

COMM2540: Introduction to Communication Technology

Summer 2025 (8-week session 1 term)

3 credit hours

Online

Instructor: Stephanie Torres-Pantoja, PhD Student

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Office Hours (online only): by appointment (please email); Zoom link will be posted on Carmen

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

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.

COURSE FORMAT

This course is an **online course**, which means that students will access 100% of the class material, activities, and assessments online via the Internet asynchronously. Although some synchronous sessions may occur, attendance in those sessions they will never be required. No in-person meetings will take place. At the start of each week, all course content will be released via Module. 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.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Carr, C. T. (2021). *Computer-mediated communication: A theoretical and practical introduction to online human communication*. Rowman & Littlefield. (ISBN: 978-1-5381-3171-8)

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

WHAT TO EXPECT AND TIPS FOR SUCCESS

This course serves as an introduction to better understanding our information rich world – one that increasingly demands knowledge and skills in effectively engaging with communication technology. I find this class fun to teach and I hope you will find the content meaningful. That said, I maintain high standards for my instruction and request the same of my students. I expect that you are here to learn, meaning that you will take responsibility for your educational experience in the course. Accordingly, I want to provide some tips that should set you up for success in this class, but know I am available to support you in achieving success.

Work Amount

This is a 3-credit course, [which according to the registrar](#), corresponds to 9 total hours of class + outside study time each week. Typically, in person classes meet 3 hours per week and then require 6 more hours of independent work outside of class. In this online, asynchronous class, all 9 hours require self-guided instruction broken down approximately this way each week: 1.5 hours lecture videos + 1 hour for R&R assignments + .5 hour for quizzes + 4 hours for supporting materials (readings, videos, etc.) + 2 hours studying/re-reviewing material. Every student will move through material at their own pace. If you feel you are spending far more than 9 hours with materials every week, please make an appointment to discuss your approach to the class with the instructors.

Structuring Your Week

In online classes, it is especially important that you maintain a high level of attention to deadlines and hold yourself accountable to the course schedule. I strongly recommend that you use a calendar or planner, but also that you set yourself up with a regular schedule for this class and maintain that schedule throughout the semester. Here is a structure I have recommended to students in the past that they have told me is useful (of course make adjustments as appropriate):

- *Mondays*
 - New module and welcome video (WV) become available by midday
 - Watch WV to get a sense of week's materials and topics
 - Open and review materials 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 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 second lecture video and read/watch the remaining material in the module
 - Take notes as you watch the lecture video and answer 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 - reminder that assignments are usually due on Sundays at 11:59pm)*
 - Complete the R&R assignment (if due)
 - Review and submit the materials quiz
 - Review your notes and organize them in a way that would help you easily navigate them eventually for the exam

Themes and Topics in the Course

I strive to highlight the value of course topics by discussing how they matter in cultural, historic, economic, and practical contexts. This means that we will sometimes engage with themes of justice, social equity, and other angles that you may have existing ideas and feelings about. I certainly do. You may find that you don't always agree with my position as I convey it through Welcome Videos or Lecture Videos. Part of what makes a college experience enriching is to hear ideas that are different than your own and learn how to position your thinking in relation to those differences. I expect that we will agree on far more points than disagree, but I invite my students of all backgrounds and perspectives to engage with me in conversation during office hours or by appointment. I assure you that your perspective will be a welcome point of conversation. Please stop by. We can learn a great deal by communicating.

COURSE POLICIES

Grading and feedback

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

E-mail

I will reply to e-mails within **24 hours Monday-Friday**.

Discussion board

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

Tips for efficient and timely communication with the instructor:

- Please check the syllabus and discussion boards for information before sending an email. Your instructor may have already answered your question in one of these locations and you can get your answer without delay.
- Please use email to correspond with us rather than Carmen mail/messenger.
- Please use your OSU email address and put the course (COMM2540) in the subject line.

- Please understand that your instructors have multiple demands on their time outside this class. We aim to respond to email promptly, but expect that students will be proactive in sending questions/concerns. It is a good idea to email by Friday mornings ahead of deadlines so we have time to reply as we do not necessarily check email on Saturdays and Sundays.

Deadlines

All deadlines are in Eastern Time (ET).

Language

All assignments must be submitted in written or spoken English. Assignments submitted in other languages will be considered as missing.

Late work

Students may submit all assessments late with a penalty calculated automatically via Carmen's submission system. 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.

Quizzes and exams are open for a duration of time and the window in Carmen will close. The quiz or exam will not be re-opened unless University or medical documentation is provided.

I understand that life happens, so students may request **two (2) 72-hour extensions** throughout the semester for any reason. However, these requests **MUST** be done before the due date of whatever assignment you want an extension for. I encourage you not to rely on these extensions since they may cause you to fall behind with the next week's lesson. This is a fast-paced course, so I do not want you to fall behind. It is your responsibility to stay up to date with each week's assignments. Not doing so will lead to a poor performance in this course.

Unenrollment

OSU does not recognize unenrollment as a valid excuse for missing work. If you become unenrolled from the course for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact me and establish alternative means to submit work prior to the specified deadline. If you suspect that this policy will affect you, I recommend saving the syllabus to your local computer or printing it out for reference.

Professionalism

When emailing the instructor, please use a proper greeting with the instructor's name (e.g., Hello ____), provide an adequate yet concise message, a proper salutation with your full name, and a clear subject line indicating the course you are in.

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. We will not inform you if your work fails to meet these standards. If we cannot view your work, you will not receive credit for your submission. Standard lateness penalties apply to unprofessional work.

I will not tolerate disruptions to my online classroom including threatening behavior or inappropriate language/derogatory speech. I expect that all students in this course will maintain civility, professionalism, and decorum in all course interactions. I reserve the right to dismiss any student

who is non-compliant with this policy. Additionally, I reserve the right to report disruptive students to the Dean of Students and/or University Police.

Technology

Students must use technology in this class because this is an online delivered course. It is 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.). Students must regularly check their OSU email account, the Carmen course page for information, materials, updates, and to participate in group discussions. Students must maintain access to a computer/laptop, a high-speed Internet connection, current web browser with video-related plugins, and speakers/headphones throughout the course of the semester. The instructor will link lectures through the [Carmen modules](#) for each week.

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.

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](#). If you experience a problem with an OSU system (email, Carmen) which OCIO have 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 the course TA only when this is not possible.

Instructors hold office hours through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. Each instructor's digital meeting room can be accessed during posted office hours at the top of the syllabus. 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 in the virtual office hours room. A guide to accessing Carmen Zoom is available [online here](#), and students can [access support for Carmen Zoom here](#).

Academic integrity policy

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.

Falsifying research or results: All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): You may use AI to help you understand topics, but not to replace your writing. If you use AI to inform your writing you must cite it like any other source, even if you merely paraphrase. Please remember that AI hallucinates (i.e., it makes up content and sources), it references message boards and social media for answers, and anything you submit becomes owned by the company running the AI software. Given this, and because OSU considers the misuse of AI as academic misconduct, I encourage you to use it wisely. As a final thing to consider, the more we use AI, the more pervasive and powerful it becomes. It may not seem problematic to use AI to speed up academic work, but it can make my job of evaluating your work difficult. Just imagine the opposite scenario: the professor who grades you using AI, the university who admits students using AI, or the employer who uses AI to decide whose resume to select. It can feel unfair and dehumanizing. Again, the more we use it, the more these scenarios become certainties. Tread carefully.

Grade appeals

You may send your professor an email to instigate a grade appeal within 1 week after the grade posting in Carmen. Appeals must have strong evidence-based arguments that reference specific components of the assignment's grading criteria. Appeals can result in an unchanged grade, a higher grade, or a lower grade. To initiate an appeal, please download and [submit this form via email](#).
[Download submit this form via email.](#)

Food Security

The Ohio State University is committed to ensuring that all students have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Dr., Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours (<https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org/>, 614-688-2508).

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or Email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have

reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information:
 1. Any human resource professional (HRP);
 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers;
 3. Chair/director; and
 4. Faculty member.

Peer interaction and public work

The structure of this course may incorporate public posting and peer interaction. If you are not comfortable with this, I recommend you drop this course as I will not make any accommodations to this structure.

Tentative nature of syllabus

This syllabus represents an agreement between the students and the instructor, Stephanie Torres-Pantoja. Students enrolled in this class agree to the terms of the syllabus and understand that the policies, schedule, and deadlines outlined within it are subject to the instructor's modification with notice via Carmen to students.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Quizzes (Q)

Completing quizzes in Carmen is one way to earn points in the course. 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. 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)

Throughout the class, students will receive a list of prompts to select from on themes that we have been covering recently in class. Students will select the prompt they prefer and submit a reflection that addresses all aspects of the prompt. Every prompt will be different and students may only select one from the list provided. R&Rs will sometimes require them to engage in an activity (e.g., watch a video, listen to a podcast, read an article, etc.), provide examples, and include personal reflections on the content. R&Rs will always require them to cite primary sources. The professor will provide a general rubric in Carmen describing the criteria used for grading.

Exams

The professor will administer two non-cumulative exams (see syllabus schedule) each containing some combination of multiple choice, true/false, and matching style questions. The professor has

designed 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. More information will be posted related to the exams in Carmen ahead of the dates the exams open.

GRADING

The grade for this course is based on 8 materials quizzes, 6 reflections and reactions (only 5 need to be completed), 2 exams, 2 checkpoints, and 1 self-introduction.

Assignment	Points and Percentage
Self-Introduction	5 points
Reading Quizzes	8 x 10 points each = 80
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 30 points each = 60
TOTAL for 100% score in the course	200 points
TOTAL possible	210 points

To calculate your percentage grade on any item, simply divide the number of points you earned by the points possible. Below are the point ranges for each corresponding course letter grade determined by OSU standards. **I will not round grades – please do not ask.**

A 93.00-100%	B 83.00-86.99%	C 73.00-76.99%	D 60.00-66.99%
A- 90.00-92.99%	B- 80.00-82.99%	C- 70.00-72.99%	E 0-59.99%
B+ 87.00-89.99%	C+ 77.00-79.99%	D+ 67.00-69.99%	

OSU Policies

Academic misconduct. All work should be your original work. You must use citations when presenting ideas that are not your own using APA style. You must complete all submitted work by yourself. You may not reuse work from a past or current semester. 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.

Disability services. Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu.

Sexual misconduct/relationship violence. 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

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.

Religious Accommodations. It is Ohio State’s policy to reasonably accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of all students. The policy permits a student to be absent for up to three days each academic semester for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief.

Students planning to use religious beliefs or practices accommodations for course requirements must inform the instructor in writing no later than 14 days after the course begins. The instructor is then responsible for scheduling an alternative time and date for the course requirement, which may be before or after the original time and date of the course requirement. These alternative accommodations will remain confidential. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all course assignments are completed.

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. Students must consider copyright law before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Student life issues. 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 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 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Student academic services. Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Students can obtain information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors at <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>.

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.

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 by 11:59PM ET.

Week	Date	Theme	Lectures	Materials	Due	Due Date (all deadlines 11:59pm ET)
1	5/6 - 5/11	Communication & Technology	Welcome Video; Lecture 1-1; Lecture 2-1; Lecture 2-2; 2 Videos (Globalization; Language & Meaning)	Syllabus; CMC Ch. 1; CMC Ch. 2 (p. 14-22)	Self-Introduction; Quiz 1; R&R1	11-May
2	5/12 - 5/18	Diffusion, Access, & Regulation	Lecture 3-1; Lecture 3-2; Lecture 5-1; Lecture 5-2	CMC Ch. 2 (p. 22-35); CMC Ch. 13 (p. 279-285); CMC Ch. 7 (122-129); Spar Reading; Diffusion of Innovation Theory Video; Media Regulation Video; Finley reading	Quiz 2; R&R2	18-May
3	5/19 - 5/25	Theories & Principles	Lecture 6-1; Lecture 6-2; Lecture 7-1; Lecture 7-2	CMC Ch. 3 (p. 39-50; all Ch.3); Ch. 4 (full chapter; p-51-66); CMC Ch. 5 (67-80; full chapter) Gambino et al. (2020); CASA Video Examples; Context collapse videos 1 + 2	Quiz 3; R&R3	25-May
4	5/26 - 6/1	Alone & Together	Lecture 9-1; Lecture 9-2	CMC Ch. 10 185 - 197; CMC Ch. 11 p. 224 - 233; Quitting social media video; In-Person conversation video; Markowitz; Fake videos video	Quiz 4; Checkpoint 1; Exam 1	1-June

5	6/2 - 6/8	Activism & Surveillance	Lecture 10-1; Lecture 10-2	CMC Ch. 10 (p. 199-208); Ch. 11 (p.209 - 224); Connected-Surveillance; FISA video; Tucker & Merchant (2023)	Quiz 5; R&R4	8-June
6	6/9 - 6/15	News & Presentation	Lecture 12-1; Lecture 12-2	CMC Ch. 12; Garrett; Zuiderveen Borgesius et al.; Garrett (2020);	Quiz 6; R&R5	15-June
7	6/16 - 6/22	Love & Hate	Online & Disinhibited + Love & Hate Lecture Videos	Graham; Selkie; Emerging Technology; Pew video; CMC Ch. 9 (p. 158 - 173)	Quiz 7; R&R6	22-June
8	6/23 - 6/29	Vulnerable & Lonely	Vulnerable & Lonely I + II Lecture Videos	CMC Ch. 8; Osmanovic & Pecchioni; Bowman; Bridle TEDTalk; PBS Newshour robot video	Quiz 8; Checkpoint 2; Exam 2	29-June