Course Syllabus

RTV4420 Syllabus Spring 2026

Contact Information

Instructor

Dr. David Ostroff

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Office Hours

by appointment (phone, zoom, in-person)

Credit Hours. 3

For questions about course content, your grade, or other personal issues, use the Canvas mail tool. Expect a response within 24 hours.

UF academic policies and resources can be found at https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies.

Course Description

This course looks to the past and to the future to explore the relationship between the media system and other societal forces, including, but not limited to, technological development, economics, politics, and demographics. Students will learn frameworks in which to evaluate the future of the media system.

Course Requirements

Required Textbook

Wilson, I., & Ralston, Jr., W. K. (2006). *The Scenario Planning Handbook: Developing Strategies in Uncertain Times*. **Thomson/Southwestern.**

Prerequisites
Senior standing

Minimum technology requirements

The University of Florida expects students to enter an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their degree program. Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements. A student's computer configuration should include:

- **Webcam**
- **Microphone**
- **Broadband connection to the Internet and related equipment (Cable/DSL modem)**
- **Microsoft Office Suite installed (provided by the university)**

Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review before starting their program.

Minimum technical skills

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of operating a computer and how to use word processing software.

Zoom

Zoom is an easy to use video conferencing service available to all UF students, faculty, and staff that allows for meetings of up to 100 participants.

You can find resources and help using Zoom at [https://ufl.zoom.usLinks to an external site.](https://ufl.zoom.us).

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Describe and explain the "media system," including:**
  - The internal and external influences on the development and use of communication technologies.
  - How these interact to affect the development of the media systems and are affected, themselves.
- **Identify, locate, and use information sources useful in analyzing trends and issues in elements of the media system.**
- **Using qualitative and quantitative tools, analyze these influences as drivers of communication technology development and communication technologies' influence on the political, economic, and other systems within societies.**
- **In a team, conduct project research and write a scenario about a future state of an aspect of the media system.**

Assignments

The major assignment for this course will be a group project to write a scenario about the impact of an emerging future state component of the media system. You will also present your work to the class.

Scenarios are used by public and private organizations to consider possible futures and are particularly useful during periods of uncertainty, such as the current situation in media and communication. They are "stories," which further enhance your skills in communicating ideas. This exercise requires you to think about the various influences on the evolution of media and media technologies. Still, it does not require the collection and analysis of "hard data," a skill you may not yet have.

You will select from one of the following technologies:

- Augmented/Virtual Reality
- 5G Wireless
- Artificial Intelligence
- High-Speed Broadband

You will be provided some background information, but part of your assignment is to conduct your own research about the technology.

Other graded assignments include

- Assignments
- Quizzes
- Locating and discussing articles on selected subjects
- Group discussions of relevant topics Can't unpublish End-of-Course Survey if there are student submissions

  Orientation
  Manage Orientation
- Page
  Netiquette for Online Courses
- Page
  Tips for Succeeding in an Online Course
   Published. Click to unpublish Tips for Succeeding in an Online Course.
  Manage Tips for Succeeding in an Online Course
- Quiz
  Course Orientation Quiz
  Multiple Due Dates
  Score at least 10.0Must score at least 10.0 to complete this module item
   Can't unpublish Course Orientation Quiz if there are student submissions
  Manage Course Orientation Quiz
- Discussion Topic
  Introduce Yourself

ContributeMust contribute to this module item to complete it

Can't unpublish Introduce Yourself if there are student submissions

Manage Introduce Yourself

Module 1: The Interplay of Technology, Society, Individuals, and the Environment

- Discussion Topic
  Module 1 Discussion
  January 26
  10 pts
  Quiz
  Module 1 Quiz
  January 29
  10 pts
- Page
  Module 2: Introduction to Scenarios
- Assignment
  Module 2 Assignment: Bibliography
  February 22
  10 pts
  Module 2 Quiz
  February 8
  3 pts
- Discussion Topic
  Final Project Discussion
- Assignment
  Final Project Topic
  March 12
  10 pts
  Manage Final Project Topic
  Module 3: The Scenario Project

  Manage Module 3: The Scenario Project
- Quiz
  Module 3 Quiz
  March 28
  5 pts
  Manage Module 3 Quiz
- Quiz
  Mid-Course Survey
  SubmitMust submit this module item to complete it

  Module 4: A Look at 4 Emerging Technologies
- Assignment
  Module 4 Assignment
  April 12

10 pts

- Page
  Module 5: Resources for Finding Information
  Assignment
  Module 5 Assignment: Scavenger Hunt
  April 22
  10 pts

  Module 6: Writing and Presenting Your Scenario
  Assignment
  Final Project Draft
  April 20
  15 pts
- Assignment
  Final Project
  April 29
  100 pts

Grading Policy

I will make every effort to have each assignment graded and posted within one week of the due date.

Course Grading Policy

Assignment	Percentage
Assignments / Quizzes / Discussions	50%
Final Project	50%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	100%-93%
A-	92%-88%

Grade	Percentage
B+	87%-85%
B	84%-79%
B-	78%-76%
C+	75%-72%
C	71%-64%
C-	63%-59%
D+	58%-56%
D	55%-52%
D-	51%-50%
F	49%-0%

See the current **UF grading policiesLinks to an external site.** for more information.

Course Policies

You are expected to participate in class discussions.

All assignments are due when listed. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a lower grade, up to and including a "0" for that assignment.

Be sure to watch for class announcements. They are used to distribute important information and announcements about class assignments, quizzes, schedules, etc.

As this is an online class, you are responsible for observing all posted due dates and are encouraged to be self-directed and take responsibility for your learning.

Requirements for make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at **catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/Links to an external site.**

Student Feedback Surveys

Every semester, students will complete two surveys to give the instructor feedback regarding this course's elements. These surveys are anonymous and are a way for you to provide honest feedback on the course. This feedback is essential to provide the best quality instruction and give you, the learner, the best learning experience. You are asked to give your honest opinion and share any advice you have to make the course better. You will be asked questions regarding the instructor's presence, lectures, assignment quality, etc.

Mid-Course Survey

The Mid-Course Survey will take place during Module 3 of the course. This survey will act as a prerequisite for the rest of the modules and will require completion before moving forward in the course. You will be graded for your participation in the quiz, not for your answers, as the survey is anonymous.

End-of-Course Survey

The End-of-Course Survey will take place during Module 6 of the course. This survey will act as a prerequisite for the final module and will require completion before moving forward. You will be graded for your participation in the quiz, not for your answers, as the survey is anonymous.

UF Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, https://disability.ufl.edu/Links to an external site.) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

University Policy on Academic Conduct

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and

[Student Conduct CodeLinks to an external site.](#) specifies the number of behaviors that violate this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Netiquette and Communication Courtesy

All class members are expected to follow common courtesy rules in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats.

Intellectual and Viewpoint Diversity

- A Student may record a class lecture for three specified purposes as outlined in House Bill 233/Section 1004.097, Florida Statutes:

1. For the student's own personal educational use;
2. In connection with a complaint to the University where the recording is made
3. As evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding.

- Students may audio or video record a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled. Students do not need advance permission, or to provide notice, to record.
- A class lecture is defined as an educational presentation delivered by faculty (instructor of record) or guest lecturer, as part of a University of Florida course, intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Lecture is inclusive of faculty-led discussions that are integrated into the educational presentation.
- A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving 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.
- A recording of a class lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer.
  - Publish is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing 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.

- o A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet.

- 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.

Getting Help

Technical Difficulties:

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [http://helpdesk.ufl.eduLinks to an external site.](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact **umatter@ufl.edu**, 352-392-1575, or visit **umatter.ufl.eduLinks to an external site.** to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit **counseling.ufl.eduLinks to an external site.** or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit [shcc.ufl.eduLinks to an external site.](shcc.ufl.edu).
- **University Police Department:** Visit [police.ufl.eduLinks to an external site.](police.ufl.edu) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care in Gainesville, call 352-733-0111, or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-centerLinks to an external site.](ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center).

Academic and Student Support

- **Career Connections Center:** 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services [career.ufl.edu/Links to an external site.](career.ufl.edu/).
- **Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance for using the libraries or finding resources. [cms.uflib.ufl.edu/askLinks to an external site.](cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask)
- **Teaching Center:** 352-392-2010 General study skills and tutoring: [teachingcenter.ufl.edu/Links to an external site.](teachingcenter.ufl.edu/)
- **Writing Studio:** 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers: [writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/Links to an external site.](writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/)

Course Evaluations

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 professionally and respectfully is available at [https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/Links to an external site.](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.bluera.com/ufl/Links to an external site.](https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/Links to an external site.](https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/).

Tips for Success

Taking a course online can be a lot of fun! Here are some tips that will help you get the most of this course while taking full advantage of the online format:

- **Schedule "class times" for yourself. It is important to do the coursework on time each week. You will receive a reduction in points for work that is turned in late!**
- **Read ALL of the material contained on this site. There is a lot of helpful information that can save you time and help you meet the course's objectives.**
- **Print out the Course Schedule located in the Course Syllabus and check things off as you go.**
- **Take full advantage of the online discussion boards. Ask for help or clarification of the material if you need it.**
- **Do not wait to ask questions! Waiting to ask a question might cause you to miss a due date.**
- **Do your work well before the due dates. Sometimes things happen. If your computer goes down when you are trying to submit an assignment, you'll need time to troubleshoot the problem.**
- **To be extra safe, back up your work to an external hard drive, thumb drive, or through a cloud service.**

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- **Instructure (Canvas)**
  - **Privacy Policy**
  - **Accessibility**
- **Sonic Foundry (Mediasite Streaming Video Player)**
  - **Privacy PolicyLinks to an external site.**
  - **AccessibilityLinks to an external site.**
- **Vimeo**
  - **Privacy PolicyLinks to an external site.**
  - **AccessibilityLinks to an external site.**
- **Zoom**
  - **Privacy PolicyLinks to an external site.**
  - **AccessibilityLinks to an external site.**
- **YouTube (Google)**

  - **Privacy PolicyLinks to an external site.**
  - **AccessibilityLinks to an external site.**
- **Microsoft**
  - **Privacy PolicyLinks to an external site.**
  - **AccessibilityLinks to an external site.**