

MMC 6660: Communication, Technology, and Society

Spring 2023

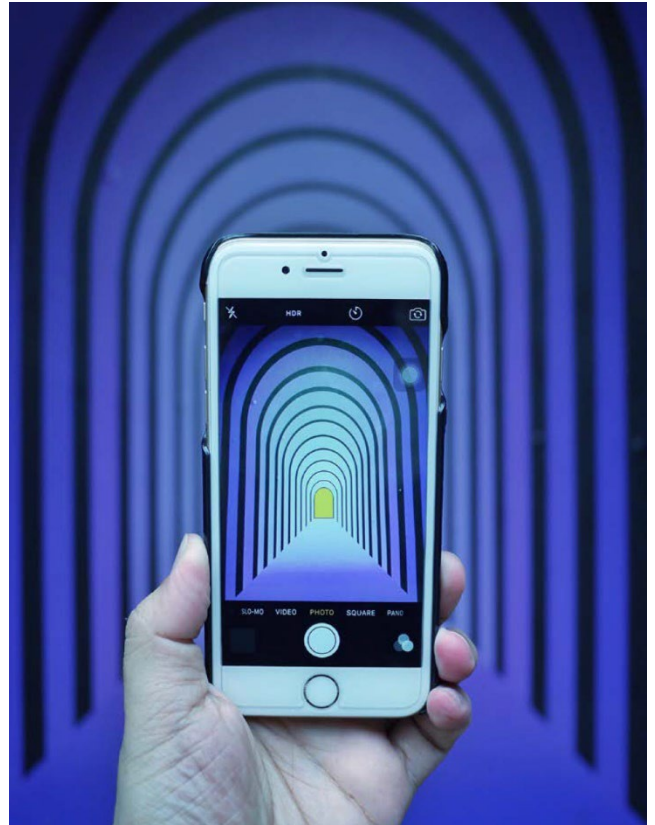
Class Meeting: Mondays 1:55pm-4:55pm (Weimer 1070)

Instructor: A.J. Coffey, Ph.D.

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Office and phone: Weimer 3040-B (352.392.6522)

Office hours: Mon. 5:00-6:00pm; Fri. 10:30-12:30 or by appt.



Course Description

Impacts of communication technology on individuals and society, and the impact that society has on these technologies; rights, responsibilities, ethics of communication and media.

Course Learning Objectives

Students successfully completing the course will be able to:

- Describe some of the major developments in the social history of communication technologies and their social/cultural consequences.
- Identify information and communication-related ethical and social issues in contemporary society, and describe the various perspectives that characterize current debates on those issues.
- Discuss the development of the “information society” as distinguished from previous historical eras and formations, the views on its prevalence and significance, and its social, cultural, and institutional manifestations.
- Describe and discuss various theories related to communication technologies and be able to recognize the influence of these theories in current debates and discussions.
- Examine new technology and forecast possible impacts on society and the concomitant impact that society may have on the new technology.
- Communicate their ideas about technology using multiple modes of communication including, written, oral, visual, and group communication styles.

Required Texts:

None required. Readings accessible via UF Libraries (VPN required) or links provided in Canvas. Reading list available in Canvas course room.

Recommended Resources (optional):

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th ed. (APA Style guide)

Jorgensen, R.F. (Ed.) (2019). *Human Rights in the Age of Platforms*. MIT Press.

Wu, T. (2016). *The Attention Merchants*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Webster, J. (2016). *The Marketplace of Attention: How Audiences Take Shape in a Digital Age*. MIT Press.

Zuboff, S. (2019). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. New York: Public Affairs.

Wimmer, R. & Dominick, J. (2013). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction* (10th ed. Or later). Cengage.

Other Recommended Reading: The *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* are recommended (both available for free via UF Libraries) for following general tech trends within society. See also tech-specific trades such as Wired, Tech Crunch, CNet News, Zdnet, Gizmodo, The New Scientist, OneZero, MIT Tech Review.

Grading

A 94-100%

A- 90-93.95

B+ 87-89.95

B 84-86.95

B- 80-83.95

C+ 77-79.95

C 74-76.95

C- 70-73.95

D+ 67-69.95

D 64-66.95

D- 60-63.95

E Below 60

Assignment descriptions and instructions will be provided separately. Final semester grades calculated using the following weights:

Evaluation

Tech Reflection 15%

Proposal Outline 5%

Weekly Topic Presentations (2) 30%

Final Paper 35%

Final Presentation 5%

Participation and Preparedness 10%

Written Work and Assignments

All assignments are due at the time of class on the stated due date and must be submitted via the **Assignment** function (TurnItIn) on our course Canvas (E-Learning) site by this time. Please double-space all work and use APA style. Late work will be accepted with a 20% penalty up to 24 hours later. No credit will be given to assignments submitted after 24 hours of the due date/time.

Attendance Policy

Graduate-level seminars tend to be interactive, so much of what you will learn occurs during classroom discussion, debate, and exchange. Your absence takes away from your peers' seminar experience. You will be graded on your level of participation and contributions to class discussion, and attendance is part of this. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.asp>.

Classroom Decorum

Our classrooms are professional environments. As such, you are expected to treat your instructor and peers with respect, as in any other workplace. This also means arriving to class on time. Part of learning also involves being exposed to a variety of perspectives and source material. As in all our courses, we do this not to indoctrinate but to instruct, to prepare you to be the most effective and successful media professional or scholar that you can be. You may not always agree with what your classmates say, but be sure to extend them the same courtesy that you would like in return. In addition, be sure not to interrupt others while they are speaking. Please be mindful of digital devices to ensure they are not a disruption or distraction to others (see next point).

Digital Devices

Laptop computers or tablets may be used in class for note-taking or other class-related purposes only. Phones must remain off or muted for the duration of the class period. If digital devices are not used responsibly and/or become a distraction to the class environment, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Academic Honesty

Familiarize yourself with the University of Florida's academic honesty policy. (They can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/>) You should not be here unless you are prepared to do your own original work. If I discover that you have been academically dishonest in this class in any way, you will receive a failing grade (for the semester).

You are responsible for knowing the definition of plagiarism and various kinds of academic dishonesty. Ignorance, i.e. "I didn't realize that was plagiarism" is not an acceptable response, and will not excuse you from academic dishonesty violations, if found. While you are responsible for reading and understanding UF's policy in its entirety, examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Using phrases or quotes from another source without proper attribution
 - For purposes of this class, five or more words (verbatim) from a source without proper attribution will be considered plagiarism.
 - This can also include omitting quotation marks around verbatim content, even if source is noted with in-text parenthetical citation.
- "Forgetting" to source material you use (same as above, intentional or not)
- Passing off others' ideas as your own
- Turning in the same assignment or paper for two courses, i.e. "dual submission." (While this might be tolerated in other classrooms, it will not be tolerated here.)
- Stealing and/or copying other students' work, whether on a test or assignment
- Bribery
- Fabrication of material

If you have any questions about plagiarism, or how to properly cite or attribute sources, please ask.

Support Services

Academic Help:

Additional services are available at:

The Teaching Center/The Reading and Writing Center

SW Broward Hall, 392-2010, <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu>

Disability Resources:

If you have a disability that you believe will affect your performance in this class and/or need special accommodations, please see me. Additional information and services are available at:

UF Disability Resource Center, 392-8565 <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

(Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.)

Academic and Personal Counseling:

UF Counseling and Wellness Center, Ph. 392-1575 (crisis and non-crisis services)

3190 Radio Road, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Counseling-Services.aspx>

Other Health and Well-Being Resources:

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

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. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). 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 ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

Course Schedule *

Week	Topic	Items Due	Comments
Jan. 9	Course overview; Early Thought Leadership; Determinism; The Attention Economy		Review syllabus, student honor code. Sign up for topic lead presentation dates.
Jan. 16	No class meeting	1/22: Tech Reflection	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday
Jan. 23	Communication Technology in Society; Diffusion of Innovations; Technology Affordance and Constraints		
Jan. 30	Media Richness; Interactivity and Presence; Cultivation Effects; Uses and Gratifications		
Feb. 6	Artificial Intelligence; Big Data	2/6: Research proposal outline	
Feb. 13	Consumerism and the Data Economy; Advertising and Marketing; Data Surveillance and Privacy		
Feb. 20	Comm Tech in the Workplace and Education; Comm Tech in Human Relationships		
Feb. 27	Social Media and Influence		

Week	Topic	Items Due	Comments
Mar. 6	Social Identity, Culture, Language, and Tech		
Mar. 13	No class meeting		Spring Break
Mar. 20	Health, Well-Being, Public Safety, and Tech		
Mar. 27	Politics, Religion, and Tech; Cognitive Dissonance; Selective Attention		
Apr. 3	Information and the Public Square; Media Literacy; Democracy, Government, and the Free Press		
Apr. 10	Connectivity and the Digital Divide; Knowledge Gap; Digital Colonialism and Global Effects		
Apr. 17	Final Presentations	4/17: Final Presentations	
Apr. 24	Final Presentations	4/24: Final Paper + Presentations	Last day of class

***Schedule subject to change. Weekly reading assignments can be found in our Canvas course room.**