

COURSE DETAIL

SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE, AND THE BIG BROTHER SOCIETY

Country

Ireland

Host Institution

University College Dublin

Program(s)

University College Dublin

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Sociology

UCEAP Course Number

174

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE, AND THE BIG BROTHER SOCIETY

UCEAP Transcript Title

SECURITY/SRVEILLNCE

UCEAP Quarter Units

5.00

UCEAP Semester Units

3.30

Course Description

People seem to be increasingly concerned with security. There is a marked perception that insecurity is on the rise, and that the world has become an extremely unsafe place. Security policies like predictive policing, urban surveillance, border control, and antiterrorism have grown in technological sophistication and legitimacy, and are increasingly debated in electoral campaigns, among policy makers, and in the press. And yet, crime statistics show unequivocally that we have never been safer. How do we explain this discrepancy, and how do we analyse critically society's concern with security and surveillance, as well as the solutions proposed by different actors to solve such concerns? This course explores what security and surveillance teach us about our society, its fears, and the way different categories of people think about and act on (in)security both online and offline. It discusses case studies such as urban insecurity, digital surveillance, border control, and citizen initiatives to increase security, and explore the causes and consequences of such practices in our society. It reflects on whose (in)security matters and why, and assesses whether practices such as predictive policing, CCTV cameras, face recognition technologies really work, for whom, and how. Students think about what it means to live in a Big Brother society – where a lot of what we do is subjected to surveillance – and explore sociological insights on surveillance and security.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

SOC30780

Host Institution Course Title

SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE, AND THE BIG BROTHER SOCIETY

Host Institution Course Details

https://hub.ucd.ie/usis/!W_HU_MENU.P_PUBLISH?p_tag=MODULE&MODULE=SOC30780

Host Institution Campus
Host Institution Faculty Sociology
Host Institution Degree
Host Institution Department
Course Last Reviewed 2025-2026

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