

**COMMUNICATION STUDIES 40313:
Social Media & Personal Relationships
TR 2:00-3:20 PM, Moudy South 341, Class #74060**

Syllabus, Fall Semester 2021

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Ledbetter

Office: Moudy South 356

Office Phone: 817-257-4524 (terrible way to reach me)

E-mail: a.ledbetter@tcu.edu (best way to reach me)

Twitter: @dr_ledbetter (also a good way to reach me more publicly)

IM screen name (Google Chat): DrAndrewLedbetter (this works too)

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-1:30; by appointment

Course readings are available through TCU Online (see schedule below for assigned readings and dates).

Course Description

*“New technologies come and go but the human context within they are used remains . . .”
-- Hameet Sawhney, Communication Monographs (2007)*

The study of ‘new’ communication technology is no longer new. Indeed, the idea that some scholars still call it ‘new’ is probably strange to you, because if you’re the same age as the average TCU student (18-23 years old), you’ve grown up with advanced computer technology as part of your day-to-day life. This course is about how communication technology intersects with our interpersonal relationships in both personal and professional contexts.

This course enters this discussion via the term *social media*. As used here, this term is construed broadly, referring to both the relatively recent adoption of sites for articulated social connection like Facebook and Twitter, yet also realizing that *media* for *social purposes* far predate the development of any form of computer technology. Thus, we will seek to understand current use of these platforms in light of both theory and history—with a particular eye toward how you can use them effectively in your life, and specifically in your personal and professional relationships. As such, by the end of this course, you will be able to:

Course objective	How you’ll demonstrate it to me
Reflect on how technology shapes communication in personal and professional contexts.	Discussion forum posts
Understand key strands of theoretical understanding in the field of interpersonal computer-mediated communication technology, including strengths and weaknesses of these theoretical perspectives.	Exams

Critically evaluate the extent to which your use of social media meets your personal and/or professional goals.	Social media audit assignment
Analyze how a current topic intersects with a specific social media platform.	Social media analysis blog post

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

1. **This is an upper-level elective seminar course. That means that I expect a few things** from you. Let’s unpack what those adjectives mean:

- (a) **UPPER-LEVEL:** It’s going to be tough. Skimming the readings won’t be enough. You will have to **THINK** about them. Cramming for exams and papers won’t be enough. You’ll have to plan ahead. This course will demand the best of your intellectual ability – consistent with the reputation of Texas Christian University, the Bob Schieffer College of Communication, and the nationally renowned Department of Communication Studies.
- (b) **ELECTIVE:** You are here of your own free choice. This course does not meet any TCU Core requirement. **It does meet hours toward the 40000-level requirement**, but you can take other courses to fulfill hours toward the communication major or minor. I assume you are here because the subject matter of the course interests you. I teach it because it interests me a great deal. If the subject matter doesn’t interest you, I suggest dropping this course and enrolling in a course that does.
- (c) **SEMINAR:** A “seminar” is not a “lecture.” I will come to class with material to discuss and things to teach. However, I do not expect to talk *at* you. Rather, I am coming to talk *with* you. A “seminar” means that everyone has read the material for the day and that everyone is prepared to discuss and critique those readings. Many of these readings will be challenging, presenting you with new ideas and abstract theoretical concepts. If you are not prepared to engage seriously with that level of reading, I **STRONGLY** suggest dropping this course immediately.

If you have a “*gulp*” reaction to the above, I don’t blame you. But, I’d also like to reframe this for you: The above characteristics are precisely why the course will help you grow. By the end of this semester, you will have seriously wrestled with theoretical and practical concerns regarding technology that will influence you for the rest of your life. That will help you make better choices about how you use technology, as well as equip you to live a personal and professional world filled with mediated communication. And although you may not feel it right now, I think you’ll come to see that serious intellectual reflection on important topics is a lot of fun!

- 2. Class Attendance and Participation:** In college courses, I don't believe in awarding points based on attendance—your voluntary presence in college and enrollment in this course suggests to me that you have a passionate interest in learning this material! However, I do believe that course attendance is the best and easiest way to learn the course material and thus earn a good grade in this course. As a teacher, I commit to making class time valuable for you as a student. Likewise, I hope you will believe that attending class is a valuable use of your time! I will take attendance every day, and if you are not attending class regularly, I will contact Campus Life to inform them of this.

Note that this is an in-person class. That means that Zoom will not be an option for remote participation. I understand that situations may arise that make it impossible for you to attend class (such examples include serious illness, quarantining due to COVID exposure, death of a family member or close friend, jury duty, cultural and religious holidays, and university-sponsored events such as participation on a sport team). If you miss class, I recommend contacting a classmate to get notes from the day. If you missed a graded activity due to an excusable absence, please contact me as soon as possible so we can plan how you will make it up.

For the good of others in the class, if you are engaging in any behavior that is disruptive to me or other students, I will ask you to stop such behavior. If you do not do so, you will be asked to leave the class for the day.

- 3. Deadlines:** These are specified in the details about each assignment (see below). I will accept late work, but an assignment's tardiness will influence how I read and grade the assignment. As a general rule, assignments turned in within 24 hours of the due date will receive approximately half credit, and assignments submitted over 24 hours late will receive minimal or no credit.

I understand that legitimate situations arise when work cannot be submitted on time (see the list of reasons for excusable absences above). If such a situation arises, please notify me **as soon as possible!** Specifically, for situations that can be anticipated in advance (e.g., a religious holiday), you should notify me sometime during the first week of class. My willingness to grant an extension will be based on (a) the legitimacy of the situation (including ability to document it upon request) and (b) your timeliness in notifying me of it. Please note that assignments administered prior to your enrollment in the class cannot be made up under any circumstance.

TCU's policy for religious observances and holidays: "Students who are unable to participate in a class, in any related assignment or in a university required activity because of the religious observance of a holy day shall be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up the examination or assignment, without penalty, provided that it does not create an unreasonable burden on the University." For more details, see <http://faith.tcu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/TCU-Religious-Holidays-Policy.pdf>

4. **Recording Class Sessions:** Class sessions contain my own and others' intellectual property. Except when I have granted prior written approval, recording audio or video from class sessions is prohibited and will be treated as academic misconduct.
5. **E-mail Availability:** During weekdays, I generally (though not always) check my e-mail frequently between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM. I will respond to your email within 24 hours during weekdays.
6. **Grade discussion and changes ("24/7 policy"):** If you have questions about any grade you receive in the course, I am more than willing to discuss your grade with you! However, I find that such discussion tends to be more effective after some time has passed since when you learned your grade—thus, I have a "24/7" grade discussion policy. Unless the issue is minor, I ask that you please refrain from discussing your grade with me until after 24 hours have elapsed after receiving the graded copy of your assignment. Be sure to check returned papers on a computer—I offer feedback using the track changes feature in Word, and such comments don't always show up on mobile devices. After you receive your graded assignment, you have one week (7 days) to discuss your grade. After that week has elapsed, the grade is final and will not be changed for any reason. Note that the 24/7 policy does not preclude your right to initiate a grade appeal according to procedures outlined in the TCU Student Handbook (http://www.studenthandbook.tcu.edu/student_handbook.pdf; pp. 26-27). (For grade changes on assignments/exams at the end of the term, please see the note below.)

Grade changes for completed assignments are rare. Such changes only will occur when, with clear, logical argumentation, you can show me that the grade I assigned is inconsistent with the expectations laid out in the assignment sheet and rubric, the course materials (e.g., the readings), and your submitted work. **Grade changes will NEVER be given based on external circumstances (e.g., loss of scholarship money or ability to graduate), the amount of effort invested in the assignment (grades are assigned by the quality of the submitted work, not effort), or simple desire (e.g., wanting to earn a "B").**

Please also note: Individual requests for extra credit will always be denied. If extra credit is available, it will be offered to the entire class.

7. **My commitment to ideological diversity.** Academia cannot function properly unless all of its members experience freedom to express their views without fear of personal attack. In order to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide our work:
 - Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion;
 - Reasonable minds can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions;

- Because constructive disagreement sharpens thinking, deepens understanding, and reveals novel insights, it is not just encouraged, it is expected;
- All viewpoints are welcome;
- No ideas are immune from scrutiny and debate;
- The purpose of this classroom is to discover, explore, and debate ideas, not to engage in political activism or political persuasion;
- You will not be graded on your opinions.
- (Drawn from Debra Mashek, <https://heterodoxacademy.org/teaching-heterodoxy-syllabus-language/>)

- 8. Communication with parents:** In high school, your parents likely had complete access to your academic record. As a college student (and for most of you, as legal adults), by federal law that is no longer the case. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; also known as the Buckley Amendment), passed in 1974, requires that colleges and universities keep your academic records private, even from your parents, unless you give consent. For information on TCU's compliance with FERPA, and how to grant your parents or others access to your academic information, see <http://www.reg.tcu.edu/privacy.asp>.

Please also note that waiving FERPA restrictions for a parent (or another person) only means that a professor may discuss your grade with the parent—it does not require a professor to do so. Therefore, I will not discuss your academic performance in this class with your parents or other individuals under any circumstances, even if you have waived your FERPA rights. You are an adult, and I believe that your personal growth as an adult will only occur as you take initiative and responsibility for your own academic career, including discussing concerns with me in a timely fashion. If you do have questions about your academic record in this class, of course I am more than happy to speak with you individually about it.

- 9. Changes to the Syllabus:** Although I've made every effort to craft this syllabus as accurately as possible, sometimes unforeseen events arise, including but not limited to inclement weather days, instructor illness, global pandemics, relevant current events that merit class discussion, or the availability of guest speakers. I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus as the semester progresses, including but not limited to changes in the course schedule, grading criteria, and attendance policies. Substantive syllabus changes will be communicated to you via e-mail, via announcement in class, and on some occasions also by announcement on TCU Online. You are responsible to check your e-mail, come to class, and visit TCU Online to receive such announcements.

In all cases, the most recent version of the syllabus posted on TCU Online supersedes all previous versions. Also, a change in one portion of the syllabus does not invalidate any other portion of the syllabus. Likewise, if one portion of the syllabus is found to be invalid by a university or legal authority, that decision shall apply to that portion of the syllabus only, and the validity of the remainder of the syllabus shall remain intact.

TCU POLICIES

- 10. COVID policies:** For current information regarding TCU's policies on COVID, please visit <https://tcu.edu/protect-the-purple/index.php>. This class will follow TCU's policies regarding masks. If masks are required campus-wide, they are required in this class; if masks are not required by TCU, they will not be required in this class.

The health and safety of students, faculty, and staff is Texas Christian University's highest priority. Safety protocols may change during the semester and may result in modifications or changes to the teaching format, delivery method, or the course schedule (e.g., altering meeting times or frequency; changing beginning or ending dates for a term; or partially or completely moving from a face-to-face classroom teaching to an online teaching or remote learning format). Any changes in teaching format, delivery method, or course schedule will not impact the credit hours for the course.

If you are exhibiting symptoms that may be related to COVID-19 (fever or chills, dry cough, shortness of breath, etc.) or are concerned that you may have been exposed to COVID-19, you must self-quarantine and consult with the Brown Lupton Health Center at 817-257-7949 for further guidance.

In addition, you must notify the Campus Life Office immediately at 817-257-7926 or use the TCU COVID-19 Self-Report Hotline, 817-257-2684 (817-257-COVI). Campus Life will inform your professors that you are unable to attend class and provide any assistance and support needed. Click here for detailed information concerning COVID-19 symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>.

If you are unwell but are not exhibiting potential COVID-19-related symptoms, please notify your instructor as soon as possible that you are ill and will not be attending class.

- 11. Academic Misconduct:** TCU's mission is "to educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community." The ideals of ethics and responsibility are completely incompatible with academic misconduct.

Sec. 3.4 from the TCU Code of Student Conduct: Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents

of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.

- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore. [I reserve the right to examine submitted papers using the turnitin.com plagiarism detection service. Normally this will occur automatically when you submit your paper to TCU Online, and in other cases I may upload your paper to the service myself.]
- **Collusion:** The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
- **Abuse of resource materials:** Mutilating, destroying, concealing, or stealing such material.
- **Computer misuse:** Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs, terminals, or freestanding computers owned, leased or operated by TCU or any of its academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.
- **Fabrication and falsification:** Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- **Multiple submission:** The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.
- **Complicity in academic misconduct:** Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.
- **Bearing false witness:** Knowingly and falsely accusing another student of academic misconduct.

Please also note that TCU's academic misconduct policy forbids submitting the same paper (or portions thereof) to multiple classes without prior instructor approval. You can find more information about academic misconduct at TCU in the Student Code of Conduct (Section 3.4), <https://tcu.codes/code/index>.

TCU students are prohibited from sharing any portion of course materials (including videos, PowerPoint slides, assignments, or notes) with others, including on social media, without written permission by the course instructor. Accessing, copying, transporting (to another person or location), modifying, or destroying programs, records, or data belonging to TCU or another user without authorization, whether such data is in transit or storage, is prohibited. The full policy can be found at: <https://security.tcu.edu/polproc/usage-policy/>. **Violating this policy is considered a violation of Section 3.2.15 of the Student Code of Conduct** (this policy may be found in the Student Handbook at <https://tcu.codes/code/index/>), **and may also constitute Academic Misconduct or Disruptive Classroom Behavior** (these policies may be found

in the undergraduate catalog at <https://tcu.smartcatalogiq.com/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Student-Policies/Academic-Conduct-Policy-Details>). TCU encourages student debate and discourse; accordingly, TCU generally interprets and applies its policies, including the policies referenced above, consistent with the values of free expression and First Amendment principles.

In this course, paying money to another student currently in the course for information such as class notes, completed review sheets, and so forth is considered a form of academic misconduct.

Exam and quiz material is my own intellectual property. **Taking photographs, videos, or any other copies of quiz or exam materials is academic misconduct, as is distributing such material to other people in any form, publicly and/or privately, or receiving such material from others. This includes via learning websites such as Quizlet. Likewise, if you discover that such material is being or has been distributed, you must tell me immediately, or else you are complicit in that academic misconduct.**

I reserve the right to record exams and quizzes on video, using any device of my choosing, to identify academic misconduct during those exercises.

If you have questions concerning what constitutes academic misconduct, please discuss this with me ahead of time. Not knowing the definition of academic misconduct does not excuse you from the consequences. **In this course, any form of academic misconduct will result in automatic failure (i.e., grade of "F") for the relevant assignment(s) and recommendation to the academic dean that the offender be dropped immediately from the course with a grade of "F". In a group project, all project members will, by default, receive the same penalty.** TCU's undergraduate and graduate catalogs provide information about appeal procedures in cases of alleged academic misconduct.

- 12. Disclosure of Financial Benefit:** Because I am a co-author of the textbook assigned for this course (*A First Look at Communication Theory*, 10th edition), TCU policy requires that I disclose my financial benefit from assignment of the text. The team of authors receives 15% of the net income from a sale of a new book or a rental. I receive 40% of that 15% (i.e., 6.0%, or \$0.06 per \$1 of McGraw-Hill's net income from the book).

In addition to purchasing a print or digital version of the book, rental options (both print and digital) are available. I hope you will do whatever you can to minimize your cost for legally procuring the text.

- 13. Student access and accommodation:** Texas Christian University affords students with disabilities reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To be eligible for disability-

related academic accommodations, students are required to register with the TCU Office of Student Access and Accommodation and have their requested accommodations evaluated. If approved for accommodations, students are required to discuss their official TCU Notification of Accommodation with their instructors. Accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement. The Office of Student Access and Accommodation is located in The Harrison, Suite 1200. More information on how to apply for accommodations can be found at <https://www.tcu.edu/access-accommodation/> or by calling Student Access and Accommodation at (817) 257-6567.

Audio recordings of class lectures may be permitted as an approved disability accommodation through Student Access and Accommodation. Recordings are not to be shared with other students, posted to any online forum, or otherwise disseminated.

- 14. Statement on TCU's Discrimination Policy:** TCU is committed to providing a positive learning, living, and working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation. In support of this commitment, in its policy on Prohibited Discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct and retaliation, TCU has a range of prohibited behaviors, including unlawful discrimination and harassment and related sexual and other misconduct based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, predisposing genetic information, covered veteran status, and any other basis protected by law. The **Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)** is responsible for responding to all reports of discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct and retaliation.

Please use the following links to review [TCU Policy 1.008 Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation](#) or to review [TCU Policy 1.009 Responding to Reports of Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation](#).

To make a report, you may call OIE at 817-257-8228, email oie@tcu.edu, visit us at The Harrison, Suite 1800 or click here: [Make a Report](#).

[To learn about the Campus Community Response Team \(CCRT\) and Report a Bias Incident click here: https://inclusion.tcu.edu/campus-community-response-team/](#)

- 15. Title IX:** As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under TCU policy and federal law and I am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with TCU's Title IX Coordinator.

TCU's Title IX Coordinator works within OIE. Andrea Vircks-McDew serves as TCU's Title IX Coordinator. You may call 817-257-8228 to make a report, email oe@tcu.edu or a.vircks@tcu.edu, or make a report [here](#). Additional Title IX resources and information are available at <https://www.tcu.edu/institutional-equity/title-ix/index.php>.

ALL TCU employees, except confidential resources, are considered Mandatory Reporters. Mandatory reporters are required to immediately report to OIE any conduct that raises Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct (Title IX or Violence Against Women (VAWA)) or Retaliation. Mandatory reporters cannot promise to refrain from forwarding the information to OIE.

Students can receive confidential support and academic advocacy via the following resources:

Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education
www.care.tcu.edu | 817-257-5225

Counseling & Mental Health Center
www.counseling.tcu.edu | 817-257-7863

Religious & Spiritual Life
www.faith.tcu.edu | 817-257-7830

Obligations to Report Conduct Raising Title IX or VAWA Issues

Mandatory Reporters: All TCU employees, except Confidential Resources, are considered Mandatory Reporters for purposes of their obligations to report, to the Coordinator, conduct that raises Title IX and/or VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) issues.

Mandatory Reporters are required to immediately report to the Coordinator information about conduct that raises Title IX and/or VAWA issues, including any reports, complaints or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination and those forms of prohibited conduct that relate to nonconsensual sexual intercourse or contact, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, stalking and retaliation involving any member of the TCU community, except as otherwise provided within the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Conduct](#).

Mandatory Reporters may receive this information in a number of ways. For example, a complainant may report the information directly to a Mandatory Reporter, a witness or third-party may provide information to a Mandatory Reporter, or a Mandatory Reporter may personally witness such conduct. A Mandatory Reporter's obligation to report such information to the Coordinator does not depend on how he/she received the information. Mandatory Reporters must provide all known information about conduct that raises Title IX or VAWA issues to the Coordinator, including the identities of the parties, the date, time and location, and any other details. Failure of a Mandatory

Reporters to provide such information to the Coordinator in a timely manner may subject the employee to appropriate discipline, including removal from a position or termination of employment.

Mandatory Reporters cannot promise to refrain from forwarding the information to the Coordinator if it raises Title IX or VAWA issues or withhold information about such conduct from the Coordinator. Mandatory Reporters may provide support and assistance to a complainant, witness, or respondent, but they should not conduct any investigation or notify the respondent unless requested to do so by the Coordinator.

Mandatory Reporters are not required to report information disclosed (1) at public awareness events (e.g., "Take Back the Night," candlelight vigils, protests, "survivor speak-outs," or other public forums in which students may disclose such information (collectively, public awareness events); or (2) during an individual's participation as a subject in an Institutional Review Board approved human subjects research protocol (IRB Research). TCU may provide information about Title IX rights and available resources and support at public awareness events, however, and Institutional Review Boards may, in appropriate cases, require researchers to provide such information to all subjects of IRB Research.

911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777.

16. Email. Only the official TCU student email address will be used for all course notification. It is your responsibility to check your TCU email on a regular basis.

17. Public safety. Please review [TCU's L.E.S.S. is More public safety video](https://publicsafety.tcu.edu/less-is-more/) to learn about Lockdown, Evacuate, and Seek Shelter procedures. (<https://publicsafety.tcu.edu/less-is-more/>)

[TCU's Public Safety website](https://publicsafety.tcu.edu/) provides maps that show our building's rally point for evacuation and the seek shelter location. (<https://publicsafety.tcu.edu/>)

In the event of an emergency, call the TCU Police Department at **817-257-7777**.

Download the [Frogshield Campus Safety App](https://police.tcu.edu/frogshield/) on your phone. (<https://police.tcu.edu/frogshield/>)

18. TCU Campus Resources for Students: Many resources exist on the TCU campus that may be helpful to students:

- Brown-Lupton Health Center (817-257-7863)
- Campus Life (817-257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006)
- Center for Academic Services (817-257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022)

- Center for Digital Expression (CDeX) (817-257-7350, Scharbauer 2003)
- Counseling & Mental Health Center (817-257-7863, Samuelson Hall)
- Mary Coats Burnett Library (817-257-7117)
- Office of Religious & Spiritual Life (817-257-7830, Jarvis Hall 1st floor)
- Student Development Services (817-257-7855, BLUU 2003)
- TCU Center for Writing (817-257-7221, Reed Hall 419)
- Transfer Student Center (817-257-7855, BLUU 2003)
- Veterans Services (817-257-5557, Jarvis Hall 219)

Course Assessment

Discussion questions (100 points) – The readings are crucial in this course. To demonstrate your engagement with the readings, at ten times throughout the semester, you will post *questions about the readings* to a discussion forum on TCU Online. Your question should demonstrate that you have read the material and thought meaningfully about it. You will earn 7 points for a weak question, 8 points for an acceptable question, 9 points for a good question, and 10 points for an excellent question. **You may complete an eleventh question in order to make up points lost on earlier questions or to earn extra credit.** Questions that are too vague or do not advance our understanding of the material will not receive any points. The due date for questions is 9 AM on the day we will discuss the topic in class.

Personal history of communication technology assignment (100 points) – You will write a paper that uses course content to describe and explain your personal history of communication technology use. See the assignment sheet for more information.

Social media analysis assignment (100 points) – You will write a paper that uses course content and external sources to analyze how one of the topics in the second half of the course intersects with a specific social media platform. See the assignment sheet for more information.

Exams (3 exams, 100 points each) – You will complete three exams. The exams will feature a mix of true/false, matching, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Grading

There are 500 points possible, with the grade breakdown as follows:

<p>Excellent Work: A = 558-600 points A- = 540-557 points</p> <p>Good Work: B+ = 522-539 points B = 498-521 points B- = 480-497 points</p> <p>Satisfactory Work: C+ = 462-479 points C = 438-461 points C- = 420-437 points</p>	<p>Poor Work: D+ = 402-419 points D = 378-401 points D- = 360-377 points</p> <p>Failing Work: F = 0-359 points</p>
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Please note:

- “A”- and “B”-quality work goes above and beyond the formal requirements/expectations of an assignment; in other words, an “A” or a “B” is an above-average grade. “C”-quality work meets the expectations for the assignment; in other words, “C” is an average grade. “D”- and “F”-quality work fails to meet the expectations for the assignment; they are below-average grades. For more information about the formal requirements/expectations for major course assignments, see the course eCollege site.
- Because “A” and “B” grades are above-average, many students will not receive them. **Do not take this course with the expectation of an easy A or B.**
- After the final course exam, you cannot complete additional work in order to increase your grade.
- To be fair to all students, I will not round point totals up or down at the end of the semester. **In other words, the point breakdown listed here is the standard for determining grades for everyone in the course.** Please also note that grades are assigned by points, *not* by percentages.
- If you wish to discuss grades for work that was completed and graded at the very end of the course (e.g., the final exam), I am more than happy to do so; however, such discussion and review may have to wait for the start of the next major (i.e., Fall or Spring) academic term.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
T 8/24	Course introduction and syllabus discussion
R 8/26	<p>Introduction to social media</p> <p>Twenge, J. M. (2017). Have smartphones destroyed a generation? <i>The Atlantic</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/</p>
<i>The History of Social Media and Personal Relationships: Ideas and Technological Development</i>	
T 8/31	<p>“Old” communication technology</p> <p>Lasar, M. (2010). “Keep the mustache out of the opening”: A history of phone etiquette. <i>Ars Technica</i>. http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2010/08/what-would-emily-post-say-about-droids-in-cafes/</p>
R 9/2	<p>Social determinism vs. technological determinism</p> <p>Thompson, D. (2017). How air-conditioning invented the modern world. <i>The Atlantic</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/09/tim-harford-50-inventions/540276/</p>
T 9/7	<p>Social networks</p> <p>Barabási, A.-L. (2002). Hubs and connectors. In <i>Linked: The New Science of Networks</i> (pp. 55-64). Cambridge, MA: Perseus.</p>
R 9/9	<p>Information theory</p> <p>Griffin, E. (1997). “Information theory of Claude Shannon & Warren Weaver.” In <i>A First Look at Communication Theory</i> (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.</p>
T 9/14	<p>Uses & gratifications theory</p> <p>Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2019). “Uses & gratifications theory of Elihu Katz.” In <i>A First Look at Communication Theory</i> (10th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.</p>

R 9/16	<p style="text-align: center;">McLuhan & media ecology</p> <p>Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2019). "Media ecology of Marshall McLuhan." In <i>A First Look at Communication Theory</i> (10th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.</p>
T 9/21	<p style="text-align: center;">Media richness theory</p> <p>Selection from Baym, N. K., "Communication in digital spaces," in <i>Personal Connections in the Digital Age</i> (2nd ed., pp. 57-67). Malden, MA: Polity.</p>
R 9/23	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Exam #1 (covers material from 8/24 to 9/21)</u></p>
T 9/28	<p style="text-align: center;">Lack of social context cues</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maher, J. (2017). A net before the web, part 2: Service to community. https://www.filfre.net/2017/11/a-net-before-the-web-part-2-service-to-community/</p>
R 9/30	<p style="text-align: center;">Social information processing theory & the hyperpersonal effect</p> <p>Griffin, E., Ledbetter, A., & Sparks, G. (2015). "Social information processing theory of Joseph Walther." In <i>A First Look at Communication Theory</i> (10th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.</p>
T 10/5	<p style="text-align: center;">Time displacement hypothesis</p> <p>Turkle, S. (2015, September 27). Stop Googling. Let's talk: What have we done to face-to-face conversation? <i>The New York Times</i>.</p>
R 10/7	<p style="text-align: center;">Affordances and the impression management model</p> <p>Gaver, W. W. (1991). Technology affordances. <i>Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems</i>, pp. 79-84.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Personal History of Communication Technology assignment due!</u></p>
T 10/12	<p style="text-align: center;">Media multiplexity theory</p> <p>Ledbetter, A. M. (2015). Media multiplexity theory: Technology use and interpersonal tie strength. In D. O. Braithwaite & P. Schrodt (Eds.), <i>Engaging theories in interpersonal communication</i> (2nd ed., pp. 357-370). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Topic and platform for the Social Media Analysis paper due!</u></p>

R 10/14	FALL BREAK: NO CLASS
<i>Current Use of Social Media and Personal Relationships: Topics and Concerns</i>	
T 10/19	<p style="text-align: center;">Mobility</p> <p>Humphreys, L. (2005). Cellphones in public: Social interactions in a wireless era. <i>New Media & Society</i>, 7, 810-833.</p>
R 10/21	<p style="text-align: center;">Relationship maintenance</p> <p>McEwan, B. (2015). Maintaining network connections. In <i>Navigating New Media Networks</i> (pp. 91-102). Lanham, MD: Lexington.</p> <p>McMahon, T. (2020, March 27). Silicon Valley gets used to its new role as digital savior as coronavirus leaves millions isolated. <i>The Globe and Mail</i>, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-silicon-valley-gets-used-to-its-new-role-as-digital-saviour-as/</p>
T 10/26	<p style="text-align: center;">Trust and deception</p> <p>Burke, T., & Dickey, J. (2013). Manti Te'o's dead girlfriend, the most heartbreaking and inspirational story of the college football season, is a hoax. <i>Deadspin</i>. https://deadspin.com/manti-teos-dead-girlfriend-the-most-heartbreaking-an-5976517</p>
R 10/28	<u>Exam #2 (covers material from 9/28 to 10/26)</u>
T 11/2	<p style="text-align: center;">Video gaming</p> <p>Bowman, N. D. (2018). The demanding nature of video game play. In N. D. Bowman (Ed.), <i>Video games: A medium that demands our attention</i> (pp. 1-24). New York: Routledge.</p>
R 11/4	<p style="text-align: center;">Networks and contagion</p> <p>Christakis, N. A., & Fowler, J. H. (2009). In the thick of it. In <i>Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives</i> (pp. 3-32). New York: Little, Brown and Company.</p>

<p>T 11/9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">User-generated content</p> <p>Ryan, J. (2010). <i>A history of the Internet and the digital future</i>, chs. 10 & 11</p>
<p>R 11/11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Aspirational labor</p> <p>Duffy, B. E., & Hund, E. (2015, September 25). The invisible labor of fashion blogging. <i>The Atlantic</i>, https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/09/fashion-blogging-labor-myths/405817/</p>
<p>T 11/16</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Digital divides and inclusion</p> <p>Eschmann, R. (2019, July 30). The internet is unmasking racism. Here’s what that means to young people of color. <i>The Brink</i>, https://www.bu.edu/articles/2019/internet-racism/</p> <p>Khazan, O. (2020, August 17). America’s terrible internet is making quarantine worse. <i>The Atlantic</i>, https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2020/08/virtual-learning-when-you-dont-have-internet/615322/</p>
<p>R 11/18</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cyberbullying</p> <p>Lorenz, T. (2018, October 10). Teens are being bullied ‘constantly’ on Instagram. <i>The Atlantic</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/10/teens-face-relentless-bullying-instagram/572164/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Note: Due to my attendance at the National Communication Association convention, class will be prerecorded and posted on TCU Online.</p>
<p>T 11/23 R 11/25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS</p>
<p>T 11/30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Algorithms and control</p> <p>Pariser, E. (2011). The you loop. In <i>The Filter Bubble</i> (pp. 109-135). New York: Penguin.</p>

<p>R 12/2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Surveillance and tracking</p> <p>Burleigh, N. (2021, July 2). Americans demanded freedom from tracking during Covid, and then grabbed their phones. <i>NBC News</i>, https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/americans-demanded-freedom-tracking-during-covid-then-grabbed-their-phones-ncna1273007</p> <p>Powers-Riggs, A. (2020, August 17). Covid-19 is proving a boon for digital authoritarianism. <i>Center for Strategic International Studies</i>, https://www.csis.org/blogs/new-perspectives-asia/covid-19-proving-boon-digital-authoritarianism</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Media Analysis assignment due!</u></p>
<p>T 12/7</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The future and the singularity</p> <p>Kurzweil, R. (2005). The six epochs. In <i>The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology</i> (pp. 7-33). New York: Viking.</p> <p>Lewis, C. S. (1947). <i>The Abolition of Man</i>, pp. 67-71. New York: Macmillan.</p>
<p>R 12/16 2-3:30 PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The final exam (covering material from 11/2 to 12/7) will be held in our regular classroom, Moudy South 340.</u></p> <p>TCU schedules this final exam block from 2:00-4:30 PM, but the time for the exam is only 1.5 hours. Thus, the exam will occur from 2:00-3:30 PM.</p>