

**Communication 3554:
Social Implications of Communication Technology
Autumn 2016**

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Class Information: Tu & Th 3:55PM - 5:15PM Journalism Bldg 251

Course Description: This is an upper-level course on the social implications of communication technologies. We will cover many communication technologies, including but not limited to social networking sites, online dating sites, video games, health apps. We will also cover important issues that cut across multiple technologies, such as privacy, digital deception, and cyberbullying.

Course Objectives:

1. To explain the historical origin of the study of communication technologies.
2. To apply communication concepts and theories to new media technologies.
3. To understand the effects of media technologies on ourselves and society.
4. To develop strategies for using and managing media technologies in our daily lives.
5. To build the critical skills to analyze and interpret media technologies and their messages.

Required readings will be available on CARMEN.

Additional Resources: During the course of this class and throughout your university career, you may find the following helpful:

*The Writing Center. This may be the last time in your life that you have easily accessible help available for your writing skills—use it. Being a good writer will give you an advantage in every walk of life, and if you are a Communication major, it is expected. Visit <http://cstw.osu.edu/writingcenter> to learn more or to schedule an appointment.

**The American Psychological Association (APA) Style Manual*. For those of you pursuing a degree in social science, this book is what will dictate many of the expectations for your research writing. It includes guidelines on citations, formatting, tone, etc. APA style will be required for the final paper submitted in this class. You may also find some information about formatting at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

COURSE POLICIES

Make-Up Exams: Make-up exams will not be given except in cases of extreme, unforeseen, and convincingly documented emergencies (notification within 24 hours of the exam time is required) or official University related absences (instructor must be notified at least two weeks in advance). Your instructor reserves the right to determine what qualifies as extreme and what documentation is required. Unacceptable excuses include, but are not limited to: having a cold, being emotionally distraught, being out of town, oversleeping, having to work, not being able to find a parking space, car trouble, and flight delays or cancellations.

Attendance: Attendance (both physical and mental) is key to your success in this class. Your grade is largely contingent upon your continued presence in class. Listen, take notes, and ask questions. Much of the material presented in lecture is not found in your readings. If you miss class for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate. *The instructor will not provide notes in any circumstance and slides are not posted on Carmen.* If you miss class, you will not be able to make up any in-class work or extra credit opportunities.

Research Participation: This course is enrolled in the School of Communication's C-REP participant pool. C-REP is designed to give students direct exposure to the topics, goals, methods, and ethical issues of communication research. You can participate in C-REP studies to earn extra credits in the course. One research credit in C-REP corresponds to 2 points in this course; therefore, to receive the maximum possible 6 points you need to complete 3 research credits. You should definitely NOT wait until the last minute to sign up for participation because people tend to procrastinate and research opportunities will be limited. In fact, it is probably wise to complete your C-REP requirement as early as possible in the semester when you have more time. Note that the same C-REP participation cannot be counted for more than one course. To sign up for studies, go to the website <https://osucomm.sona-systems.com/>. If you have questions about C-REP, email Jessica Frampton at frampton.22@buckeyemail.osu.edu.

Disruptions: Disruptions and distractions (including talking during lecture; text messaging or other phone use; nonclass computer activity; or reading nonclass materials), threatening behavior, and negative participation (e.g., use of inappropriate language or derogatory speech) will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior may be asked to leave class, suffer grade penalties, and be reported to the School of Communication Director, the Dean of Students, and/or University Police.

Web/Email Policy: For this course, you are required to have online access regularly (i.e., at least 2-3 times a week). Email should be used for quick administrative questions and emergency contact **only**. Additionally, emails should be written using standards of courtesy (address, proper tone, and signature) or they will be returned to you. If you have questions or concerns (e.g., about an assignment, material discussed in class or the text, your grade) make an appointment or drop by our office hours. Updates to the course

schedule or readings will be announced in class and also on Carmen; it is your responsibility to stay apprised of these changes.

Technology: Students are NOT allowed to take photographs, record video, or record audio during class. Laptops and tablets should be used only for note taking and class related activities. Failure to comply with these policies will result in point deductions.

Challenging a Grade: We do not discuss individual grades in the classroom. To challenge a grade, you must meet the instructor or TA during office hours or make an appointment *within one week of the grades being posted* on Carmen. Please note that a challenge may result in grades being raised or lowered. Also note that grading is an exercise in professional judgment that we take very seriously. We spend large amounts of time developing and grading assignments, and we do not arrive at grade decisions haphazardly. In this regard, do not challenge a grade unless you truly believe there is a legitimate problem with our decision.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of your contract as a student. I expect that you will know and follow the University's policies on cheating and plagiarism. All students are subject to the student code of conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp), including the student code of academic integrity. Violations of the code will result in severe penalties in this course and all violations will be reported to the School of Communication and the Committee on Academic Misconduct. Ignorance about plagiarism and cheating is NOT an acceptable excuse.

Disability Accommodations: If you anticipate the need for accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, please contact the Office for Disability Services, Pomerene Hall, Room 150, or phone (614) 292-3307. Students with documented disabilities can meet with me privately within the first three weeks of class to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Diversity: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this syllabus constitutes a list of basic class policies. I reserve the right to modify this information when deemed necessary for any reason. You will be notified in class, via email, and/or on Carmen if and when any changes occur.

Assignments & Their Point Values

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
In-class assignments	50 points
Project	100 points
Peer evaluations	10 points
Total	360 points

Grade Break Downs (in percentage points):

93-100% = A	90-92.99% = A-	
87-89.99% = B+	83-86.99% = B	80-82.99% = B-
77-79.99 % = C+	73-76.99% = C	70-72.99% = C-
67-69.99% = D+	60-66.99% = D	below 60% = E

Exams: There will be two exams, each consisting of multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. For the most part, the exams will NOT be cumulative. However, some major concepts discussed throughout the semester may appear on multiple exams. I will make a study guide available about a week before the exam. Please understand that the guide is meant to be just that—a guide. Although I try to stick to the information as presented on the study guide, I do consider all reading and lecture material to be fair game for exam questions.

In-class assignments: They are designed to assess your understanding of reading materials or reinforce content recently covered in the course. There will be a total of 7 in-class assignments throughout the semester. You will not know in advance which days we will have in-class assignments. *These assignments cannot be made up outside of class. That is, you must be in class in order to earn these points.* I will drop your two lowest scores providing you some cushion should you need to miss class on the day of an in-class assignments. Once in-class assignments are passed out and students begin them, I reserve the right to not pass out any additional quizzes. Students with late enrollments will have to accept the fact that missed assignments cannot be made up.

Final Project: Throughout the semester, you will be working on a group project. Each group may consist of 3 to 5 students. A recommended size is 4 members. Each group will produce some creative materials, write a paper, and give a presentation on a topic related to communication technologies. Each student will be evaluated individually based on their unique contribution to the project as well as evaluations that they will receive from other group members. Papers should be turned in as hard copies at the beginning of class on the due day. Late submissions will be penalized. Further details about the project will be announced in class and be available on Carmen.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Assignments	Topic	Readings
1	8/23		Syllabus	Syllabus
	8/25	Read final project document	Basics of communication technology	Rheingold; Castells
2	8/30		Concepts and theories	Reeves & Nass, ch.1
	9/1	Brainstorm and propose project ideas	Concepts and theories	Walther, 2011
3	9/6		Psychological effects	Levitin
	9/8		Online identity	“Generation Like”
4	9/13		Friendship in CMC	Baym, 2010
	9/15	Group and topic due	Romantic relationships in CMC	Toma & Hancock, 2011
5	9/20	Feedback on topic	Romantic relationships in CMC	Pelley, 2016; Weisskirch, 2012
	9/22		Video games and virtual reality	Sherry, 2004
6	9/27		Video games and virtual reality	TBD
	9/29		Review class	
7	10/4		Exam 1	
	10/6	Proposal due	Social influence	Blascovich & Bailenson, ch. 4
8	10/11	Feedback on proposal	Social influence	Fogg, ch.5
	10/13		Fall Break	
9	10/18		Work and other applications	Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014
	10/20		eHealth	Wright, Sparks, & O’Hair, ch. 7
10	10/25		eHealth	Wright, 2015
	10/27		eHealth; Group meeting	
11	11/1		Group meeting with the instructor	
	11/3		Digital culture	Nahon & Hemsley, ch. 2
12	11/8		Privacy and surveillance	Scherker, 2014 Pew Research, 2015
	11/10	<i>TA extra office hours</i>	Project work day (Instructor at NCA)	
13	11/15		Dark side of technologies	Hancock et al., 2004
	11/17		Dark side of technologies	Sales, 2013
14	11/22		Project finalization	
	11/24		<i>Thanksgiving holiday</i>	
15	11/29	Final project due	Presentation	
	12/1		Presentation	
16	12/6		Presentation & Review	
17	12/14		FINAL EXAM	4:00pm-5:45pm