Communication on the Internet

MMC 3260 | Spring 2024 | 3 credits | Class #:15510 section: UFO

Instructor: Ray Martinez Email: raymondmartinez@ufl.edu TA: N/A	Class meeting hours: N/A Room: N/A Office Hours 5-6 pm - Wed

"The medium is the message" -- Marshall McLuhan.

This course explores the future of the Internet while also focusing on a foundation set of practical digital skills you will need in today's media markets. Over the semester, you'll learn about various tools to improve your digital life and build skills you'll use to create projects relevant to your digital future.

Note: Because this is an online course, more details about it and the assignments are available on the UF eLearning (Canvas) course site. Please review all that material, not just the material in this document.

Course Objectives

The course has three parts: (1) practical Internet skills; (2) discussion of Internet trends and issues; (3) independent study of current topics related to the Internet and its use. This leads to the following objectives:

1. **Understand the historical development of the Internet:** Learn the history and structure of the Internet and the World Wide Web and explore current issues and future trends surrounding it.
2. **Analyze privacy concerns and ethical considerations in online communication:** Examine privacy concerns, data collection, surveillance, and the ethical implications in journalism and media.
3. **Explore the role of artificial intelligence in Internet communication:** Investigate AI's impact on content creation, curation, and the ethical and social implications of AI in media.
4. **Investigate technological advancements influencing online communication:** Explore emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and the Internet of Things (IoT) that shape online communication.

5. **Gain practical skills in website development and management, focusing on WordPress:** Build your skills in long-term project planning and the process for planning and building a quality website using WordPress for a business or interactive project.
6. **Prepare for careers in journalism and media by applying course concepts to real-world scenarios:** Build your skill in "thinking multimedia," planning and organizing content and user experiences for interactive projects on multimedia platforms, and understand the foundations of web analytics and key elements of digital marketing.

Class meetings and office hours

Most of the required assignments for this course are completed online in UF's eLearning learning platform (Canvas) and related tools, but **this class is 100% online**.

Office hours will be held on Wednesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. ET in the #uf-online-mmc-3260 Slack channel.

Your class participation is a significant part of your final grade. Attendance in this class follows the University of Florida's attendance policies.

Your professor is happy to meet with you by appointment outside these hours if you have questions about your project or any of the material in this course. Participation is essential to your grade, so enter your weekly journal entries and schedule check-in meetings when needed.

Readings and course materials

Textbooks
There is no printed textbook for the course, but you will read and view 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 many videos, 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/

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 professor 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 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." For a three-credit class, this means that in this class, you should expect to spend up to 3 hours per week watching course videos and 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. The class eLearning (Canvas) site details each course element.

1. Quizzes, surveys, and assignments: 40%
Every module in this course will have one or more small quizzes or assignments to test your knowledge of the material. This means there will be a lot of quizzes (probably around 15-20 total), but each quiz is only a tiny part of your overall grade.

2. Project: 35%
This semester, an independent study project will be a big part of your grade. The goal of the project is to provide students with the opportunity to research or examine in depth an Internet-related topic that isn't covered through the modules in the course. The project includes research, a presentation or teaching activity, and a website. There will be much more about the project as the semester progresses.

3. Discussions and participation: 15%
Participation is crucial to this course, so part of your grade is devoted to your engagement with the course material and your classmates. Elements of course participation will include class discussions, project journal entries, check-in meetings with your professor, and other measures of course participation.

4. Final exam: 10%
The final exam will be a proctored exam covering the entire semester. More instructions on the

exam and on how to use the proctoring software for the exam will be available during the first week of classes.

Deadlines

All quizzes are due before 11:59 p.m. on Sunday. Project assignments are usually due on Friday before 11:59 p.m. The syllabus includes a printable calendar for the course. Deadlines for all activities will also be added to the Canvas course calendar.

Quizzes will only be accepted on time. Assignments turned in late will be assessed a full letter grade deduction for each day they are late. Assignments will only be accepted up to the due date with the instructor's written permission. If you need to miss the due date for any assignment, communicate your concern as far in advance as possible. Written documentation will be required if you have a genuine emergency and advance notice is impossible.

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

Read the instructions; many assignments will require you to post something online or write something on your project group's pages on Canvas. Assignments will not be accepted by email unless requested by the instructor.

Extra credit
A small number of extra credit opportunities will be available in the course, which will be communicated via course announcements. Students should not expect or request extra credit other than these options.

Grading
Grading will be based on the collection of course elements described above. More details about each graded element listed above are described on pages on the course site.

Grades will be awarded based on the following scale.

Name:	Range:		
A	100 %	to	94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to	90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to	87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to	84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to	80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to	77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to	74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to	70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to	67.0%
D	< 67.0 %	to	64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to	61.0%
F	< 61.0 %	to	0.0%

Information on current University of Florida grading policies can be found at:
http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

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 helpful 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 professionally and respectfully 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.bluera.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 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 classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the students, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. Students need to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

You must submit this documentation before submitting assignments or taking quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive. Therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible during the term they seek accommodations.

Students in distress

If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit https://umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Professionalism
Students are expected to maintain the appropriate level of professionalism, cooperation, and language in all aspects of this course, including discussions, written assignments, presentations, and interactions with the instructor and colleagues.

Academic honesty
You should know the rules in the University of Florida student honor code.
https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/

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

Given the above, 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 you use for a class assignment or 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. Still, 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 instructor first.

Resources for understanding academic integrity
The University of Florida maintains several resources on 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 violate the Student Honor Code. Your professor 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 you take half an hour to watch the video at the beginning of the semester.