpersonal relationships and our social interactions. In the second year, the sub-theme The Digital Citizen will locate the individual within the larger societal context through an examination of the political, societal, financial, and ethical consequences of our increasing global adoption of digital technology.

Below are some ideas we may wish to explore during each year of this theme. Other ideas are welcome!

Year 1, 2016-17: The Digital Self

● Personal identity in the social media age

● Impact of digital technology on physical and mental health

● Changes in the human body wrought by technology

● The role of technology in storytelling and self-expression, including writing, art, theater, and music

● Video games' effects on players and culture

● Genomics and medical genetics

● Friendships, partnerships, and communities in the digital world

● The human relationship with nature in a technology-focused era

● Rights and responsibilities of freedom of expression in a digital and social media world

Year 2, 2017-18: The Digital Citizen

● Changes in political mobilization and attitudes due to technology

● The digital revolution and the changing landscape of security (e.g. privacy, cybercrime/cyberterrorism, Wikileaks, etc.)

● K-12 and higher education in a digital age

● Technology's effects on the business world

● Law and justice in a technological era

● The changes wrought by technology on social mores and norms

● Group identity, such as race, class, gender, and nationality, in the digital age

● Digital tools' role in helping us understand the past

● Effects of increasing access to technology -- and ways to address the persistent digital divide