

# STS4600 Ferguson Spring 2022

## Instructions for HW2 on Global Classroom and Engineering Cultures

### Goals and Justification

First, we have had assignments and conversations about your already existing identities and commitments--passions, values, and objectives. What we have not established are more grounded practices to figure out how we are shaped on a daily basis to think and behave based upon our surroundings. We are practicing methods of being attentive to the socio-material-cultural world we are embedded within. There will be two options available to complete this assignment.

### Option 1: Self-study

You will be capturing raw "data"--mostly through video and image documentation but in your own written text where appropriate--of your lived experience. We will then use that material to construct a story together about what it means to become a UVA engineer. This is the cognitive, analytical, and emotion work of understanding engineering cultures. You will be learning about your own situated self (how do I 'become' who I am) and how others in your same community view their situated self in the same location; think of this as collaborative field research. We are looking to be mindful of our physical surroundings and relationships as we interrogate the social groups and cultural norms you are living with. These are foundational aspects of what it means to act like a responsible, ethical engineer--we need to see clearly before we can hope to act appropriately.

**Example of using Audio and Visuals to tell a story.** For a professional depiction of organizational cultures you can watch American Factory for how to tell stories of culture and practice through video, audio, and static images. Notice how the directors focus on interactions between people, interactions with materials/tools, media posted in their working spaces, and sites where people hang out formally and informally.

**Example of how engineering cultures shape engineering practice and outcomes.** [This is a recording](#) I thought insightful because it is someone in software development who reflects on the multitude of different organizational cultures and how components of them support or degrade the success of a team.

**Example of an expert in organizational culture talks about a case study (Huawei).** <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/corporate-culture-nuclear-bomb-huawei-eric-flamholtz/>

## Option 1: Instructions

Portray your engineers training and campus life at UVA, one of your internships, or in a lab/design space. What components constitute your daily life and practice as an emerging engineer—give concrete examples:

- Rituals you and your peers go through (noticing rituals is challenging, we can work together on the analysis);
- What are the materials shared between people or that modify how they interact with one another;
- Description such as typically daily and high stress schedules;
- Spaces you occupy individually and in groups that might shape you like restaurant, laboratory, classroom, dormitory, gym, shared public homework spaces, etc.;
- Identify, ideally with recorded video or photos, what shared behaviors, practices, or norms exist: dress codes, clubs or events you join, indicators of success or failure, who "fits" into the in-group and how you identify in-groups, how people share what they believe or care about, what media/text/propaganda exists that might promote certain agendas or ideologies or expectations.
- Note anything that violates or supports the values, beliefs, or commitments you have identified in previous assignments.

## Option 2: Global Engineering, Culture, and Tech?

There is an event I am co-hosting on the 29th (9pm-11pm) with our friends in Taiwan. We are inviting Huawei's Vice President of Corporate Strategy, ANDREW EDWARD WILLIAMSON, and a Senior Director of Public Affairs and Communications working on Corporate Social Responsibility programs, Haohan Zhang, to come talk to us. We want you to drive the conversation by sharing what you know and don't know about Huawei and the ongoing conversation about the fascinating world of transnational big tech, data governance, corporate responsibility across global spaces, and questions of culture and politics. I'd like you to attend the event, but you can still develop your assignment even if you can't attend, there will be a recording eventually that you can look back over. Prompt questions and instructions follow...

## Option 2: Instructions

Rather than have you do a simple internet search and drown in the information I am providing some resources to start from. Be aware that I am not advocating or taking a stance on anything. I am building Option 2 as an opportunity to use similar skills from Option 1, locate evidence of culture in context, analyze that evidence, locate yourself in the analysis, and develop insights into how a small subset of the world operates. As an expert in qualitative methods, this is one of many procedures I would use in my research when I am attempting to understand norms and behaviors within groups of engineers, technologists, or scientists. Three resources to start from:

1. First is a video clip of a documentary called the "100 faces of Huawei." The time stamp is part way through and I want you to go from there to the end. Pay attention to how the producers of the video show off the location, interactions, organizational context, and personal values. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeXIFmzfgzM&t=853s>
2. Second resource is a case study style of evaluating Huawei as an organization concerned with this idea of corporate social responsibility. <https://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/corporate-social-responsibility-csr-in-china-huawei-as-a-case-study/>
3. Third is one a conversation about organizational culture. This one speaks to the complexity of talking about organizations and the way in which groups of people can intentionally build relationships that are supportive. The author also talks about the superficial claims of corporate culture and then how to analyze what the "actual" cultural factors are behind those claims. The ideas are useful for your analysis of any personal or professional organization, do their values and norms match your own commitments?

Your task is to digest the material above and any other evidence you would like to evaluate. You will then answer these questions:

- What are the divergent portrayals of Huawei as a political entity (remember technoscience has politics) and as a market player, e.g. what do we know about Huawei as best as we are able to surmise? Include links to any evidence you find useful to your discussion.
- What don't you know based upon your evaluation of the evidence? Include questions that you would pose to our guests or questions that you would use to develop a research project on the subject of "Organizational Culture and Social Responsibility."