SSPP 6000 Advocacy in Emergent Technology, Digital Media and Society
This course is designed to build a critical foundation for understanding the interplay of digital technologies and society and the important role of advocates in this space. Providing an overview of the history, students will investigate and critique contemporary emergent technologies in a social context, and explore their use in advocacy efforts. The course uses interactive lecture, discussion, readings, and guest speakers from technologists in the field.
Fall
Also Offered As: COMM 6000
1 Course Unit

SSPP 6010 Comparative Urban and Distributive Politics
As of 2007, more than half of the world’s population resides in cities. Cities and metropolitan regions are much more unequal than the countries that host them. For example, income inequality in the New York Metropolitan Area parallels that of Rwanda at around 15 Gini points higher than the U.S. as a whole. Especially in the world’s developing regions, the onset of rapid urbanization occurs in tandem with environmental degradation that disproportionately affects impoverished and marginalized communities. This course provides an introduction to the observable patterns and challenges confronting cities and metropolitan areas and the policy remedies and options available to government, NGOs, and the private sector. First, the course will explore the political, social, and economic explanations for the origins and evolution of urban environments. We will trace the historical development of local government institutions, analyze how urban coalitions form, and investigate distributions of power. In the second half of the course, we will examine urban welfare policies in the areas of growth, housing, the distribution of public goods/services (e.g., education, public security, sanitation), identity politics and culture wars, and poverty. Focusing especially on cities in the Global South, the topics covered in this course include: poverty and urban slums, informal housing, informal labor markets, public goods and distributive justice, urban land rights and other “rights to the city” (RTC), climate change adaptation in cities, environmental risk and urban precarious settlements, gentrification and evictions, among other topics.
Fall
1 Course Unit

SSPP 6020 Applied Data Ethics, Law, and the Social Good
This course explores the applied use of civic data, specifically “using data for the social good.” Data can help us understand needs, improve services, shift policies, and build stronger, healthier, and more just communities. However, use of data can also reinforce legacies of racist policies and produce inequitable resource allocation, access, and outcomes. These tensions are the crux of this course. We will interrogate assumptions and ask difficult questions of ourselves as we hold this duality—that data can be used for good and for harm. It is up to us as practitioners to weigh the risks and benefits to ensure that civic data use is legal, ethical, and a good idea.
Fall
1 Course Unit