

# COMM 3554:

## Social Implications of Communication Technology

Tu/Th 3:55-5:15pm, 360 Journalism Building

### Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Jessica Frampton

Office: 310 Journalism Building

Office hours: 11:00am-1:00pm EST Tuesdays & Thursdays (and by appointment)

Email: [frampton.22@osu.edu](mailto:frampton.22@osu.edu) (Please put "COMM 3554" in the subject line and adhere to the email protocol outlined below.)

Teaching Assistant: Ashlee Lehr

Email: [lehr.71@osu.edu](mailto:lehr.71@osu.edu)

### Course Description & Goals

This is an upper-level course on the social implications of communication technology. We will cover many communication technologies such as social networking sites, online dating sites, video games, texting, mobile telephony, and virtual reality. We will also cover important issues that cut across multiple technologies, such as privacy, digital deception, and cyberbullying. At times, we consider the ways communication technology may affect society as a whole (e.g., the spread of fake news) as well as cases in which communication technologies affect their individual users (e.g., the connection between social media and mental health).

- Students will learn about the characteristics, functionality, and usage of communication technologies; a focus will be placed on identifying the unique properties of new communication technologies.
- Students will be able to explain the historical origin of the study of communication technology.
- Students will increase their knowledge of the effects of communication technology on ourselves and society.
- Students will apply existing theory and research findings to new media technologies.
- Students will develop strategies for using and managing communication technology in our daily lives.
- Students will build critical skills to analyze and interpret communication technologies and their messages.

## Required Textbook

Downs, E. (Ed.) (2019). *The dark side of media and technology: A 21<sup>st</sup> century guide to media and technological literacy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang. (ISBN: 978-1-4331-4900-9)

**Note:** You may purchase an electronic version of the text directly from the publisher:  
<https://www.peterlang.com/view/title/65416>

I will provide other required media content, materials, and readings via Carmen throughout the semester.

## Course Technology

For help with your password, university e-mail, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.

Self-Service and Chat support: <http://ocio.osu.edu/selfservice>  
Phone: 614-688-HELP (4357)  
Email: [8help@osu.edu](mailto:8help@osu.edu)  
TDD number: 614-688-8743

## Carmen

Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [carmen.osu.edu](http://carmen.osu.edu). Log into Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit [my.osu.edu](http://my.osu.edu).

Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>

If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor and visit the following site: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2061>

## Basic Technological Skills, Software, Equipment, & Supplies Requirements

- You need to come to class with blank notebook paper and a writing utensil.
- You need basic computer and web-browsing skills.
- You need to be comfortable accessing and navigating Carmen.

- You need **a working OSU email address and Carmen announcement notifications enabled**. I will often send emails or create Carmen announcements to provide updates to you regarding course materials, assignment due dates, and other important elements relevant to the class. Thus, it is important that you are able to receive these emails and announcements in a timely manner.
- You need access to a high-speed internet connection. Many elements of the course are presented online, so it is essential that you can gain access to these materials, whether on your personal computer or using the university's computers and resources.
- You need access to a computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+)
- You need a word processor with the ability to save files as .doc, .docx, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word and Mac Pages have these abilities. OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. To install, please visit [https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb\\_view.do?sysparm\\_article=kb04733](https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733)

## Communicating with the Instructor

### Email

In general, students should refer first to the course syllabus and Carmen for due dates, assignment details, and other course information. Please reserve email messages for extenuating circumstances and points of administrative concern. **Please do not use Carmen messaging for communicating**, as I do not check this regularly, and it is unreliable.

In any email communication, students must put "COMM 3554" in the subject line and demonstrate professional courtesy in their message. Email messages that do not adhere to this policy may not receive a response.

Generally, you can expect me to reply to emails within 24 hours on weekdays. I may take up to 48 hours to respond on weekends. I will let you know if there are any circumstances that affect my ability to respond to emails for a particular week.

### Class Questions Discussion Board

If you have a question that you would like answered that would benefit the whole class (e.g., a question about clarifying assignment instructions, a question about using C-REP, a question about course content), you can post it on the Carmen discussion board titled "Class Questions." I will respond as soon as I am able. Your classmates might also respond to you if they know the answer.

Be sure to check previous posts in the discussion board to see if your question has already been asked and answered. Also make sure you check this syllabus and Carmen announcements to see if your question is answered there before posting.

This discussion board is **NOT** where you ask questions about your own grades. Grades should be discussed privately.

## Attendance, Professionalism, & Participation

### Attendance

Although attendance does not factor into your final grade per se, attendance (both physical and mental) is key to your success in this class. Listen, take notes, and ask questions. Much of the material presented in lecture is not found in your readings, and exams primarily draw on lecture material. You are also graded on your participation in in-class activities.

If you miss class for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to obtain notes and get any news or updates from a classmate; **notes will not be provided, and slides are not posted online**. If you miss class, you will not be able to make up any in-class work or extra credit opportunities without documentation of extreme extenuating circumstances.

Tardiness or leaving class early is unacceptable, as it disrupts your colleagues' learning experience. In the event that you must enter or leave the classroom during lecture, do so as quickly and quietly as possible.

### Professionalism & Class Participation

**Professionalism and class participation count for 2.5% (10 points) of your grade.** You earn these points by participating in in-class activities and following the rules and guidelines outlined in this section of the syllabus.

Unprofessional communication is not tolerated in the workplace, nor will it be tolerated in this class. Mutual respect, willingness to listen, and an ability to constructively communicate about alternative viewpoints are necessary skills for this course. Please remain civilized and respectful in all communications, whether in-person or online. Any disrespectful commentary will result in a grade penalty and possibly further consequences with the University depending on the severity of the offense.

Class disruptions and distractions (e.g., talking during lecture, text messaging or other phone use, non-class computer activity, reading non-class 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.

**To be clear, technology (e.g., laptops, cellphones) should only be used for class-related activities.**

If you are contacting the instructor or TA, your tone and language should be professional at all times. As noted above, you should also be sure to check the syllabus and Carmen before emailing us to ask questions about due dates, which textbook to purchase, etc.

Moreover, I love helping students with questions or concerns they might have, but we need to respect each other's time. As a result, if you schedule a meeting with me outside of my regular office hours, I expect you to show up. If something comes up and you are unable to make the meeting, please email me ahead of time to notify me you will not be able to come to the meeting. I will do the same for you.

## Assignments

### Quizzes

All quizzes will be administered on Carmen. The quizzes will be open book/notes and cover material from the textbook, other readings, and lecture. Some of the material on the quizzes may reappear on exams. The quiz description in Carmen will state which material each quiz covers. **You have 1 attempt to take each quiz, and quizzes are timed.** Due dates are listed in the course calendar below. **I will drop your lowest quiz grade** (i.e., it will not be calculated into your final grade).

### Project

Throughout the semester, you will work on a group project. Each group will produce some creative materials, write a paper, and give a presentation on a topic related to communication technologies. Each group member will also need to submit peer evaluations. You will be required to check in with me about your project at several points in the semester (see the dates below). Further details about the project, including instructions for all project check-ins, will be announced in class and be available on Carmen.

### Discussions

At two points in the semester, you will be asked to reflect on what you have learned so far by participating in a class discussion. Prior to each discussion day, you will be required to submit **at least 2** discussion questions. To earn full credit for question submission, the questions must be high quality and thoughtful. You will also be asked to participate in class during the discussion days. More information about how to participate, the discussion topics, and how to write quality discussion questions will be provided in lecture.

## Exams

The midterm and final exams will be taken in class on the dates listed in the course calendar below. The exams will cover information from textbook readings, other readings, and lecture. They will feature some combination of multiple choice, true/false, and matching style questions. I will design the questions to assess your definitional understanding of course content and ability to accurately apply, interpret, and evaluate human communication and behavior through the lens of course concepts.

## Extra Credit

Students may earn up to three points of extra credit by participating in the School of Communication's Communication Research Experience Program (C-REP). One hour of research participation is equal to one point of extra credit. A non-research participation alternative is also available if you do not wish to participate in studies or are ineligible to participate in a research study. The C-REP Fall 2019 Student Guide will be posted on Carmen as soon as it is available, and it has more details about research participation. If you want to obtain an alternate assignment or need to unlock your C-REP account, you will need contact the C-REP coordinator, Shannon Poulsen, at poulsen.6@osu.edu.

## Grading

### Grading Scale & Point Distribution

<b>A</b> = 93-100%	<b>B+</b> = 87-89.9%	<b>C+</b> = 77-79.9%	<b>D+</b> = 67-69.9%
<b>A-</b> = 90-92.9%	<b>B</b> = 83-86.9%	<b>C</b> = 73-76.9%	<b>D</b> = 60-66.9%
	<b>B-</b> = 80-82.9%	<b>C-</b> = 70-72.9%	<b>E</b> = under 60%

Professionalism & Participation	10
Quizzes (10 pts. each & your lowest score is dropped)	30
Midterm exam	100
Final exam	120
Discussions (Question submission: 3 pts./question, Participation: 4 pts./day)	20
Project	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>

## Late Work

Quizzes and other assignments will not be accepted late without documentation of extreme extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies).

You are required to take the exams on the scheduled days. Missing an exam will result in 0 points. Make-up exams will only be allowed in cases of documented emergencies.

Computer/technology problems will not be considered an acceptable justification for late work unless you have a note from IT/OCIO staff documenting an actual Carmen issue that affected your submission. Please note that IT/OCIO staff are able to see when you last logged in, what Carmen pages you navigated to, and how long you were on each page.

## A General Note

The grade you earn in this course will reflect your effort. If you find yourself struggling to achieve what you are here to accomplish, then please come speak with me so that I might help you strategize your approach to my class. My door is open.

Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this class. There will not be opportunities for you to re-take exams or re-complete assignments to raise your grade. It is your responsibility to ensure that you receive a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. No exceptions will be made.

## Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

**To be clear, you should not put any of my course materials on document-sharing websites without my permission.**

**Students are NOT allowed to take photographs, record video, or record audio during class without permission from the instructor.**

## OSU Resources and Policies Observed in this Course

### Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services’ website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

## Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition, and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

## Please Take Care of Yourself (Mental Health Statement)

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are, or someone you know is, suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting [ccs.osu.edu](http://ccs.osu.edu) or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 1-800-273-8255), text (4hope to 741741), or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

## 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.

## Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu)



## Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. **Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487).**

For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<https://studentconduct.osu.edu/CodeofStudentConductVersions>) and the “Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity” available at <https://oaa.osu.edu/coamtensuggestions.html>.

For this course, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Using someone else’s ideas or expression (e.g., writing) without proper acknowledgement of the source is academic dishonesty. Proper acknowledgement (e.g., citation, quotation, footnote) should make clear both the extent and nature of the use. If you have used someone’s exact words, you should use quotation marks as well as a citation. If a large portion of your writing uses another person’s ideas, argument structure, or narrative form, then you should make clear where the borrowing begins and ends. Note that paraphrasing someone, summarizing their arguments, or using their ideas are all plagiarism if the source is not acknowledged. **Plagiarism is more than just using someone else’s exact words.**
- Collaborating with other students on any assignment, homework, class project, etc., without the clear consent of the instructor is also academic dishonesty. If the work is not assigned as a group project, you must do it entirely on your own. Check with your instructor if in doubt.
- In most instances, taking your own work from one course and submitting it in a different course is also considered academic dishonesty. Check with your instructor if in doubt.
- Exchanging information with another individual during a test is academic dishonesty, as is the use of any materials not permitted for the exam.

## Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact

information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

## Calendar

I will make every attempt to adhere to these dates. However, these dates are subject to change. Please check Carmen (especially the announcements), which is where I will post changes if necessary.

**\*\*Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due 11:59pm\*\***

Week 1	Topic	Readings	What's Due?
8/20	Course introduction		
8/22	What is technology, and what do we mean by social implications?, Group project introduction	Syllabus, Textbook chs. 1 & 25	Attendance check
<b>Week 2</b>			
8/27	Concepts & Theories	McEwan (2015) & Metzger (2009)	Syllabus quiz (Quiz #1), Group questionnaire
8/29	Psychological effects & Problematic use	Textbook chs. 8 & 20	
<b>Week 3</b>			
9/3	Individual differences, Group selection, & Project brainstorming	APA (2017)	
9/5	Identities, Groups, & Self-presentation	Textbook chs. 7 & 18	
<b>Week 4</b>			
9/10	Privacy & Surveillance	Merchant (2015) & Textbook ch. 16	Quiz #2, Notify Dr. Frampton of group members by 5:15pm
9/12	Relationships (Part 1) <i>Guest speaker: Katy Coduto</i>	Pattillo (2019) & Textbook ch. 12	
<b>Week 5</b>			
9/17	Relationships (Part 2)	Fox & Frampton (2017) & Textbook ch. 13	
9/19	Social influence	Jones et al. (2012)	Project proposal; Discussion #1 questions

<b>Week 6</b>			
9/24	Discussion #1 day		
9/26	Concerns about children	Textbook chs. 14 & 15	
<b>Week 7</b>			
10/1	Net neutrality, Ethics, & Group meetings		Quiz #3
10/3	Exam review		Project check-in (due in class)
<b>Week 8</b>			
10/8	<b>Midterm exam</b>		
10/10	Fall break – No class		
<b>Week 9</b>			
10/15	Go over the exam & Group meetings		
10/17	News, Education, Work, & Other contexts	Berkelaar & Buzzanell (2015) & Textbook ch. 4	
<b>Week 10</b>			
10/22	Documentary screening (Part 1)		
10/24	Documentary screening (Part 2)		
<b>Week 11</b>			
10/29	Health	Ahn and Fox (2018) & Singh (2014)	Project check-in (due in class)
10/31	Drones, Virtual reality, & Other emerging technology	Shahani (2017) & Textbook ch. 21	
<b>Week 12</b>			
11/5	Project work day		Quiz #4
11/7	Presentations		Presentations & creative materials due for all groups by the start of class (3:55pm)
<b>Week 13</b>			
11/12	Presentations		
11/14	Dr. Frampton at a conference		Discussion #2 questions
<b>Week 14</b>			

11/19	Presentations		
11/21	Discussion #2 day		
<b>Week 15</b>			
11/26	Catch up day		Papers & peer reviews due for all groups
11/28	Thanksgiving – No class		
<b>Week 16</b>			
12/3	Review day		
<b>Week 17</b>			
12/11	<b>Final Exam 4:00-5:45pm EST</b>		

*This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described herein.*