Online communities bring together people to talk, work and play. From reddit, to networks linking young mothers, sites for those fighting cancer, building software or even discussing a company's latest product online communities abound. How do these communities work? What brings people in and keeps them contributing? What does a "community manager" or "moderator" do, anyway? How might we know when a community is in trouble? Taking this course will teach you how to build and sustain communities and how to measure activity to see dynamics over their lifecycle. We'll draw on and use many theories from social psychology and human-computer interaction while learning practical and hands-on skills for understanding and building thriving online communities.

To give you a little more insight into the course as I develop the syllabus (which will eventually replace this document) these are the two books that we'll be drawing on (as well as loads of examples from existing and historical online communities):

Kraut and Resnick (2012) Building Successful Online Communities: Evidence-Based Social Design  
http://www.amazon.com/Building-Successful-Online-Communities-Evidence-Based/dp/0262016575/

Millington (2012) Buzzing Communities: How To Build Bigger, Better, And More Active Online Communities  
http://www.feverbee.com/2012/11/buzzing-communities-.html

The rest of the feverbee.com (http://feverbee.com) site is a great resource for getting a feel for the likely content of the course as well.