THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

# SYLLABUS
# COMM 3554

Social Implications of Media Technologies
Autumn 2021
3 credit hours
Online

## COURSE OVERVIEW

## Instructor

Instructor: Austin Hubner, M.A.

Preferred Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Email address (preferred contact method): hubner.9@osu.edu

Office hours: MW 10-12 and by appointment

## T.A.

Instructor: Kara Fort

Preferred Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Email address: fort.40@osu.edu

Office hours: TR 11:30-1:30

## Course description

**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).**

# Course learning outcomes

- 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.

# HOW THIS ONLINE COURSE WORKS

**Mode of delivery:** This course is 100% online. There are no required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

**Pace of online activities:** This course is divided into **weekly modules** that are released one week ahead of time. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame.

**Credit hours and work expectations:** This is a **3-credit-hour course**. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

**Attendance and participation requirements:** Because this is an online course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of students' expected participation:

- **Participating in online activities for attendance**: **AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**
  You are expected to log in to the course in Carmen every week. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible.*

- **Office hours and live sessions**: **OPTIONAL**
  All live, scheduled events for the course, including my office hours, are optional.

- **Participating in discussion forums**: **2+ TIMES PER WEEK**
  As part of your participation, each week you can expect to post at least twice as part of our substantive class discussion on the week's topics.

# COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

## Textbooks

### Required

Downs, E. (Ed.) (2019). The dark side of media and technology: A 21st 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

## Course technology

### Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** ocio.osu.edu/help
- **Phone:** 614-688-4357(HELP)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

### Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)
- Recording a slide presentation with audio narration (go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide)
- Recording, editing, and uploading video (go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide)

### Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Microphone: built-in laptop or tablet mic or external microphone
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication

### Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help.

### Carmen access

You will need to use BuckeyePass (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass - Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions (go.osu.edu/add-device).
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new codes** button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application (go.osu.edu/install-duo) to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

# GRADING AND FACULTY RESPONSE

## How your grade is calculated

| ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY | POINTS |
|---|---|
| Syllabus and APA Quiz | 20/ 5% |
| Quizzes | 60/ 15% |
| Weekly Discussion Posts | 120/ 27% |

| Reflection Papers | 150/ 33% |
|---|---|
| Exam | 100/ 25% |
| Total | **450** |

*See course schedule below for due dates.*

# Descriptions of major course assignments

**WEEKLY DISCUSSION POSTS** This is the only group-based assignment. Each week you will be expected to take part in class discussions within your assigned groups. Discussions will take place over the course of Wednesday through Friday each week. You are expected (from week 2 onwards) to be making **One** discussion post AND **TWO** responses per week. Prompts for discussion posts will be provided. You are expected to address **ALL** components of the prompt. You should not be looking to make a point based on your own thoughts and then leaving. Instead, you should seek to engage with what other group members are saying and responding to them. **Initial posts are due by Wednesday 11:59pm and at least 2 response posts are due by Friday 11:59pm**. Each discussion post does not need to be especially long. Your initial discussion posts are expected to be around 150 words. Each of your responses should not be less than 100 words. An excellent discussion post (and response) should demonstrate 1. Understanding of the concept(s) in the material provided 2. Independent thought regarding the concepts and material 3. Thoughtful response to the work of at least 2 other students in the class. From Week 7 onward, group assignment will be shuffled so you can interact with other peers in the class.

**QUIZZES** Four quizzes will be administered on Carmen. The quizzes are designed to assess your understanding of the readings and audio lectures. The first quiz will be on Week 2. All quizzes are announced and available on your weekly schedule. These quizzes cannot be made up. Quizzes will open a week before the due dates. You have A WEEK to complete the quiz. 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 quizzes are non-cumulative. 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.

**REFLECTION PAPERS** You will complete **five** reflection assignments over the course of the semester. Due dates are listed in the course calendar below. You will need to cite any sources that you use for these assignments. Your reflections will be reported in a 2.5-page minimum double-spaced paper, complete with outside references. We will use APA style citations in this course (either the 6thor 7th edition is fine). An excellent submission will briefly explain the theory or concept and then go into depth, making a connection between the concept and a real-world application. A complete rubric and description for each will be provided on Carmen when the paper is assigned. Note that we can only grade what you have submitted. Double check before submitting your work.

**EXAM** One exam will be delivered on Carmen to assess comprehension of reading and lecture materials at the end of the summer term. The exam 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 Summer 2021 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, Olivia Bullock, at bullock.181@osu.edu. Additional extra credit opportunities will be announced via Carmen throughout the term.

# Late assignments

You can turn in **TWO** assignments late, no questions asked. These are called "freebies." In order to use a freebie, you must email me (Hubner.9) within **three days** after the due date has passed. You have a week to turn the assignment in for full credit. You cannot use a freebie for the exam.

# Grading scale

93–100: A
90–92.9: A-
87–89.9: B+
83–86.9: B
80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70 –72.9: C-
67 –69.9: D+
60 –66.9: D
Below 60: E

Please note: Carmen Canvas, OSU's grading and class management software, does not round fractions up. Please take that into account in computing grades. I do not manually round up grades. There will be opportunities for extra credit for students who choose to earn those points.

# Instructor feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-4357(HELP)** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

- **Grading and feedback:** For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7 days**. If it is going to take longer than 7 days, you will see a course announcement from me.

- **Email:** I will reply to emails within **24 hours on days when class is in session at the university**. I do not respond to emails over the weekend and do not expect you to respond to emails over the weekend. Please email me through my OSU email and not the Carmen messaging system. Sometimes Carmen does not notify me that I have an unread email.

- **Discussion board:** I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards every **24 hours on school days**.

# OTHER COURSE POLICIES

## Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style**: While there is no need to participate in class discussions as if you were writing a research paper, you should remember to write using good grammar, spelling, and punctuation. A more conversational tone is fine for non-academic topics.
- **Tone and civility**: Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online.
- **Citing your sources**: When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link.
- **Backing up your work**: Consider composing your academic posts in a word processor, such as Microsoft Word, where you can save your work, and then copying into the Carmen discussion.

## Academic integrity policy

See **Descriptions of major course assignments**, above, for my specific guidelines about collaboration and academic integrity in the context of this online class.

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 **http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/**.

**If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.** If COAM determines that you have violated the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page (go.osu.edu/coam)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)

# Student Services and Advising

University Student Services can be accessed through BuckeyeLink. More information is available here:
https://contactbuckeyelink.osu.edu/

Advising resources for students are available here:
http://advising.osu.edu

# Copyright for instructional materials

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.

# Statement on Title IX

All students and employees at Ohio State have the right to work and learn in an environment free from harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender, and the university can arrange interim measures, provide support resources, and explain investigation options, including referral to confidential resources.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against based on your sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you may find information about your rights and options at titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu. Title IX is part of the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at Ohio State, which responds to all bias-motivated incidents of harassment and discrimination, such as race, religion, national origin and disability. For more information on OIE, visit equity.osu.edu or email equity@osu.edu.

# Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

# Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the land that The Ohio State University occupies is the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe and Cherokee peoples. Specifically, the university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greeneville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. I/We want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

More information on OSU's land acknowledgement can be found here:

https://mcc.osu.edu/about-us/land-acknowledgement

# Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learn, 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. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

# ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

## Requesting accommodations

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 immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. 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; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

## Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of CarmenCanvas (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- Canvas accessibility (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Collaborative course tools

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Refer to the Carmen course for up-to-date assignment due dates.

| Week | Dates | Topics & Readings | Deadlines |
|------|-------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 | 8/24 – 8/27 | Topic: Introduction to the course<br>Reading: Syllabus<br>Media: Purdue OWL APA tutorials | None |
| 2 | 8/30– 9/3 | Topic: What is technology, and what do we mean by social implications?<br>Reading: Textbook chs. 1 & 25 | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F)<br>Quiz 1: Syllabus and APA due (F 9/3) |
| 3 | 9/6- 9/10 | Topic 1: Concepts and Theories<br>Reading: McEwan (2015) & Metzger (2009)<br>Topic 2: Drones, Virtual reality, & Other emerging technologies<br>Reading: Textbook chs. 21 & 23 | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F) |
| 4 | 9/13- 9/17 | Topic 1: Psychological effects & Problematic use<br>Reading: chs. 8 & 20<br>Topic 2: Identities, Groups & Self-presentation | Discussion Post (W) & Response (F)<br>Reflection paper # 1 due (F 9/17) |
| 5 | 9/20- 9/24 | Topic 1: Individual differences & Relationships (Part 1)<br>Reading: Textbook ch. 12 | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F) |
| 6 | 9/27- 10/1 | Topic: Relationships (Part 2)<br>Reading: Fox & Frampton (2017) & Textbook ch. 13 | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F)<br>Quiz # 2 due (F) |
| 7 | 10/4- 10/8 | Topic: Privacy & Surveillance<br>Reading: Merchant (2015) & Textbook ch. 16 | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F)<br>Reflection Paper 2 (F 10/8) |
| 8 | 10/11- 10/15 | TBD [FALL BREAK] | |
| 9 | 10/18- 10/22 | Topic: Social Influence<br>Reading: Jones et al (2012) | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F) |
| 10 | 10/25- 10/29 | Topic 1: Concerns about children<br>Reading: Textbook chs. 14 & 15 | Discussion Post (W) & Response Post (F)<br>Reflection Paper #3 due (F 10/29) |
| 11 | 11/1- 11/5 | Topic: Communication technology & Knowledge<br>Reading: Wei & Hindman (2009), Cacciatore et al. (2014), & de Zúñiga, Weeks, & Ardèvol-Abreu (2017) | Discussion Post (W) & Response (F)<br>Quiz 3 |
| 12 | 11/8- 11/12 | Topic: Film screening for Reflection paper #4<br>Media: *Her* | Discussion Post (W) & Response (F) |

| 13 | 11/15-11/19 | Topic: Education & Health<br>Reading: Ahn & Fox (2018) & Singh (2014)<br>Topic 2: Network neutrality & Ethics<br>Reading: None | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F)<br>Reflection Paper #4 Due |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | 11/22-11/26 | Topic: Social networks<br>Reading: None | |
| 15 | 11/29-12/3 | Topic: Science & Mis- Disinformation<br>Readings: TBD | Discussion Post (W) & Responses (F)<br>Quiz #4 Due |
| 16 | 12/6-12/8 | Bonus Topic: Visibility effects of social media<br>Reading: Treem et al (2020)<br>Review for the exam | Reflection Paper #5 Due (12/8) |
| Finals | | Final Exam online | Final Exam Due (12/15 at 11:59pm) |