

SYLLABUS

COMM 2540

Introduction to Communication Technology

Summer 2023 (8-week session 1 term)

3 credit hours

Online

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed as an introduction to major communication technologies. The course will consider a range of older media and contemporary new media with a focus on societal, relational, and psychological effects.

Instructor

Instructor: Jorge Cruz Ibarra

Email address: cruzibarra.1@osu.edu (preferred contact method)

Office hours: Fridays 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm ET (no appointment necessary)

Also by appointment (email Professor and include 3 days/times you are available to meet in request)

Zoom link:

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/7634444036?pwd=d1FRbTNKcU9SRXVKUXJpbi90REd6dz09>

Prerequisites

Not open to students with credit for 240.

Course description

Current problems of the technologies markets and policies of new and developing media. This course will be delivered entirely online.

Course learning outcomes

This course is an introduction to major communication technologies and how people interact with and use them. Over the semester, we will discuss a range of older, contemporary, and emerging media. We will be considering and discussing the varying impact communication technologies have had on society, relationships, and individuals.

- 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 increase their knowledge of communication technology adoption and policy making.
- Students will increase their knowledge of the societal implications of traditional, new, and emerging communication technologies. Content will focus on historic, political, economic, relational, and psychological effects.
- Students will apply existing theory and research findings to better understand (1) their own use of communication technology, and (2) the possible effects of their technology usage.

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. The professor will provide a welcome video for the week that will include information about the week's content, updates about the course, and reminders for material that is due in the upcoming week.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is an **8-week session 3-credit-hour course**, which according to the registrar corresponds to 15.75 total hours of class + outside study time each week. Typically, in-person classes meet 5.25 hours per week and then require 10.5 more hours of independent work outside of class. In this online, asynchronous class, all 15.75 hours require self-guided instruction broken down approximately this way each week: 3 hours for lecture videos + 2 hours for R&R assignments + 1 hour for quizzes + 4.25 hours for supporting materials (readings, videos, etc.) + 5.5 hours studying/re-reviewing material. Every student will move through the material at their own pace. If you feel you are spending far more than 15.75 hours with materials every week, please make an appointment to discuss your approach to the class with the instructors.

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:

Structuring your week: In online classes, it is especially important to maintain a high level of attention to deadlines and hold yourself accountable to the course schedule. I strongly recommend using a calendar or planner, as well as setting up a regular schedule for this class and maintaining it throughout the semester. Here is a structure I recommend for organizing coursework over a week (of course, make adjustments as appropriate):

Mondays:

- New module and welcome video (WV) become available by 12 pm.
- Watch WV to get a sense of the week's materials and topics.
- Open and review R&R; open and review reading quiz (note: you can open quizzes and return to them later; they are not timed; make notes of topics or concepts covered in the quizzes so you recognize them in the weekly materials).

Tuesday or Wednesday:

- Watch the first lecture video and read/watch the material in the module immediately before the lecture.
- Take notes as you watch the lecture video and answer any quiz questions that you learn the answers to from the lecture or other assigned materials.

Thursday or Friday:

- Watch the second lecture video and read/watch the remaining material in the module.
- Take notes as you watch the lecture video and answer the remaining quiz questions that you learn the answers to from the lecture or other assigned materials.

Friday, Saturday, or Sunday (or any other day after you've completed the other module materials - **all assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm**):

- Complete the R&R assignment or Checkpoint.
- Review and submit the reading quiz.
- Review your notes and organize them in a way that would help you easily navigate them eventually for the exam.

Office Hours: I will be available via Zoom on Fridays from noon to 1 pm. Office hours provide opportunities for live lecturing, answering content questions, and offering examples or more in-depth examinations. They also allow me to provide direct feedback according to your needs and your progress in the course. If you cannot meet during office hours one week, please send me an email with 3 days/times you are available to meet.

Submissions and deadlines: Since this is an online course, you are required to have online access on a frequent basis. All updates to the course will be announced via email and/or on Carmen. It is your responsibility to check these platforms regularly. Please carefully read the syllabus to keep up with due dates and responsibilities. For consistency over the summer term, every graded item will be **due on Sundays before midnight (11:59 pm Eastern Time)**.

Email and communication etiquette: I prefer to communicate through email, so please use that instead of Carmen mail/messenger. Using Carmen may result in delays in getting a response. To make our communication more efficient, I kindly ask that you follow these simple steps:

- Please check the syllabus and discussion boards for information before sending an email. I may have already answered your question in one of these locations, and you can get your answer without delay.
- Please use your OSU email address and put the course (COMM2540) in the subject line (e.g., "COMM 2540 question about R&R2").
- I might have a lot going on outside of this class, but I'll do my best to respond to your emails as soon as possible. I really appreciate it when students are proactive and reach out with their questions or concerns. If you have any deadlines coming up, it's a good idea to email me by Friday mornings, as I don't always check my email on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Finally, when you're writing emails, please keep standards of courtesy in mind. That means being sure to address your recipient respectfully, using the proper tone, and including a signature.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Textbooks

Required

- Carr, C.T. (2021). *Computer-mediated communication: A theoretical and practical introduction to online human communication*. Rowman & Littlefield. (ISBN: 978-1-5381-3171-8)
- [Additional readings and lecture materials will be posted on Carmen.]

Course Technology

Students must use technology in this class because this is an online delivered course. It is the students' responsibility to keep their instructors updated and aware of the nature of any issues related to technology access (i.e., technological disruption, breakdown, etc.)

Technical failure does not constitute an excuse for submitting work late. This rule is more important with online courses. You are per course requirements, obligated to have regular access to a working computer/laptop and high-speed internet access. It is your responsibility to make sure your devices are in working order, which includes hardware and software.

Technical problems which are documented by the University's Office of the Chief Information Officer will be permitted as these are outside of your control. You can view the status of OSU's systems on [this page Links to an external site](#). If you experience a problem with an OSU system (email, Carmen) that OCIO has not reported, it will be your responsibility to raise a ticket with them. Only after they confirm your situation was out of your control will the instructor make an accommodation. Note that a situation like this is extremely rare. If you find yourself experiencing a technical issue that impacts your ability to take part in essential class activities, your first response should be to make alternate arrangements (e.g., a computer lab). You should email me only when this is not possible.

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.

- **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](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not set up a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
 - Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>
 - This online course requires the use of Carmen (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.
 - [Carmen accessibility](#)
- **Carmen Zoom**
 - Office hours will be held through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. A separate guide to accessing Carmen Zoom and our office hours is posted on the course Carmen page under Files.
 - Students may use the audio and video functions if a webcam and microphone are available. If not, there is still a chat function within Carmen Zoom for the student to live chat with the professor or TA in the virtual office hours room
 - Help guides on the use of Carmen Zoom can be found at <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenzoom>

Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection

Necessary software

- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, 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

GRADING AND INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE

How your grade is calculated

Assignment	Points and Percentage
Reading Quizzes	8 x 5 points each = 40
Reflections and Reaction Discussions	6 x 10 points each = 60 (50 required + up to 10 extra points)
Checkpoints	2 x 2.5 points each = 5
Exams	2 x 25 points each = 50
TOTAL for 100% score in the course	155 points
TOTAL possible	165 points

See the course schedule below for due dates.

Descriptions of major course assignments

Reading Quizzes (8 x 5 pts)

All quizzes will be administered on Carmen. The quizzes will be open book/notes and cover material from the textbook and readings. The purpose of the quizzes is to draw your attention to key concepts in the readings and other course materials. Students may use any materials related to the course to complete the quizzes, but they may not collaborate on them. The quizzes are non-cumulative but some of the material on the quizzes may reappear on exams. The quiz description in Carmen will state which material each quiz covers. Students may take quizzes twice and we will keep the highest grade earned.

Reactions and Reflections (R&R) (6 x 10 pts)

During the 6-week course, you will receive a prompt each week that requires you to complete a task related to the course. This task may include reading, watching videos, playing video games, or other activities. The prompt will ask you to reflect on this

experience and write a short essay about it. Your response for each R&R is due by Sunday at 11:59 pm EST.

There will be a total of six R&R papers, **but you only need to complete five of them.** This means that you could choose to skip one of the R&Rs and still have the chance to achieve a 100% score in the course. Alternatively, you can complete all six R&Rs and earn up to 10 extra points. I recommend the latter approach. This way, if you lose points during the course, you can always make them up by completing the extra paper.

Expectations for the R&Rs are provided on Carmen. There is no minimum length for your reflection, but it will be graded on how accurately and comprehensively you can apply specific course materials to your experience. You are required to use APA to format your papers and properly cite your references. No title page is necessary.

Checkpoints (2 x 2.5 pts)

Taking a completely online course has many conveniences. However, we miss out on some of the face-to-face interaction that helps instructors gauge how students are doing and feeling. That's why I've included two checkpoints throughout the term. During the exam weeks (Week 4 and Week 8), you will not have an assigned reading and response (R&R). Instead, I'll ask you to complete a brief questionnaire about your opinions on different aspects of the course. I will also ask you to write down any general questions you might have, or concepts that you still don't understand, or need clarification on. These checkpoints are graded on a scale of 2.5 points based on thoroughness and completion (2.5 = complete and thoughtful responses, 1.5 = complete but responses were incomplete or superficial, 0 = incomplete).

Exams (2 x 25 pts)

Two exams will be administered through Carmen, each consisting of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and matching style questions. The exams will primarily cover the section of the course leading up to the exam, but a strong understanding of prior concepts is crucial in order to apply them to later concepts. Questions will assess your definitional understanding of the material covered in lectures and readings, as well as your ability to accurately apply, interpret, and evaluate human communication and behavior through the lens of course concepts.

Late assignments

Written assignments (R&Rs) must be submitted by Sunday before midnight on the assigned due date. Submitting work 1 second after the deadline yields a -2% point penalty for the submission. For each additional hour after the deadline, you lose an additional -2% off the submission. Aim to submit work well ahead of the deadline to avoid late penalties. If you are sick or have another reason you think you will submit your assignments late, you may always email to request an extension in advance of the deadline.

Professionalism

You must ensure that the work you submit is correct. Submitting files that are corrupt, the wrong version, the wrong format, missing components, the wrong file type, etc. is unprofessional. It is your responsibility to check on the integrity of your work immediately following submission. I will not inform you if your work fails these standards. If I cannot view your work, you will not receive credit for your submission. Standard lateness penalties apply to unprofessional work.

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 have to make a cut at some point, so I just use Carmen to do that, and I don't round up individual grades, no matter how close you may be, because it's not fair to other students.

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-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

Grading and feedback

For large weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7-10 days**.

E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**. Emails sent after 5 pm on Friday can expect a response on Monday.

Discussion Board

I will check and reply to messages on the discussion boards **every 24 hours on school days**. Posts made after 5 pm on Friday can expect a response on Monday.

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.

- **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. The instructor and TAs work very hard to provide a positive learning experience. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your email and discussion board communications.
- **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.)

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this online course

- **Assignments and quizzes:** You must complete the assignments and quizzes yourself, without any external help or communication.
- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow APA style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in--but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

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 <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 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: <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>. 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 or someone you know are 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 or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and the 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24-hour emergency help is also available 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Writing Center

All students, especially those who have difficulty writing, are encouraged to visit the *OSU Writing Center*. Their web address is <https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center> and their phone number is 688-5865. The Writing Center offers two kinds of tutorials: 1) Scheduled, 50-minute tutorials in 4120A Smith Lab and 2) Drop-in, 20-minute tutorials at our satellite centers (First floor Thompson Library and 114 Smith-Steeb Residence Hall).

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

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 at titleix@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.

Religious accommodations

Our inclusive environment allows for religious expression. Students requesting accommodations based on faith, religion, or a spiritual belief system in regard to examinations, other academic requirements, or absences, are required to provide the instructor with written notice of specific dates for which the student requests alternative accommodations at the

earliest possible date. For more information about religious accommodations at Ohio State, visit <http://odi.osu.edu/religious-accommodations>.

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 have and continue to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

More information on OSU's land acknowledgment 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 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 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 or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and the 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)

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Requesting accommodations

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's request process, managed by Student Life Disability Services. 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; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires the 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

The schedule below is tentative and subject to change. A log of documented changes is available at the bottom of this page for any adjustments to the schedule.

Please refer to the weekly modules for the most up-to-date material list. All materials, readings, and videos are available via the modules.

Typical weekly structure: New modules for each week will open on Monday mornings. Generally, assessments for the week are due on the following Sunday

Week	Theme	Topics, Readings, and Activities
1 (5/9 - 5/14)	Intro to Communication & Technology	<p>Topics: 1. Communication & Technology 2. Grand Innovations & the Internet 3. Dystopias & Utopias</p> <p>Readings: – Syllabus – CMC Ch. 1 – CMC Ch. 2 (pp. 22-35) – Jarvis</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 1; R&R 1</p>
2 (5/15 - 5/21)	Diffusion & Access	<p>Topics: 1. Adoption & Diffusion 2. Access & Ability</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch.2 (pp. 22-35) – CMC Ch. 13 (pp. 271-275)</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 2; R&R 2</p>
3 (5/22 - 5/28)	Theories & Principles I	<p>Topics: 1. Media Richness Theory & Cues Filtered Out 2) 2. CASA & Media Equation 3. Social & Hyper-personal</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 3 – CMC Ch. 4 – Gambino</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 3; R&R 3</p>
4 (5/29 - 6/4)	Theories & Principles II	<p>Topics: 1. Stereotypes & Anonymity 2. Avatars & Agents</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 5 – Greene – CMC Ch. 9 (pp. 173-181) – Intro to the Proteus Effect (Medium)</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 4; Checkpoint 1; Exam 1</p>
5 (6/5 - 6/11)	Support & Activism	<p>Topics: 1. Alone & Together (social support) 2. Influence and Activism</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 10 (pp. 185-197) – CMC Ch. 11 (pp. 209 - 224)</p>

		Activities: Quiz 5, R&R 4
6 (6/12 - 6/18)	News, personalization & Surveillance	<p>Topics: 1. Surveillance & Security 2. Bubbles & News 3. Personalization & Devices</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 10 (pp. 199-208) – CMC Ch. 12 (pp. 235-263) – Zuiderveen Borgesius et al. – Garrett</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 6, R&R 5</p>
7 (6/19 - 6/25)	Love & Hate	<p>Topics: 1. Deception & Trust 2. Online & Disinhibited 3. Love & Hate</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 11 (pp. 224-233) – Markowitz – Selkie; Graham – Emerging technology (MIT)</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 7, R&R 6</p>
8 (6/26 - 7/2)	Vulnerable & lonely	<p>Topics: 1. Vulnerable & Lonely I (infants) 2. Vulnerable & Lonely II (elders)</p> <p>Readings: – CMC Ch. 8 – Bowman – Osmanovic & Pecchioni</p> <p>Activities: Quiz 8, Checkpoint 2, Exam 2</p>