Computers and Society
PHIL 366 (*3) | Dr. Mark Wolfe
July 30–August 17, 2018

As our fascination with and dependence on advanced communication media deepens, the work of thinkers such as Marshall McLuhan continues to be revived and mined for insight on how technology is shaping us cognitively and socially. We will study Berlin’s media-rich environment and use the contrast with North American media culture to explore where we’re headed with this technology.

The course blends key writings in media theory and philosophy with field trips to natural and organized media centres in Berlin including the famous East Side gallery, the Central Kino graffiti walk in the Hackesche Höfe, and Babelsberg studio. As well, special seminars and guest lecture in the Marshall McLuhan Salon at the Canadian Embassy will complement a visit to the Television and Film museum located across the street in Berlin’s renowned Sony Centre – all designed to illuminate and make real key questions regarding media development and use, including: why are contemporary media so irresistible? Does extensive media use change us in fundamental ways? Are there social implications for a world increasingly reliant on media technology?

This course is open to students in all disciplines with an interest in further understanding the role and implications of media use in our lives and the places we inhabit.