

WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
CSE 098 – Section 010 (1 credit)
January 24 – March 6, 2020 * 2:05pm – 3:20pm Fri * BC- 115

Instructors:

Professor Daniel Lopresti
Email dal9@lehigh.edu ~ Ext. 85782

Samantha Walravens, Adjunct Professor & Co-author, *Geek Girl Rising: Inside the Sisterhood Shaking Up Tech*
Email: samwalravens@gmail.com

Description: This class looks at the transformative role women play in promoting prosperity and human progress through technology and innovation. The class will shine a light on the remarkable women who are building companies and technologies that transform the way we live and work, and who are paving new paths for female entrepreneurship and gender equality. It will also look at the challenges that women in tech continue to face, including sexism, gender discrimination, unconscious bias, impostor syndrome and more. This one credit class will explore the issues over seven sessions, meeting once weekly. The class will feature a number of guest lectures by female tech leaders who will offer points of view on the issues, and share their experiences as a guidepost for success

Topics explored in the course will include:

- Why diversity (gender, race, culture) matters in the workplace, especially in tech
- Entrepreneurship and the challenges/opportunities facing female founders
- Breaking the glass ceiling: the path to leadership for women in tech
- The “leaky” pipeline: how do we attract and retain more women in tech?
- The importance of coaching and mentoring young women in tech
- Venture capital’s diversity problem, and how we fix it
- Why “soft skills” matter: emotional intelligence, authenticity, communication skills
- The next “big thing”: future trends in tech

Texts: *Geek Girl Rising: Inside the Sisterhood Shaking Up Tech*. There may also be weekly assigned readings/articles posted to CourseSite.

Grading: Participation (in-class & online discussion forums) (50%)
Final Paper (50%)

Mentorship Program & Final Paper

For the duration of the seven-week course, you will be matched with a female in the technology industry who will serve as your mentor as you examine the opportunities and challenges faced by women in tech. As part of your final grade, you will conduct an interview with the mentor and

write a three- to five-page paper regarding your findings from the interview, insights from the mentoring relationship, and key takeaways from the class discussions.

Final Paper

Each student in the course must submit a final paper due by 9:00 pm on Monday, March 16. The purpose of the paper is to reflect on your findings from the interview with your mentor and any insights you gained from the mentoring relationship. You should also incorporate key lessons you learned from the class presentations. Papers may examine one or two topics deeply, or examine more topics in less detail. The paper should be three to five pages (Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced). Quality over quantity is more important. We expect your write-up to follow the style of a high-quality and thoughtful paper, including proper use of citations. Your final paper will account for 50% of your grade in the course.

Weekly Schedule

Friday, January 24: Why diversity matters in the world of technology & innovation

Readings: Chapter 1 in *Geek Girl Rising*; McKinsey report, "Why Diversity Matters"

Speakers:

- Bari Williams: VP of Legal & Policy Affairs at All Turtles; Former Senior Counsel, Facebook
- Jossie Haines: Platform Engineering Director, Tile; Diversity advocate

Friday, January 31: Success strategies of female founders

Reading: Chapter 2 in *Geek Girl Rising*

Speakers:

- Ari Horie: Founder and CEO, Women's Startup Lab
- Maci Peterson: Founder and CEO, On Second Thought

Friday, February 7: Funding female and diverse founders

Reading: Chapter 3 in *Geek Girl Rising*

Speakers:

- Shelly Kapoor Collins: Founding partner, The Shatter Fund
- Lisa Jones: Angel investor, Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund
- Susannah Shipton: Venture capitalist, AlleyCorp

Friday, February 14: The path to leadership

Reading: Chapter 4 in *Geek Girl Rising*; [McKinsey report, Women in the Workplace 2018](#); [Lean In: The "Broken Rung"](#)

Speakers:

- Kathleen Egan: COO ecomedes; Lehigh engineering, Harvard MBA
- Aparna Pujar: CEO and founder, Zemplee
- Mercedes Broening: VP of product and technology strategy at First Republic Bank

Friday, February 21: Young alumni in tech panel

Reading: Chapter 6 in *Geek Girl Rising*

Speakers:

- Christine Quan: Data scientist & engineer, Sisense (BS, MS Stanford 2014)
- Emma Catlin: Software engineer, Pinterest (Brown 2018)
- Kati Pease: Deployment strategist, Stripe (Lehigh 2009)

Friday, February 28: Inspiring the next generation

Reading: Chapter 7 in *Geek Girl Rising*

Speakers:

- Sona Dolasia: Founder, Reaching Out With Robotics
- Allie Diracles: Founder and CEO, VidCode
- Dhana Pawar: General Manager, VeraTempo; Managing Director, Girls in Tech

Friday, March 6: The next “big thing”: future trends in tech

Reading: Chapter 5 in *Geek Girl Rising*; Forbes article, [“2019 Tech Forecast: 11 Experts Predict The Next Wave Of Breakout Technologies”](#)

Speakers:

- Cack Wilhelm: Venture capitalist, IVP (Institutional Venture Partners)
- Kathleen Cavanagh: Software Developer, Symbio Robotics
- Fiona McEvoy: Technology Ethics Researcher, Founder of YouTheData.com

Collaboration

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all of your work in this course is to be an individual effort. You are encouraged to discuss assignments with one another, your friends, and with the instructors. Indeed, this may be the most effective method of learning. However, all work submitted in your name must be your own. You may not copy in whole or in part from another student or from a website. Violations will be considered as cases of academic dishonesty and referred to the University Committee on Discipline. If you are found guilty, you may be given the failing grade WF in the course. If any aspect of this policy is not clear to you, do not make assumptions; consult with the instructors.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please contact both your instructors and the Office of Academic Support Services, Williams Hall, Suite 301 (610-758-4152) as early as possible in the semester. You must have documentation from the Academic Support Services office before accommodations can be granted.

Principles of Our Equitable Community

Lehigh University endorses The Principles of Our Equitable Community. We expect each member of this class to acknowledge and practice these Principles. Respect for each other and for differing viewpoints is a vital component of the learning environment inside and outside the classroom.