**Applications of Technology for Peacebuilding**

**American University Skills Workshop**

**Spring 2011**



**Instructors:** Dr. Michael Gibbons and Nicholas C. Martin.



**Description:** The advent of new and rapidly evolving technologies has fundamentally changed the capacity for processing and exchanging information in the 21st century. Citizens, NGOs, governments, and companies alike are just beginning to understand the potential that these tools and systems can have in analyzing and addressing a range of social problems.  This skills institute will explore how technology is being used to foster learning and collaboration, transform conflicts, fight diseases, monitor elections, distribute food, design better economic development measures, and much more. It will also consider some of the key challenges related to access, implementation, scale, and evaluation that working with technology presents. Through a hands-on and interactive learning approach that draws from a number of real world examples, students can expect to develop a practical set of strategies and skills that will prepare them to apply new technologies to social change work amid this rapidly evolving landscape.



**Dates: Feb 9-11 (20hrs)**



**Course Objectives:** The course has two primary educational objectives:

* Critically examine the evolution of and future for technology in peacebuilding through readings, multimedia, discussion, exercises and presentations.
* Provide practical skills and tools necessary for responding creatively and successfully with technology to the challenges and opportunities in the peacebuilding world.

**Teaching method/class format:** The course will consist of sessions involving a variety of teaching approaches, including presentations, discussions, group exercises, and will make extensive use of multimedia.

**Principal learning assignments:** Crowdsourcing exercise, crisis mapping/medical emergency simulations, mobile SMS case studies review, video games and technology tools review, and UNICEF use of technology case group project.



**Schedule:**

**Pre Workshop**

**Crowdsource Teaser.** One week prior to course, participants are asked to post the following question to their social networks (facebook, twitter, etc) “Do you know any interesting examples or organizations using technology to address social problems or build peace?” Class will revisit responses on Friday of course.

**Questionnaire:** Distribute brief training needs assessment questionnaire to allow for (a) previewing learner interests/needs before so we can tailor our design; (b) show how technology can be used to “tailor” outside-in assistance to participants at a distance; (c) incorporate the crowdsourcing technique and results into the first afternoon “intro to technology” theme as something they have already “participated in” together.

**Friday 4:00-9:00pm**

**Introductory Icebreaker:** **Technology Scavenger Hunt.** Participants are given a map with a grid of tech related search items (i.e. find another participant who used a Macintosh computer before 2000). Participants ask each other questions on the grid then collect signatures from each other based on whichever search item their partner satisfies. The goal is for participants to begin dialogues with each other around interesting tech related life experiences.

**Facilitator Introductions.** Facilitators introduce themselves, share their backgrounds and interests, as well as their expectations for the class.

**Semi-Circle Questions.** Participants are asked to arrange themselves along the arc of a semi circle depending how much they agree or disagree with a statement read by a facilitator. Sample statement: “I am comfortable with emerging technological trends.” Facilitators invite participants to share why they chose to stand where they did.

**Technology Life Maps.** Participants are invited to draw their personal journey with respect to technology (ie. major experiences with it, comforts, discomforts, hopes fears, plans for using technology in their professional life/personal life, etc. How technology relates to social change for them. Each participant is asked to present his or her map and then they are placed on the walls around the room. Facilitators lead discussion and make connections between life maps.

**Break**

**One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) Case Study.** OLPC presents an excellent case study to explore the role of technology in attempting to build peace and encourage development. Many of the key themes and pitfalls raised in the course are introduced in this example. Participants are given flashdrives with a dozen articles and asked to do critical research on the program. They are then divided into small groups to examine and discuss the success and failures of the program and how they relate to themes of course.

**Expectations and Contributions Exercise.** Participants are invited to write expectations for the course on a post-it card that can be posted on the wall. Facilitators then lead a brief discussion around themes and trends that emerge.

**Overview of Course Details:** Facilitators provide overview of course details, review schedule, and introduce class tools. Flash drives with multimedia files and PDF Documents are also handed out. Participants are also shown how to use, Diigo, a social bookmarking tool, so that as interesting case studies or websites emerge, they can be easily accessed on Diigo.

**Key Technology Facts, Figures and Trends Game.**

**Break**

**Introduction of Frameworks and Theories with MindMaps.** Facilitators lead a group discussion to establish frameworks and defining terms. What is Technology? What is Peacebuilding? Facilitators minimally introduce two concepts - PeaceBuilding, ITechnology then divide class into pairs. Pairs discuss and map ideas for each. Pairs merge into fours, discuss and enrich mindmaps. Post mindmaps and review in plenary to build a common picture of PB and IT.

**UNICEF Case Study Intro:** Participants are divided into groups and presented with a real world problem from UNICEF Innovation country office. They are then asked to do research, incorporate and utilize skills developed in class and propose a solution that will then be presented to UNICEF Innovation. Discuss and answer questions about assignment.

**Debrief:** what new technologies were used today? What new uses of technology were experienced? What other end-of-day reflections/Qs?

**Saturday 9:00-5:00pm.**

**Afghan Star Clip.** Afghan star is a documentary about an American Idol-esque contest in Afghanistan that is working to bridge cultural ethic and religious gaps. Viewers watch performances of contestants and then vote for their favorite ones using their cell phones. Clip is intended to demonstrate value of technology for social well-being in conflict zones.

**Multimedia.** Participants watch TED Talk from Erik Hersman about Ushahidi crisis mapping platform.

**Introduction of Simulation**. Discuss Ushahidi Simulation and assign roles.

**Ushahidi Simulation.** Facilitators host a two-hour simulation of the Ushahidi crisis mapping software.  The goal of the exercise is to have participants understand the possibilities and limitations of crisis mapping through a practical application. The simulation is built around elections in Afghanistan. See full simulation design [here](http://blog.ushahidi.com/index.php/2010/07/20/ushahidi-in-the-classroom/).

**1 hr Lunch Break**

**Multimedia.** Participants watch TED Talk by Jane McGonigal entitled “Gaming can make a better world”.

**Video Games for Social Change Exercise:** Participants are divided up into groups to sample best practice video games for social change. Each group then presents reflections on their experience to the large group. Video Games for Social Change include: Ayiti: Cost of Life, Third World Farmer, Darfur is Dying, Afghan Simulation, Free Rice, Open Courts.

**15 Minute break**

**Tools and Resources.** Participants choose a tool or resource to research and present on first to the small group and then to the large group. Groups are divided according to broader categories. Sample categories include: tools for research (Diigo, Zotero), tools for education and collaboration (ePals, Elgg, Classroom 2.0), tools for professional networking (PCDN, twitter), and the Technology for Peace blogroll (ushahidi, iRevolution, ICT4Peace, TechChange, etc). Each person must also add URL of tool or resource to the Diigo class list.

**UNICEF Innovation Group Presentation Work**.

**End of day debrief – reflections, Qs**

**Sunday 9:00-5:00pm**

**Multimedia. Frontline:SMS Medic Introduction.**

**Mobile Case Studies** (Cell-All, Internet, M-jirga, Mexico Traffic Program, FrontlineSMS:Credit, Souktel, SanaMobile, Grameen Phone, M-Pesa, RapidSMS). Participants choose groups based on their interests. Each group examines an organization involved in mobile peacebuilding efforts and shares with large group afterwards.

**Debrief and Check in.** Facilitators lead a large group discussion to address additional questions, ideas.

**1 hr Lunch break**

**Group Work for Presentations**. Participants make final preparations for their UNICEF presentation.

**Presentations.**  Each group presents their solutions to the class. Guest speaker (Ideally from UNICEF) and other participants provide feedback on presentation. Q&A session for each. Member of UNICEF Innovation Team is invited down to help provide feedback on ideas and incorporate each groups suggestions into real world practice.

**Final reflections, synthesis of what was learned – technology, uses, PB applications.**

**AU Evaluation.**