

COMM2540: Introduction to Communication Technology (OL)

School of Communication | Autumn 2020 | Section 14151

Syllabus updated 8/27/20 (log of changes available at bottom of syllabus)

Instructor: Dr. Teresa Lynch (she/her)

E-mail: lynch.659@osu.edu

Digital Office: [Carmen Zoom Meeting Room \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Office Hours (online only): Mondays 10:30am - 12:00pm and by appointment

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Yue Li

E-mail: li.7232@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Digital Office: [Carmen Zoom Meeting Room \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Office Hours (online only): Fridays 2:00pm - 3:30pm and by appointment

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. 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

Westerman, D., Bowman, N. D., & Lachlan, K. A. (2017). *Introduction to mediated communication: Social media and beyond* (2nd Ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt. (ISBN: 978-1-5249-1234-5)

Note: You may purchase an electronic version of the text directly from the publisher by visiting [this link \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

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

TEACHING APPROACH

My leadership and instruction in the classroom is an important part of my role as a professor here at The Ohio State University. 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. This makes for a course that will likely resonate with you on a personal level and a fun one for me to teach!

Despite being a fun course, I maintain high standards for my own performance as the professor and, consequently, will ask the same of you. Success in any undertaking requires consistent dedication and learning in your college classes is no different. 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. Especially in the time of a pandemic, my (virtual) door is open.

Some of the topics we will cover might make you uncomfortable. I encourage you to get out of your comfort zone (within reason) and learn something new. Some topics might be controversial and you might find yourself disagreeing with me – wonderful! I strive to highlight the value of course topics by discussing how they matter in cultural, historic, economic, political, and practical contexts. I invite my students of all backgrounds and perspectives to engage with me in conversation in class or during office hours. No appointment is necessary to attend my office hours. Please stop by. We can learn a great deal by communicating.

COURSE POLICIES

Communication policy: Because of the size of our class and its online nature, the communication policies serve to facilitate timeliness, collaboration, and simplicity. Please aim to adhere to the policy closely. Deviating from the policy may result in undue delays or us missing your messages altogether.

Things to avoid:

1. *Carmen mail/messenger & Carmen submission comments.* Both of these are unreliable and the instructors **will not** check them regularly.
2. *Weekend emails and messages sent around 5PM or later on weekdays.* Under most circumstances, we will respond to messages of this sort on the next business day.
3. *Sending emails that are not from your OSU email address.* Messages to our OSU accounts from non-OSU email services are regularly marked as spam and since their OSU cannot confirm their delivery, you may not use them as evidence of communication attempts.
4. *Unprofessional emails.* Please ensure that your email messages are professional and informative by including your course info in the subject line, a salutation, adequate yet concise body text, closing, and your full name.
5. *Emails that require immediate attention.* We aim to answer emails with 24 hours of receipt on business days. Be proactive and plan ahead.

Sources of course information: Because this is an online class, quick questions regarding the course cannot take place in person. Thus, I have set up a system for you to access various forms of information about the course. Start at the top of this list and work your way down to find answers to your questions. This will usually be the most efficient and quick way to get information about the course.

1. **First source for information:** Your first and most important resource are the course [discussion boards](#) available in Carmen, because it is likely that another student has asked your question and an instructor has already answered it. For general course questions, use the [General Course Questions discussion board](#). For assignment specific questions, use the specific discussion board for each assignment.
2. **Second source for information:** If you wish to remain anonymous or have sensitive questions, send your TA, [Yue Li](#), an email. In short, your TA is your lifeline for this course. Your TA will have an intimate knowledge of your work and should be your resource for all questions and concerns regarding content, class scheduling, accommodations, or any other class related issues not addressed in the discussion boards.
3. **Third source for information:** If after referencing the discussion board and contacting your TA you feel that you still have questions or concerns, you may email the professor: lynch.659@osu.edu

Deadlines: Assume that all deadlines are in Eastern Time (ET).

Late work: Students may submit all assessments except group study guides late with a penalty. Group study guide discussions will close after the due date and, thus, this work must be completed

within the time frame when the discussion board is open. Penalties for late work increase cumulatively. 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.

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: 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 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 while in the classroom and in our online 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 outside of the classroom because this is an online delivered course. 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> ([Links to an external site.](#)), 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#). 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.

Dr. Lynch will hold office hours through Ohio State's conferencing platform, Carmen Zoom. Dr. Lynch's digital meeting room can be accessed during posted office hours at this link: <https://osu.zoom.us/j/4327902829> (Links to an external site.). 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and students can [access support for Carmen Zoom here \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Grade appeals: You may send your TA 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.

Course leave: If you become seriously ill or something happens to you that prevents you from participating in the course for an extended amount of time (e.g., mental illness, taking care of an immediate family member, childbirth, etc.), you may apply for course leave. You must let the instructor know of your situation as soon as practical when you become aware of the need for leave (either the day you learn of the need or the next workday). If you qualify for leave, we will allow you to make up missed work up to 7 days prior to your leave request. Be proactive and let us know as soon as possible if you think you need leave. We will not grant leave retroactively. For example, if you qualify for leave in week 2 but request leave in week 5, you cannot earn credit for work due in weeks 2 & 3. Course leave is similar to OSU's Family and Medical Leave (FML; [see here for more information \(Links to an external site.\)](#)) and the instructor will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis.

Peer interaction and public work: The structure of this course incorporates 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, Dr. Teresa Lynch. 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. Students may use any materials related to the course to complete the quizzes. Some of the material on the quizzes may reappear on exams. The quiz description in Carmen will state which material each quiz covers.


Reflections and Reactions (R&R): Most weeks students will receive a prompt that will require them to reflect on or react to material related to the topic of the week. This will usually require them to

engage in an activity (e.g., watch a video, listen to a podcast, play a game, or read an article). Then, they will write up a reflection on the material based on a provided prompt. There are twelve R&Rs. Each week students will receive full credit (i.e., 2/2) if they submit *anything* for the R&R or a zero if they do not. The professor will **randomly select** four of the twelve R&Rs **without notice** and grade those four for content. The professor will provide a general rubric in Carmen describing the criteria used for grading. Of the four graded R&Rs, the professor will drop your lowest grade.

Group Introduction: The professor will assign you to a small online group. This assignment requires you to introduce yourself to your group. The professor will provide specific instructions in Carmen. The groups will serve as a discussion forum where you will submit these introductions, but it will also be a place where you can ask one another questions about the course, compile notes, and work through the study guides for the exams together.

Group Study Guide Completion: Prior to each exam I will release a series of questions within each group that students will answer using their notes. This will be an effort based assignment (pass/no pass) and will serve to provide students with a study guide for the exams. You will complete the study guide essays with your online group using a discussion board. I highly encourage that you participate above and beyond the minimum requirements, as the study guide is the best way to prepare for the exam. The assessment asks that you answer brief prompts in a short-answer format. Specific instructions and grading criteria will appear on the assignment page when released to the class. Study guide participation cannot be submitted late.

Exams: I will administer two non-cumulative exams (see syllabus schedule) each containing 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 five points of extra credit by participating in ongoing research in the School of Communication. One hour of research participation is equal to one point of extra credit. You must complete all participation by 11:59 on April 19, 2019 to earn credit. A non-research participation alternative is available if you wish to earn extra credit, but do not wish to participate in or are ineligible to participate in a research study. The [C-REP information document available here](#)  has more details about research participation.

GRADING

The grade for this course is based on 13 reading quizzes, group introductions, 12 reflections and reaction submissions, 3 graded reflections and reaction submissions (lowest of 4 dropped), and 2 exams.

Item	Total Points	Percentage
Quizzes	40	20%
Group Introductions	2	1%

Submitted Reflections & Reactions		20	10%
Graded Reflections & Reactions		40	20%
Study Guide Creation		8	4%
Exams		90	45%
Total for 100% Score in Course		200	
C-REP Extra Credit	1 credit = 1 point	5 points	2.5%
Total Possible		205	

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 – 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.

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 ([Links to an external site.](#)) 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 ([Links to an external site.](#)).

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> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Students may learn about additional services offered on the OSU main campus by visiting <http://ssc.osu.edu> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

COVID-19 Accommodation Process. 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#), 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 (Links to an external site.); 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

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: I will release new content on Sundays. Assessments for the week are due on Fridays by 11:59PM ET.

Week	Date	Theme	Lectures	Materials/Readings	Due Friday at 11:59pm ET
1	8/25 - 8/28	Communication & Technology	Lecture 1-1	Syllabus; MC Ch. 1	Quiz 1
2	8/30 - 9/4	Philosophy & Innovation	Lecture 2-1; Lecture 2-2	MC Ch. 2; Jarvis; Globalization video; Language & Meaning video	Quiz 2; R&R1; Group Introduction
3	9/6 - 9/11	Diffusion & Access	Lecture 3-1; Lecture 3-2	MC Ch. 3 - 4	Quiz 3; R&R2
4	9/13 - 9/18	Divides & Consequences	Lecture 4-1; Lecture 4-2	Belmonte; TBD	Quiz 4; R&R3
5	9/20 - 9/25	Bubbles & News	Lecture 5-1; Lecture 5-2	MC Ch. 5 and 11 (pp. 167 – 169)	Quiz 5; R&R4
6	9/27 - 10/2	Surveillance & Security	Lecture 6-1; Lecture 6-2	Larson; Tufekci	Quiz 6; R&R5
7	10/4 - 10/9	Governance & Regulation	Lecture 7-1; Lecture 7-2	Spar; Finley; Brodtkin; McBeath	Quiz 7; R&R6

8	10/11 - 10/16	Prepare & Succeed		Study Guide 1 (available 10/11 - 10/13); Exam 1 (releases 10/14)	SG1 (due 10/12); Exam 1
9	10/18 - 10/23	Alone & Together	Lecture 9-1; Lecture 9-2	MC Ch. 7-8	Quiz 8, R&R7
10	10/25 - 10/30	Identity & Impressions	Lecture 10-1; Lecture 10-2	Grabmeier; Greene; Millet	Quiz 9, R&R8
11	11/1 - 11/6	Deception & Influence	Lecture 11-1; Lecture 11-2	Markowitz; Vincent; MC Ch. 6	Quiz 10; R&R9
12	11/8 - 11/13	Love & Hate	Lecture 12-1; Lecture 12-2	Graham; Selkie; TBD	Quiz 11; R&R10
13	11/15 - 11/20	Vulnerable & Lonely	Lecture 13-1; Lecture 13-2	Bowman; Flood; Osmanovic & Pecchioni	Quiz 12; R&R11
14	11/22 - 11/25	Avatars & Agents	Lecture 14-1; Lecture 14-2	Singer; Chambers; MC 12 -13	Quiz 13; R&R12
15	11/29 - 12/4	Prepare & Succeed		Study Guide 2 (available 11/29 - 12/1); Exam 2 (opens 12/2)	SG2 (due 11/30); Exam 2