

The Ohio State University

COMM 654

Social Implications of Telecommunication and Electronic Media Structures

Winter 2006

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Office hours: by appointment

Class time: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:30-5:18

Location: Derby Hall, room 80

Purpose of Course

This course will address different theoretical concepts that address the relationship between technology (e.g., TV, Internet, video games) and consumers of technology.

Required Readings

Readings for this class utilize the book and readings available online and linked through Carmen for only the cost of printing if you choose to print. United States copyright law allows you to make a personal copy of these readings for research use. Other use is prohibited. Please see <http://carmen.osu.edu> for links to articles.

Grading Procedures

Late Assignments

I will not accept late assignments. Please do not come to me concerning late assignments unless you are asking for and believe you qualify for an incomplete for the class. Excuses are discriminatory because some students use them while others do not for equally good reasons. This is the best way I know to be fair to everyone.

Incompletes

I follow the university's policy. The following is from the OSU Course Offerings Bulletin:

An "I" indicates that the student has completed a major portion of the work in the course in a satisfactory manner, but for reasons judged by the instructor to be legitimate, a portion of the course requirements remains to be completed. The mark "I" shall be reported to the Office of the University Registrar together with the mark which the University Registrar is authorized to enter on the student's official record unless a different mark is reported to the Office of the University Registrar in the manner and within the time described below. The student must complete the work so that the instructor of the course may report the final mark at the earliest possible time, but not later than noon of the sixth Friday of the quarter, semester, or session following that in which the "I" was received.

Grading Procedure

Research Paper – 50%

(30% paper, 15% presentation, 5% presentation participation)

You are required to propose an original research study. This proposal should provide a thorough literature review of a particular aspect of technology-related communication processes. You will not be expected to collect original data this quarter. The goal is to create a well-thought-out idea for a research project—possibly for an honors project or if you plan to continue with academia. If you are not planning either, it will be good practice organizing a variety of materials and producing them into one coherent piece of literature, a good skill for any employee. If you don't plan to work then I suggest you chalk this up as something that will make you stronger. The research proposal should interest you. You will be required to submit progress reports throughout the quarter to help alleviate exam week pain. The Final Paper is due Tuesday, March, 14 by 3:30 p.m., in a hard copy. This date is before the official final exam date; however, with pieces of the paper due throughout the quarter, it should be mostly editing at the end. You are encouraged to work with a partner for your final paper.

As part of your research paper (15%), you will be presenting your ideas to the class in a formal setting. Your research proposal presentation should last 12-15 minutes. For your presentation, be at least business casual, be prepared, have PowerPoint slides, and be ready for 5 minutes of questions regarding your literature review and methodology. Convince us why what you're investigating is interesting and needed by demonstrating an understanding of a theory and how you will go about extending it. If you're enthusiastic about the topic, your audience will be, too, so have fun. If you have a partner, both of you need to participate in the presentation.

Finally, part of your overall research paper grade (5%) derives from your participation in asking other presenters about their research proposal. Ask questions regarding the theory, the methodology, or for clarification of aspects you do not understand—positive support is also nice in what you learned and what was interesting. Of course, this also means you are expected to attend your classmates' presentations.

Exam – 30%

This class will have one exam encompassing the material up to the exam. It will consist of questions addressing the content of the readings, as well as class discussion.

Discussion Questions – 20%

For each class, there will be assigned readings. For each reading, a subset of the class will be expected to write a summary based on the Reading Summary Form (RSF). Bear in mind, however, that it is assumed everyone has read each article prior to class. The class subset should submit the RSF items to the "dropbox" in Carmen (<http://carmen.osu.edu>) by **12 p.m. on the day of the class**. When grading the discussion questions, I will be looking for evidence you read the material and have attempted to relate it to the content of the class. Each group will have five RSFs due throughout the quarter; however, I will only count the top four. This gives you a

chance to skip one if you are happy with the four scores you've received. Feel free to use your RSF as starting points for the class discussion. The subsets are as follows:

- A: Ekpo, Hashem, McCartan, Mullen, Steinhardt
- B: Brane, Garcia, Karl, Malden, Vasquez
- C: Carro, Field, Habenschuss, Joachim, Scott
- D: Goldapp, Hoffman, Lafavers, Meshanko, Simko
- E: Bergh, Buccicone, Fisher, Heiser, Polk

Academic Integrity

All students at The Ohio State University are bound by the Code of Student Conduct (online at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp). Obviously, I do not expect this to be a problem; however it has been my experience that some students do not fully understand the rules concerning plagiarism. If you are not 100% certain you understand rules of fair use or citation of materials, please schedule to meet with me, investigate it online, or use the support services offered at OSU.

Any evidence of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee of Academic Misconduct in accordance with The Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct.

Other Information

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated. If you are a student with a disability, who requires reasonable accommodations, please call 292-3307.

Religious Observance: If you wish to be absent from class to observe a religious holiday, make arrangements in advance with the instructor.

Participation in a Required Activity: If you must miss a class to participate in an officially-sanctioned athletic game or in a required activity for another course, provide the instructor with adequate advanced notice, such as the team schedule or a written authorization from the faculty member of the other course.

Tentative Nature of this Syllabus

This syllabus represents a contract in the works. Events that transpire over the quarter may, in rare circumstances, require me to modify the syllabus. I will announce the modification in class and on the course web page. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc.

Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is the best learning occurs through doing...by reading the materials and discussing them with others. Be supportive of your classmates by reading the articles prior to class and helping move discussion along. I plan to present for the first 10 minutes of class on the theory-of-the-day. Afterward, the class will discuss the articles. I hope you feel, as I do, that discussions are more interesting than lectures.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1

Wednesday, January 4
Introduction

Week 2

Monday, January 9
Social Identity
Readings:

Lee, E.-J. (2004). Effects of gendered character representation on person perception and informational social influence in computer-mediated communication. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 20(6), 779-799. **Group A**

Mastro, D. E. (2003). A social identity approach to understanding the impact of television messages. *Communication Monographs*, 70(2), 98-113. **Group B**

Wednesday, January 11

SIDE Model

Readings:

Postmes, T., Spears, R., & Lea, M. (1998). Breaching or building social boundaries? Side-effects of computer-mediated communication. *Communication Research*, 25(6), 689-715. **Group C**

Scott, C. R. (1999). The impact of physical and discursive anonymity on group members' multiple identifications during computer-supported decision making. *Western Journal of Communication*, 63(4), 456-487. **Group D**

Week 3

Monday, January 16

Holiday

Readings:

NO CLASS; Martin Luther King Day

Wednesday, January 18

Paper Discussion

Meetings:

Coordinate time this week to meet with Rob regarding your paper.

Week 4

Monday, January 23

Presence

Readings:

Witmer, B. G., & Singer, M. J. (1998). Measuring presence in virtual environments: A presence questionnaire. *Presence: Teleoperators & Virtual Environments*, 7(3), 225-240. **Group E**

Lee, K. M. (2004). Presence, explicated. *Communication Theory*, 14(1), 27-50. **Group A**

Wednesday, January 25

Flow

Readings:

Sherry, J. L. (2004). Flow and media enjoyment. *Communication Theory*, 14(4), 328-347. **Group B**

Pearce, J. M., Ainley, M., & Howard, S. (2005). The ebb and flow of online learning. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 21, 745-771. **Group C**

Novak, T. P., Hoffman, D. L., & Duhachek, A. (2003). The influence of goal-directed and experiential activities on online flow experiences. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(1&2), 3-16. **Group C** (lead discussion, no RSF)

Week 5

Monday, January 30

Excitation Transfer

Readings:

Perry, S. D. (2001). Commercial humor enhancement of program enjoyment: Gender and program appeal as mitigating factors. *Mass Communication & Society*, 4(1), 103-116.

Group D

Cohen, B., Waugh, G., & Place, K. (1989). At the movies: An unobtrusive study of arousal-attraction. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 129(5), 691-693. **Group D** (lead discussion, no RSF)

Sundar, S. S., & Wagner, C. B. (2002). The world wide wait: Exploring physiological and behavioral effects of download speed. *Media Psychology*, 4(2), 173-206. **Group E**

Wednesday, February 1

Emotional Contagion

Readings:

Neumann, R., & Strack, F. (2000). "Mood contagion": The automatic transfer of mood between persons. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(2), 211-223.

Group A

Doherty, R. W. (1998). Emotional contagion and social judgment. *Motivation & Emotion*, 22(3), 187-209. **Group B**

Levy, D. A., & Nail, P. R. (1993). Contagion: A theoretical and empirical review and reconceptualization. *Genetic, Social & General Psychology Monographs*, 119(2), 235-284.

PAPER UPDATE

Provide evidence of making progress on front end of paper

- Ten (10) references for final paper due
- Theory being used due

Week 6

Monday, February 6

Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis

Readings:

Dill, J. C., & Anderson, C. A. (1995). Effects of frustration justification on hostile aggression. *Aggressive Behavior*, 21, 359-369. **Group C**

Williams, R. B., & Clippinger, C. A. (2002). Aggression, competition, and computer games: Computer and human opponents. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 18(5), 495-506. **Group D**

Wednesday, February 8

General Aggression Model

Readings:

Bushman, B. J., & Anderson, C. A. (2002). Violent video games and hostile expectation: A test of the general aggression model. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(12), 1679-1686. **Group E**

Carnagey, N.L. & Anderson, C.A. (2003). Theory in the study of media violence: The general aggression model. In D. Gentile (Ed.) *Media Violence and Children* (pp. 87-106), Westport, CT: Praeger. **Group E** (lead discussion, no RSF)

Eastin, M. S., & Griffiths, R. P. (under review). Male game play beyond the "shooter game" situation: Examining presence and hostile outcomes. *Communication Research*. **Group A**

Week 7

Monday, February 13

Exam

- Signing up for presentation slots

Wednesday, February 15

Cultivation Theory

Readings:

Williams, D. (2005, May 27). Virtual cultivation: Online worlds, offline perceptions. Paper presented at the International Communication Association Annual Conference. New York. **Group B**

Gerbner, G. (1998). Cultivation analysis: An overview. *Mass Communication & Society*, 1(3), 175-194. **Group C**

Week 8

Monday, February 20

Uses and Gratifications

Readings:

Ruggiero, T. E. (2000). Uses and gratifications theory in the 21st Century. *Mass Communication & Society*, 3(1), 3-37. **Group D**

Greene, K., & Krcmar, M. (2005). Predicting exposure to and liking of media violence: A uses and gratifications approach. *Communication Studies*, 56(1), 71-93. **Group E**

PAPER UPDATE

Provide evidence of making progress on back end of paper

- Methodology used due (survey or research design)
- Potential scales due

Wednesday, February 22

Media Richness

Readings:

Cameron, A. F., & Webster, J. (2005). Unintended consequences of emerging communication technologies: Instant messaging in the workplace. *Computers in Human Behavior, 21*, 85-103. **All groups (Group A, Group B, Group C, Group D, Group E)**

Dennis, A. R., Kinney, S. T., & Hung, Y.-T. C. (1999). Gender differences in the effects of media richness. *Small Group Research, 30*(4), 405-437. **All groups (Group A, Group B, Group C, Group D, Group E)**

PAPER UPDATE

Draft of Literature Review Due (not necessarily final version)

Week 9

Monday, February 27

Presentations

Set 1 of Presentations

Wednesday, March 1

Presentations

Set 2 of Presentations

Week 10

Monday, March 6

Presentations

Set 3 of Presentations

Wednesday, March 8

Presentations

Set 4 of Presentations

Exam Week

Tuesday, March 14

Final Paper by 3:30 p.m. to me

