COMM 5346 Seminar in New Media
Summer II 2013
TR 6:00 - 9:45p.m.
Bay Hall Rm. 127

Professor David Gurney
Office: Bay Hall Rm. 326
Phone: 361-825-5991
david.gurney@tamucc.edu
Office Hours: TWR 4:30-5:45pm & by appointment

Course Description:
Explores contemporary instances of new and emerging media platforms, especially as facilitated through digital media technologies, as they continue to disseminate more widely as portals of communication. Students will engage with specific issues in new media through the lenses of various cultural theories in order to gain a greater understanding of the scope of new media, its culture, and the relationships that exist between machines and humans, as well as those between society and technology.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
» Understand and critically evaluate many of the current scholarly topics and debates that occur within new media and digital media studies.
» Understand and articulate the current and potential future implications of digital media on culture, as well as the way in which pre-existing cultural conventions also impacts the advancement of Internet technology.
» Utilize postmodern and contemporary theories to analyze, describe, and further develop interpretive and evaluative arguments about the culture of digital media.
» Conduct a new media research project

Required Materials:
» Access to PDFs or online versions of all other required readings will be provided through Blackboard

Course Policies:
» Attendance is required -- both physically and mentally. Unexcused absences will have a direct effect on your final grade for this course, with each one equaling a ten-point deduction (out of a possible total of 100 points). Attendance will be taken starting exactly at 6:00 p.m. and completed within the first five minutes of class. Arrivals after that time will be considered late. Late arrivals and departures prior to the finish of the class period will count as half-absences, meaning that two of either type will be counted as a full absence.
» You are allowed one fully excused absence throughout the semester. This is to be employed at your discretion, but it should be used to cover illness, religious holiday observances, or most any other events or circumstances that cause you to miss class. Only extreme hardship with back-up documentation (e.g. a doctor’s note) will allow for consideration of any additional absences being excused. Classes missed due to university-approved activities (athletic teams, student government, etc.) will also be considered excused. For those absences, I will need official TAMUCC documentation. If appropriate, you may arrange to make up quizzes or exams missed due to excused absences, but it will be your responsibility to get any information from a missed class lecture or discussion from one of your classmates.
» All absences not fitting into the excused categories described immediately above, will be considered unexcused. Any work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.
» Late work will be penalized by ten points (all assignments will be on 100-point scales) for each day it is late.
» A note on competing media: Laptops are permitted for note taking purposes during lecture only, but please do not abuse this privilege. While you may personally feel capable of multitasking during class while still paying attention to
lecture and discussion, your surrounding classmates will more likely find your in-class extracurricular activities distracting, so please, for the sake of your peers, respect this restriction. No laptop use will be permitted during screenings.

» Please remember to check your Islander email account regularly during the week and monitor the course Blackboard site for any course updates.

» If you would like to discuss any course readings, lectures, or assignments outside of class, you should feel free to contact me via email or by arranging to visit me during my office hours. If you need to schedule a time to meet outside of office hours, please let me know.

» All writing for this course must be composed using a standard, 12-point font size, double spacing, and standard 1” margins.

Academic Advising:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Notice to Students with Disabilities:
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Grade Appeal Process:
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Academic Integrity:
“Plagiarism” means “kidnapper” in Latin. Webster’s Dictionary defines “plagiarism” as “to steal and pass off as one’s own (the ideas or words of another); use (a created production) without crediting the source,” and “to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.” Please always document the source of an idea and use quotation marks when you draw phrases or entire sentences from a book or an article. Plagiarism carries severe academic penalties, including a failing grade on a particular assignment, a failing grade for the course, and a report to the Dean of your college. If you misrepresent another’s ideas and/or written work as your own, then you will earn an “F” for the course. Academic dishonesty is not worth the penalty it incurs, so don’t do it!
» For the purposes of citation, please follow American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guide. For reference, see: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
**Dropping a Class:**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the class be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. July 26, 2013, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Grade Scale:**

A  90-100
B  80-89
C  70-79
D  60-69
F  59 and below

**Grade Distribution:**

» **Attention & Participation (10%):** Each student is expected to be attentive and, ideally, to participate in class discussion when appropriate. This grade will reflect how well you accomplish these goals.

» **Reading Presentation (20%):** Each student will take responsibility for one of our scheduled readings. You will need to create a short lecture (approx. 30 min.) for in-class presentation based on the reading you select.

» **Final New Media Research Paper Proposal (20%):** A short written proposal will be due in Week 2 of class. This will establish your research topic and allow for Professor Gurney to offer you feedback and guidance.

» **Presentation of Final Paper (10%):** Students will describe the findings of their final paper project in a presentation to the class.

» **Final New Media Research Paper (40%):** Each student will write a research paper on a new media topic approved by the professor. that will serve as the culminating work for the class. This will be explained further in a separate document distributed on the first day of class.
Course Schedule:
Readings are to be completed prior to the class meeting dates alongside which they are listed, unless they are designated as optional. Also, this schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Week 1 – Introduction, Course Outline, New Media Beginnings and Aesthetics
July 9  Introduction, Course Outline, General Discussion, Screening of Digital Nation
July 11  Rheingold, Howard, excerpts from The Virtual Community
        Bolter, Jay David and Richard Grusin, excerpts from Remediation
        Manovich, Lev, “What Is New Media?” from The Language of New Media

Week 2 – Theoretical Approaches to New Media
July 16  Beer, David and Gane, Nicholas, Chapters 1-4 from New Media: The Key Concepts
July 18  Beer, David and Gane, Nicholas, Chapters 5-8 from New Media: The Key Concepts

Week 3 – Social Media I: Foundations
July 23  Van Dijck, José, Chapters 1-4 from The Culture of Connectivity
        Research Proposals to be submitted via Blackboard before the beginning of class on 7/23.
July 25  Van Dijck, José, Chapters 5-8 from The Culture of Connectivity
        Proposal Workshop in class

Week 4 – Social Media II: Mediated Identities
July 30  boyd, danah, “The Public Nature of Mediated Breakups” (in Hanging Out)
        Kampman, Minke, “Flagging or Fagging: (Self-)Censorship of Gay Content on YouTube” (in Video Vortex Reader)
        Thomas, Douglas, “KPK, Inc.: Race, Nation, and Emergent Culture in Online Games”
August 1 boyd, danah and Eszter Hargittai, “Facebook Privacy Settings”
        boyd, danah, Heather Horst, and Katynka Z. Martinez, “Friendship” (in Hanging Out)
        Zhao, Shanyang et al. “Identity Construction on Facebook”

Week 5 – Presentations and Final Exam
August 6  Presentations of Final New Media Research Papers
August 8  Presentations of Final New Media Research Papers
Final New Media Research Paper due at the beginning of class