COMM-3380_002 New Media and Communication Spring 2015

Time: TR 12:30-1:45pm
Room: O’Connor Building, Rm. 117

Professor David Gurney
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Office: Bay Hall, Rm. 326
Office Hours: T 2-4pm, W 2-3pm, R 2-4pm & by appointment

Course Description:
This course examines how new media technologies impact society and change communication practices. Particular emphasis placed on different modes of cultural expression and social interaction made possible through digital media and the Internet.

Course Detail:
This course explores contemporary uses of new and emerging digital media platforms, especially as they facilitate digital culture and as they continue to disseminate more widely as channels of communication. Students will explore specific themes such as identity, community, and virality through the lenses of various culture theories. Readings, discussions, writing, and a new media research project will help students gain a greater understanding of networked digital 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:
» Critically evaluate many of the current scholarly topics and debates that occur within new media and digital media studies.
» 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 cultural theories to analyze, describe, and further develop interpretive and evaluative arguments about the culture of digital media.
» Conduct a digital media research project to gain insight into how digital media platforms shape communication

Required Materials:
» All course readings, lectures recordings, podcasts, and videos will be provided via links on 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 five-point deduction (out of a possible total of 100 points). Attendance will be taken starting exactly at 12:30pm. 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 two fully excused absences throughout the semester. These are to be employed at your discretion, but they 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, please make me aware, and, in addition, I will need official TAMUCC documentation. If appropriate, you may arrange to make up work missed due to excused absences, but it will be your responsibility to get any information from a missed class lecture 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 points equaling one letter grade for each day it is late. Work submitted more than three days past its original due date will not be accepted.
» Please remember to check your email 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 Blackboard messages, my office phone, 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, and with standard 1” margins.

Academic Integrity:
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work. For a more expansive definition of plagiarism please see the relevant passage from the University’s student handbook.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade (F) for the assignment, at the very least, or a report to the Chair of the Department of Communication and Media, the Dean of the School of Arts, Media, and Communication, and the Office of Student Affairs.
» 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. April 10, 2015, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Classroom/Professional Behavior:**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. **This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.**

**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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Disabilities Accommodations**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade Appeal Process:**
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a
grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

**Grade Distribution:**

» Attention & Participation (100 points - 10% of final grade): Each student is expected to be attentive toward lecture and willing to participate in class discussion and activities when appropriate. This grade will reflect how well you accomplish these goals. **This grade does not account for attendance which is mandatory and can have a direct impact on your final grade as described in the Course Policies section above.**

» Online Activity (50 points - 5% of final grade): We will maintain a somewhat informal discussion forum (titled “Class Wall”) in which we can share our observations about digital media in our own lives. This grade will be based on your frequency of activity in this forum (with the expectation that you will contribute on a weekly basis), and your general ability to contextualize concepts from readings and class discussions (making posts relevant to the broader concepts being studied).

» Blog Posts (150 points - 15% of final grade): At three points throughout the semester you will be asked to post blog entries related to course topics. These will take a variety of shapes. The due dates are noted in the Assignments Schedule section below.

» Midterm Exam (150 points - 15% of final grade): A take-home midterm exam covering topics from the first half of the semester will be distributed on March 10 and due 48-hours later via Blackboard on March 12.

» Final Exam (200 points - 20% of final grade): A take-home final exam covering topics discussed over the entire semester will be distributed on May 7 and must be submitted 2 days later via Blackboard on May 9.

» Final Project (350 points total - 35% of final grade): As a member of a small group, you will design a project to study some form of communication facilitated by new media. This will serve as your culminating work for the class. The general expectations for the components of this project will be discussed prior to their due dates.

  » Final Project Proposal (50 points - 5% of final grade): Due via Blackboard on February 17.
  » Final Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography (100 points - 10% of final grade): Due via Blackboard on March 31.
  » Final Project Exhibition (200 points - 20% of final grade): An online exhibition of your final project will be published by May 5.

**Grade Scale:**

A   900-1000 points  
B   800-899 points  
C   700-799 points  
D   600-699 points  
F   Less than 600 points
**Course Schedules:**

**Schedule of Assignments:** Assignments are due before class meeting time on the dates under which they are listed, unless otherwise noted. The major exceptions are the exams and the final project, which are due at noon on the specified days. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I will make you aware of any such changes by course announcements before the due dates. **It is highly recommended that you print this page out to post somewhere as a reminder for yourself.**

- **Tuesday, February 3**  
  - Blog Post 1 must be published

- **Tuesday, February 17**  
  - Final Project Proposals due

- **Tuesday, March 3**  
  - Blog Post 2 must be published

- **Tuesday, March 10**  
  - Midterm Exam made available at noon

- **Thursday, March 12**  
  - Completed Midterm Exam must be submitted by noon

- **Tuesday, March 31**  
  - Final Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography due

- **Tuesday, April 6**  
  - Blog Post 3 must be published

- **Tuesday, May 5**  
  - Completed Final Project must be published online by noon

- **Thursday, May 7**  
  - Take-Home Final Exam made available at noon

- **Saturday, May 9**  
  - Completed Take-Home Final Exam must be submitted by noon
Readings, Lectures, Podcasts, and Videos: Listed readings, lecture recordings, podcasts, and videos are to be completed (read, listened to, watched, etc.) prior to the dates under which they are listed. They will be provided through hyperlinks on the course Blackboard page in the appropriate “Units” sections. Throughout the semester, other contemporary newspaper or magazine articles on our weeks’ topics may be assigned as supplemental readings. The overall schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. I will make you aware of any such changes by course announcements before the due dates.

You will also find “Supplemental Materials” in many unit folders on Blackboard. These are not required but may be referenced in lecture and some of you may find them helpful for further exploring topics of interest.

Unit 1 (Jan 21-Feb 1) – Introduction to New Media and Culture

Tuesday, January 27
- Syllabus
- “Crap detection 101” – Howard Rheingold
- “Is Google making us stupid?” – Nicholas Carr
- “When it comes to politics, the internet is closing our minds” – Intelligence-Squared Debates
- “The NSA probably has your buddy list” – P. J. Vogt

Unit 2 (Feb 2-15) – Studying Online Communication and Community

Tuesday, February 3
- “Introduction” and “Daily life in cyberspace” (introduction and chapter 1 from The Virtual Community) – Howard Rheingold
- “A rape in cyberspace” – Jullian Dibbell

Tuesday, February 10
- “Digital ethnography: An examination of the use of new technologies for social research” – Dhiraj Murthy
- “Virtual communities and translation into physical reality in the 'It Gets Better’ project” – Amber Muller

Unit 3 (Feb 16-Mar 1) – Digital Tools (Platforms and Network Distribution)

Tuesday, February 17
- “The double logic of remediation” and “Immediacy, hypermediacy, and remediation” (introduction and chapter 1 from Remediation) – Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin
- “Technologies, texts and affordances” – Ian Hutchby
- “Games telling stories?” – Jesper Juul
Unit 3 (continued)

Tuesday, February 24
- “The long tail” – Chris Anderson
- “Digital distribution, participatory culture, and the transmedia documentary” – Chuck Tryon
- "I never owned any music to begin with” – Emilly White
- “Letter to Emily White at NPR All Songs Considered” – David Lowery
- “Hey dude from Cracker, I’m sorry, I stole music like these damned kids when I was a kid” – Travis Morrison
- “Making money the 100-songs-a-day way” podcast – Alex Goldman and PJ Vogt

Unit 4 (March 2-9) – Social Media: Individual Identity

Tuesday, March 3
- “Socially mediated publicness: An introduction” – Nancy Baym and danah boyd
- “Our privacy delusions” podcast – Sarah Abdurrahman
- “Why you should let Google spy on you (sometimes)” – P. J. Vogt
- “The presentation of self in the age of social media: Distinguishing performances and exhibitions online” – Bernie Hogan
- “Knock, knock. Who's there? The imagined audience” – Eden Litt

Midterm Exam (March 10-12)

Spring Break (March 16-22)

Unit 5 (March 23-29) – Social Media: Collective Action

Tuesday, March 24
- “Flash mob dance and the territorialisation of urban movement” – Georgiana Gore
- “Debate over social media incitement as flash mobs strike” – J. David Goodman
- “Digital media and revolutions” – David Faris
- “My Stolen Face” podcast – Brooke Gladstone (On the Media segment)
Unit 6 (March 30-April 5) – Social Media and Participatory Culture

Tuesday, March 31
- “The future is user-led: The path towards widespread produsage” – Axel Bruns
- “Moving the crowd at Threadless” – Daren C. Brabham
- “Introduction” and “Part 1: Cultures” in *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy* – Lawrence Lessig
- *Lawrence Lessig: Re-examining the remix*
- “Recombinant comedy, transmedial mobility, and viral video” – David Gurney
- “If it doesn't spread, it’s dead (parts 1-8)” – Henry Jenkins
- “Media life” – Mark Deuze

Project Meetings (April 6-12)
No readings scheduled. Groups are expected to finalize projects and meet with Dr. Gurney. A schedule of meetings will be devised and released prior to this week.

Unit 7 (April 13-May 3) – Social Media for Business, Branding, and Marketing

Tuesday, April 14
- “10 vines you must watch if you're marketing online” – Dave Kerpen
- “5 predictions for social media in 2014” – Dave Kerpen
- “Take caution when connecting: 8 risks you are taking with social media marketing” – Rusty Cawley
- “Decoding the Beyonce tumblr” – Anne Helen Petersen

Tuesday, April 21
- “Dorie Clark, author and personal branding expert” podcast
- “I won't hire people who use poor grammar” – Kyle Wiens
- “How your social media profile could make or break your next job opportunity” – Lisa Quast
- “How social media is making job hunting better--For candidates and companies” – Ryan Holmes
- “10 terrifying social media mistakes filmmakers make” – Elliot Grove

Tuesday, April 28
- Need readings

Project Submissions and Exhibitions (May 5)

Final Exam (May 7-9) – Final Exam
References:

Unit 1 References

Unit 2 References

Unit 3 References


**Unit 4 References**


**Unit 5 References**


Unit 6 References
Cawley, R. (2011). Take caution when connecting: 8 risks you are taking with social media marketing. Public Relations Tactics, 18(6), 16–16.