

Communication on the Internet

MMC 3260 | Fall 2019 | Class number: 19909 section: 1174 (UF Online course)

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Office hours: TBA and by appointment.	

“The future is already here. It’s just not evenly distributed.”

-- William Gibson

This course is about the past, present, and future of the Internet. It attempts to explore the future of the Internet while providing a foundation set of practical digital skills you will need in today’s media markets. Over the course of the semester, you’ll learn about a variety of tools to make your digital life better, and skills you’ll use to create projects that are relevant to your digital future.

Note: Because this is an online course, there is more detail about this course and the course assignments available in the course site on UF eLearning (Canvas). Please be sure to review all of that material, not just the material in this syllabus.

Course objectives

The course includes the following objectives:

1. Learn the history and structure of the Internet and the World Wide Web.
2. Understand the basic options for planning, setting up, and building a quality website for a business, personal portfolio, or interactive project.
3. Understand the structure of modern content management systems and how to use them effectively as a media professional.
4. Explore important cultural, economic and political issues surrounding the use of the Internet today and trends shaping the future of the Internet and how we’ll use it.
5. Learn to “think multimedia”: Understand the differences between creating content for multimedia platforms and creating content for traditional media.
6. Build your skills in project planning, research, presentation, and entrepreneurship, and improve your ability to plan and complete long-term work done on the Internet, independently and in teams.

Class meetings and office hours

All the required work for this course takes place online in UF's eLearning learning platform (Canvas) and related tools. There will be no formal class meetings online, but you will have two required "check-in" meetings (via video chat) with your professor during the course of the semester. There will be optional "office hours" sessions conducted via video chat and your prof is happy to meet with you by appointment via Zoom video chat if you have questions on any of the material in the modules or your project. (If you have not downloaded the Zoom app, you will find it helpful as it is now UF's standard for video conferences.)

Readings and course materials

Textbooks

There is no printed textbook for the course, but you will be reading and viewing material from the Web for each module. You will find that there are more pages to read in Canvas for this course than you may be used to in other online courses; think of these Canvas pages as the textbook for the course.

Course videos

In addition to readings, almost all of the modules in this course will require you to watch some form of video instruction, using videos created by your instructor or selected videos from experts on that course topic. Because you will be watching so much video, please be sure your computer is powerful enough to display the videos without problems. If you aren't sure about this, review the computer requirements for all College of Journalism and Communications students here:

<https://www.jou.ufl.edu/current-students/current-undergraduate/current-academics/equipment/>

Please note: many videos in this course come from LinkedIn Learning, formerly Lynda.com. The lynda.com site was bought by LinkedIn in summer 2019; when this happened all of the links to videos at lynda.com were changed. Your prof and teaching assistant have tried to correct all the video links, but you may find an occasional broken link. If you find a broken link, please send a message to your prof or teaching assistant to let them know. You also can search for the video you are looking for in LinkedIn Learning's search feature.

Tech help

For all problems with Canvas and UF's online course materials, students should contact the UF tech helpdesk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> For issues with Siteground hosting, students should contact Siteground support at: <https://www.siteground.com/support> (Your prof will discuss tips for hosting support during the semester.) For help with WordPress issues, students should check the excellent resources at: <https://wordpress.org/support/> before emailing your teaching assistant or professor.

Course workload

One credit hour is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as “one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester.” This means that in this class you should expect to spend up to 3 hours per week watching course videos and/or reading assignments, and up to 6-9 hours per week studying for and completing quizzes, working on your project, and completing other course assignments.

Assignments

Here are the major graded elements that you will complete for this course. More details about each element of the course are available in the class eLearning (Canvas) site.

1. Quizzes : 180 pts.

For every module in this course there will be one or more small quizzes to test your knowledge of the material. Each quiz is only a small part of your overall grade, there are study questions for each quiz, and your lowest score will be dropped, so don't stress if you aren't a good quiz-taker.

2. Project : 150 pts.

The goal of the project is to provide students with the opportunity to research or examine a topic in depth that isn't available through the student's program of study. The project will build your skill in planning and creating effective projects for online platforms. You will be able to select a project topic that interests you from a list of class-related topics.

3. Assignments : 20 pts.

During the semester you will complete a small number of assignments based on course topics.

4. Discussions and participation : 50 pts

Participation is crucial to an online course, so part of your grade is devoted to how engaged you are with the course material and with your classmates. (The points for this section equal 10% of your grade, so “Participation is the difference between a B and an A.”) Elements of course participation will include class discussions, check-in meetings with your professor, project meetings, and other measures as described in the Canvas site for the course.

5. Final exam : 100 pts

At the end of the semester you will take a cumulative final exam covering the entire semester. The exam will include both a proctored online exam and a short written discussion. More instructions on the exam and on how to get a proctor for the exam will be available closer to the end of the semester.

Deadlines

Most quizzes will be due before 11:59pm on a Monday evening. Assignments will be due at that time or on Friday at 11:59pm. The Canvas course calendar contains the exact due dates for all assignments. You should use the course calendar when planning your work for the course.

Quizzes will not be accepted late. Assignments turned in late will be assessed a full letter grade deduction for each day they are late. Assignments will not be accepted after two days beyond the due date except via the written permission of the instructor. If you need to miss the due date for any assignment, communicate your concern as far in advance as possible. If you have a genuine emergency and advance notice is not possible, written documentation will be required.

NOTE: Assignment deadlines in Canvas are usually set for 11:59 p.m. If you submit after the deadline, your assignment is late. Your inability to upload at the last minute is not a valid excuse for lateness.

Read the assignment instructions; many assignments will require you to post something online or in the course site on Canvas. Assignments will not be accepted by email unless requested by the instructor.

Extra credit

There will be a small number of extra credit opportunities available in the course. These will be communicated via course announcements. Other than these options, students should not expect or request extra credit.

Grading

Grading will be based on a collection of course elements worth a total of 500 points. More details about each graded element listed above are described in more detail in pages on the course site.

All grades are final unless questions about grades are addressed in writing within one week. For more information on how grades are calculated, there is a useful page on grades and grading in the University of Florida Undergrad Catalog.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

UF and Course Policies

Your future employers will expect professional behavior in your conduct and your work; your instructors and the University of Florida expect the same from you as students in this course. This section deals with the guidelines and requirements for these expectations.

University policy on accommodating students with disabilities

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams.

Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

Professionalism

Students are expected to maintain the appropriate level of professionalism, cooperation, and language in all aspects of this course including, but not limited to, discussions, written assignments, presentations, and interactions with the instructor and colleagues.

Academic honesty

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community, and any example of academic dishonesty will be dealt with seriously. It will be reported to the student's department chair and to the university's Dean of Students—and it will result in a failing grade for the assignment, or, depending on the severity, for this course. A formal report of the offense will be filed with the university's Dean of Students.

Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code. Read below and learn more at: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting work done by another person for a class assignment.
- Collaborating with other students to complete quizzes or collect quiz answers.
- Submitting work you did for another course.
- Not giving credit for any idea, media resource, text or code that you use for a class assignment or the project.

Please note that the rules on plagiarism apply to online sources, images, and all online content. Stealing another person's content is painfully easy on the web, but when it comes to turning in work for this class, I expect you to credit anything you get from somebody else, whether that is images, code for projects, or ideas for written work. If you have any questions, it's always best to check with your t.a. or instructor first.

If you are aware of academic dishonesty, please notify the instructor or contact the Student Honor Court (392-1631) or Cheating Hotline (392- 6999).

Resources for understanding academic integrity

The University of Florida maintains several resources at the Dean of Students Office website to allow you to understand the requirements for what is expected of you as a student.

One of those resources is an excellent Academic Integrity module to help you understand situations that would be in violation of the Student Honor Code. Your prof highly recommends that you take the time to complete this module.

Another good resource is the presentation on "Avoiding Plagiarism". It discusses the rules and guidelines around plagiarism and how to cite. Your instructors recommend that you take half an hour at the beginning of the semester to watch the video.

Success in this course

Online classes are different and in some ways they are more difficult. On the class site, you will find several pages devoted to helping you succeed in this class. You will also be introduced to several tools designed to make completing your work easier and more effective. Use them.