RUTGERS
School of Communication
and Information

Mediated Communication
17:194:512
Fall 2017

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Office:	SDW 302 (Simeon De Witt Building, 185 College Ave.)
Office Hours:	Monday 3:00pm-5:00pm
Course Time:	Monday, 6:20pm-9:00pm
Course Room:	CI 201 (SC&I Building, 4 Huntington Street)
Course Website:	sakai.rutgers.edu
Course Mailing List:	mcm512-2017@sakai.rutgers.edu

Course Description

Drawing on existing theory and research, this course examines issues of usage, adoption, and performance of new and established communication technologies in the workplace and other contexts. The class considers opportunities and challenges that mediated communication presents for both users of these tools and for society more generally. The course will expose you to a range of new technologies used by people to coordinate, collaborate, and communicate with one another.

Learning Objectives

Upon the successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify new communication technologies (and their key features or dimensions) relevant to the workplace and other contexts
- Name and summarize major theories relevant to the study of new communication technologies
- Recognize and discuss key scholars and research findings regarding the topics and technologies discussed in class
- Apply theory and research from the communication technology literature in writing assignments, class discussion, as well as in your own work experience
- Train others about issues related to new media based on existing theory and research from class.

Required Readings

There is no required textbook for this class. All readings will be available on the course's Sakai website (sakai.rutgers.edu). Log in using your Rutgers NetID, navigate to the course site, and browse the *Course Readings* page. The reading materials for each week of class are also listed in the *Course Outline* section of this syllabus.

Contact Information

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, ideas, problems, or concerns related to this course. The most reliable way to reach me is by emailing katya.ognyanova@rutgers.edu. Please include "**SCI 512**" in the e-mail subject – that ensures I can identify your message as related to this class and give it appropriate attention. I will typically respond within 3-5 days of receiving your email.

My office hours are held in SDW 302 (Simeon De Witt Building, 185 College Ave), on Monday, 3pm-5pm. I encourage you to stop by for a chat at least once during the semester. If you have another class during that time, you can email me, or come talk to me after class if you would like to schedule an appointment.

Course Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes. If you need to miss a class, use the Rutgers University absence reporting website (sims.rutgers.edu/ssra) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. The system will automatically send me an email. If you are unable to attend classes for longer than one week, you should contact a dean of students who can help verify your circumstances. University policy excuses absences due to religious observance or participation, and permits students to make up work missed for that reason. You should notify me at least two weeks in advance if you are unable to come to class or take an exam due to religious observance.

On occasion, the university may have to cancel classes due to inclement weather. To check if classes are canceled, visit campusstatus.rutgers.edu or call 732-932-7799.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Participation (150 points)

In this course, we will work together to review and examine critical questions and themes related to communication and technology. Much of the class will be discussion-based, with limited lecturing from me covering key points. Everyone is expected to be active in contributing to the conversations we will have in class. You should read all the required materials carefully and thoroughly, reflect critically on their strengths and weaknesses, identify their key points, and be prepared to discuss them. Not only the frequency, but also the quality of contributions will be considered.

Technology observer (150 points)

Once during the semester, you will examine an assigned technological tool or service and share your experience with the class. This will be a group project, as some technologies will require more than one person in order to test their collaboration features.

Everyone in your group should sign up for and/or install the assigned technological tool. You should study its uses and tinker with its options to figure out what it does and how. You will have **25 minutes** to present your findings in class. During that time, you should provide an overview of key features, a demo showing the class how to use those features, and a discussion of important use cases (i.e. who is or could be using this technology, and why). Where appropriate, you should also think about ways in which this digital tool is relevant to the topic discussed in class that week.

Reading reflection (200 points)

Each week after you complete the required readings, you should write a brief reflection on one or more of them and share it with the class. Your writing should demonstrate original thinking rather than simply provide a summary of the readings.

The assignment should be submitted by e-mail **by the end of the day on Sunday** before class. We will use a Sakai mailing list: send your reading reflections to mcm512-2017@sakai.rutgers.edu.

Each reading reflection should be at least 200 words long. If some of your classmates have shared their reading reflections before you submit yours, I encourage you to respond to the points they have made. Your email should conclude **with at least one thoughtful question** you have that was provoked by the readings. We will discuss many of those questions in class.

To get the full 200 points for this assignment, you need to submit at least **8 reading reflections** (worth 25 points each) that show critical thinking about the theories and themes examined in this class. Emails will only contribute to the reading reflection grade if they are sent out by the end of the day on Sunday of the respective week (so you cannot, for instance, send all eight in the last week of class).

Research talk (200 points)

This assignment will require that you work in groups to research a theme related to the material we have covered during the semester. Your team will examine one of the eight topical areas listed below. During the last two weeks of class, you will lead a **20-minute lecture** and a **15-minute discussion** on your topic. You may also opt for a more conversational format, combining lecture and discussion as you go.

Groups will have to prepare a **one-page outline** of their research talk and submit it through the *Assignments* section on Sakai by **November 20**. If you have questions about your topical area, do come see me during my office hours to discuss them.

For this assignment, you will sign up on Sakai to work on one of the following eight topics:

(1) Stress and social media
(2) Online health communication
(3) Children and cyberbullying
(4) Hate speech on the Internet
(5) Rumors and misinformation online
(6) Identity management and online dating
(7) Online activism and collective action
(8) Companies and digital brand management

In your research talk, you should:

- Summarize relevant academic research dealing with your topic
- Explain how the topic connects with concepts and theories covered in class
- Provide examples or case studies illustrating key points you are making
- Find ways to engage your audience and keep them interested

In the limited time you will have, you will **not** be expected to provide a comprehensive overview of your topic. Instead, you will need to select and present a few key ideas. Skip the details and focus on the big picture.

During your research talk, you can use slides, Prezi, video, or any other format or material you prefer. Be ready to answer questions from the instructor and your peers.

Final exam (300 points)

The take-home final exam includes four questions that will be posted on Sakai by December 1. Students will select **three of the four questions** and submit answers for them by December 15.

Your answers should demonstrate critical evaluation skills, familiarity with the concepts and ideas covered in this class, and ability to produce original insights about the subject matter. You should develop clear, coherent, and compelling arguments supporting your position.

Exams should comply with the following requirements:

(1) Formatting and length

Each answer should be 4-5 pages long (making for a total exam length of 12-15 pages). The text should be double-spaced, using a 12-point font with a 1-inch margin on all sides.

(2) References and bibliography

Each answer should include at least **five** citations to **academic** works. The full reference list for the exam should contain at least 15 citations. The citations and bibliography should be formatted in APA style (one place where you can learn more about it is the Purdue Online Writing Lab). You can use a free citation manager to store and format citations (e.g. www.zotero.com), or a simpler online tool to format selected citations (e.g. www.refme.com/citation-generator/apa or www.bibme.org/apa).

(3) Writing quality and organization

The answers should be clearly and logically organized. The text should flow smoothly and demonstrate an excellent writing style. Be sure to carefully proofread the final draft of your exam and confirm that it is clearly written, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors.

(4) Deadline and submission

Exams should be submitted through the *Assignments* section of Sakai by **December 15.** Your submission should be included as a single-file attachment in PDF or Word format. **Exams that are submitted late or sent by e-mail will not be accepted**.

Grade Breakdown & Scale

A and B grades in this course are reserved for outstanding work. To get a high grade, students need to participate actively in class, be thorough and careful in assignments, and demonstrate excellent understanding of the subject, critical thinking, and originality in their work.

The grade breakdown is as follows:

Class participation	**150** points
Technology observer	**150** points
Reading reflections	**200** points
Research talk	**200** points
Final exam	**300** points
Total:	**1000** points

The final grade will be awarded according to the following scale:

A	900-1000 points
B+	850-899 points
B	800-849 points
C+	750-799 points
C	700-749 points
D	600-699 points
F	Below 600 points

Grade appeals

You can appeal individual assignment grades in writing up to 5 days after the grades are announced. In order to be reviewed, your appeal has to be submitted over e-mail. If you have concerns about your course grade, schedule an appointment with me as early as possible during the semester to discuss it. Once the course grades are announced, they are final and will only be changed in case of an error in the computation of the student's score.

Individual extra credit

In addition to any other extra credit opportunities that may be available during the semester, students who receive a failing grade on an assignment may request to do an individual extra credit project. Those requests will only be granted for students who can show a legitimate and verifiable reason for their poor performance (e.g. a health problem).

You can request individual extra credit up to 3 days after you receive a failing grade.

If your request is approved, you will have one week to turn in the assignment: a short paper (5 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced, including at least 5 academic citations) on the role of technology in the civic engagement and participation of Americans. The assignment would be worth a maximum of 30 extra credit points.

Academic Integrity

You are required to complete your own assignments and always acknowledge the sources of contributions, materials, quotes, and ideas that you did not develop yourself. The consequences of scholastic dishonesty in this class and at Rutgers University in general are very serious. For more details, consult the University's academic integrity policy. Any violation will at a minimum result in no credit earned for the assignment in question. Serious violations of academic integrity may prevent students from completing the course or their academic program. If you have questions about issues related to plagiarism or academic integrity, do not hesitate to contact me.

Accommodation

This course will accommodate any student in need of assistance. Students with documented disabilities who need accommodations should contact the Rutgers Disabilities Services Office (see disabilityservices.rutgers.edu for details). You can also speak with a SC&I adviser by visiting the Office of Student Services in the SC&I Building, Room 214 or calling them at 848-932-7500 (dial 2 as your menu choice). Please contact me with information about the requested assistance and present your Letter of Accommodation as early in the semester as possible.

Additional Resources

The university offers a number of resources that you can access if needed:

- For additional tutoring, training, or **writing help**, visit the Rutgers Learning Center (online at rlc.rutgers.edu`) and the Writing Center (plangere.rutgers.edu).

- If you need a consultation on **research materials** and ways to find them, you can contact the Rutgers University subject specialist librarian for communication.

- If you need help with **class schedule or registration**, visit the Student Services Office located in CI 214, and online at comminfo.rutgers.edu/student-services/contact-us.html.

- The SC&I IT Services can help you with various **technological problems**. You can find them in CI 120, by phone at 848-932-5555, or by email at help@comminfo.rutgers.edu.

- If you encounter **problems with Sakai**, you can contact the help desk at sakai@rutgers.edu or call them at 848 445 8721 between 8am-6pm on Monday through Friday.

- Student wellness services are available to you at Rutgers. You can contact CAPS for **mental health support** at rhscaps.rutgers.edu or by phone at 848 932 7884. Free and confidential **peer counselling** is available from Scarlet Listeners at 732 247 5555.

- The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy for victims of **sexual and relationship violence**. You can reach VPVA at vpva.rutgers.edu and 848 932 1181.

- The Office of Disability Services can be reached for help with accommodation and facilities for **students with disabilities** at ods.rutgers.edu, or by phone at 848 445 6800.

- On occasion, the university may have to **cancel classes** due to inclement weather. To check if classes are canceled, visit campusstatus.rutgers.edu or call 732-932-7799.

Course Outline

The course schedule is subject to change: materials may be added or replaced during the semester. If that happens, the changes will be reflected on Sakai and announced in class/over email.

Week 1 – September 11

Introductions, course and syllabus review

Week 2 – September 18

Key theories of mediated communication

Required: Baym, N. (2015). *Personal connections in the digital age* (2nd Ed.). Malden, MA: Polity Press. Ch.3 Communication in digital spaces

Walther, J. B. (2011). Theories of computer-mediated communication and interpersonal relations. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *The handbook of interpersonal communication*, pp. 443-479. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DeAndrea, D. C. (2014). Advancing Warranting Theory. *Communication Theory,* 24(2), 186-204

Antheunis, M. L., Schouten, A. P., Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2012). Interactive Uncertainty Reduction Strategies and Verbal Affection in Computer-Mediated Communication. *Communication Research*, 39(6), 757-780.

Optional: Riordan, M. A., & Trichtinger, L. A. (2016). Overconfidence at the Keyboard: Confidence and Accuracy in Interpreting Affect in E-Mail Exchanges. *Human Communication Research.*

Week 3 – September 25

Affordances, uses, and gratifications

Required: Baym, N. (2015). *Personal connections in the digital age* (2nd Ed.). Malden, MA: Polity Press. Ch.2 Making new media make sense.

Norman, D. (2013). *The design of everyday things,* 2 Ed. Ch. 1 The psychopathology of everyday things.

Ellison, N. & Vitak, J. (2015). Social Network Site Affordances and their Relationship to Social Capital Processes. In Sundar, S. (Ed.) *The Handbook of Psychology of Communication Technology* (pp. 205-227). Boston, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013). Uses and Grats 2.0: New Gratifications for New Media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 57 (4):504-525.

Optional: Treem, J., & Leonardi, P. (2012). Social media use in organizations: Exploring the affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, and association. *Communication Yearbook*, 36, 143-189.

Digital tools: IFTTT (ifttt.com)

Week 4 – October 2

Crowdsourcing, collaboration, and teams

Required: Shirky, C. (2008) *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations.* Ch. 5 Personal motivation meets collaborative production.

Brabham, D. (2013) *Crowdsourcing*. Ch.1 Concepts, Theories, and Cases of Crowdsourcing.

Halfaker, A., Geiger, R. S., Morgan, J. T., & Riedl, J. (2013). The Rise and Decline of an Open Collaboration System: How Wikipedia's Reaction to Popularity Is Causing Its Decline. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(5), 664-688.

Brandon, D. P., & Hollingshead, A. B. (2012). Characterizing online groups. In A. N. Joinson, Y. A. McKenna, T. Postmes & U.-D. Reips (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Internet Psychology.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Optional: Hand, E. (2010) People power: Networks of human minds are taking citizen science to a new level. *Nature* 466

Gura, T. (2015) Amateur experts: Involving members of the public can help science projects, but researchers should consider what they want to achieve. *Nature* 496.

Digital tools: Slack (slack.com)

Week 5 – October 9

Social relationships and social capital

Required: Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2014). Cultivating Social Resources on Social Network Sites: Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviors and Their Role in Social Capital Processes. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19(4), 855-870.

Green, M. C. & Clark, J. L. (2015). Real or Ersatz? Determinants of Benefits and Costs of Online Social Interactions. In Sundar, S. (Ed.) I *Handbook of Psychology of Communication Technology* (pp. 247-269). Boston, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L., & Brashears, M. E. (2006). Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks over Two Decades. *American Sociological Review*, 71(6), 353-375.

Hampton, K., Sessions, L. F., & Her, E. J. (2011). Core networks, social isolation, and new media: How Internet and mobile phone use is related to network size and diversity. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14(1)

Optional: Dunbar, R. I. M. (2016). Do online social media cut through the constraints that limit the size of offline social networks? *Royal Society Open Science*, 3(1).

Digital tools: Klout (klout.com)

Week 6 – October 16

Social networks and network concepts

Required: Ellison, N. B., & boyd, d. (2013). Sociality through social network sites. In W. H. Dutton (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Internet Studies* (pp. 151-172). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Christakis, N & Fowler, J. (2011) *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*, Ch.8 Hyperconnected

Easley, D., & Kleinberg, J. (2010). *Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning About a Highly Connected World*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Ch.1 Overview.

Nahon, K. & Hemsley, J. (2013) *Going Viral*. Ch. 2 What virality is: I know it when I see it.

Optional: Takhteyev, Y., Gruzd, A., & Wellman, B. (2011). Geography of Twitter networks. *Social Networks*, 34(1), 73-81.

Digital tools: NodeXL (nodexl.codeplex.com) – instructor-led.

Week 7 – October 23

Digital Methods: data collection

Required: Pew Research Center (2015) *From Telephone to the Web: The Challenge of Mode of Interview Effects in Public Opinion Polls*. Washington, DC: Pew Research.

Joinson, A. N. (2012) Gathering data on the Internet: Qualitative approaches and possibilities for mixed methods research. In Joinson, A. N., McKenna, K. Y. A., Postmes, T., Reips, U.-D. (Ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Internet Psychology*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Schober, M. F., Pasek, J., Guggenheim, L., Lampe, C., & Conrad, F. G. (2016). Social Media Analyses for Social Measurement. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(1), 180-211

Lazer, D., Pentland, A., Adamic, L., Aral, S., Barabasi, A. L. et al. (2009). Life in the network: the coming age of computational social science. *Science*, 323(5915), 721.

Optional: Kramer A. D. I., Guillory J. E., & Hancock J.T. (2014) Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 111(24): 8788–8790*. + read media coverage of the article*

Digital tools: Qualtrics (rutgers.qualtrics.com) – instructor-led.

Week 8 – October 30

Political participation & civic engagement

Required: Bennett, W. L. (2008). Changing citizenship in the digital age. In W. L. Bennett (Ed.), *Civic Life Online: Learning How Digital Media Can Engage Youth* (pp. 1-24). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Neuman, R. W. , Bimber, B., Hindman, M. (2011). The Internet and Four Dimensions of Citizenship. In G. C. Edwards, L. R. Jacobs & R. Y. Shapiro (Eds) *The Oxford Handbook of American Public Opinion and the Media*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bond, R. M., Fariss, C. J., Jones, J. J., Kramer, A. D., Marlow, C., Settle, J. E., & Fowler, J. H. (2012). A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization. *Nature*, 489(7415), 295-298.

Xenos, M., Vromen, A., & Loader, B. D. (2014). The great equalizer? Patterns of social media use and youth political engagement in three advanced democracies. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(2), 151-167.

Optional: Jenkins, H. (2015). "Cultural Acupuncture": Fan Activism and the Harry Potter Alliance. In L. Geraghty (Ed.), *Popular Media Cultures: Fans, Audiences and Paratexts* (pp. 206-229). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Digital tools: ProPublica Represent (projects.propublica.org/represent) and Census Reporter(censusreporter.org)

Week 9 – November 6

Privacy, free speech, copyright

Required: Acquisti, A., Brandimarte, L., & Loewenstein, G. (2015). Privacy and human behavior in the age of information. *Science*, *347*(6221), 509-514.

Papacharissi, Z. & Gibson, P. L. (2011). Fifteen Minutes of Privacy: Privacy, Sociality, and Publicity on Social Network Sites. In Trepte, S. & Reinecke, L. (Eds.) *Privacy Online: Perspectives on Privacy and Self-Disclosure in the Social Web*. Berlin, Germany: Springer.

Solove, D. J. (2007). *The future of reputation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Ch. 6 Free Speech, Anonymity, and Accountability.

Aufderheide, P. (2015). Copyright and Fair Use in Remix. In E. Navas, O. Gallagher, & x. burrough (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Remix Studies* New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Optional: Freedom House (2016) Freedom of the Net.

Digital tools: Panopticlick (panopticlick.eff.org) and Privacy Badger (eff.org/privacybadger)

Week 10 – November 13

Algorithms and big data

Required: Lessig, L. (2006). What things regulate. In *Code: Version 2.0* (pp. 120–137). New York: Basic Books.

Crawford, K. (2016). Can an Algorithm be Agonistic? Ten Scenes from Life in Calculated Publics. *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 41(1), 77-92.

Bakshy, E., Messing, S., & Adamic, L. (2015). Exposure to ideologically diverse news and opinion on Facebook. *Science*, 348(6239), 1130-1132.

+ The Wall Street Journal (2016) Blue Feed, Red Feed: graphics.wsj.com/blue-feed-red-feed

Bogost, I. (2015). The cathedral of computation. *The Atlantic*.

Optional: Epstein, R., & Robertson, R. E. (2015). The search engine manipulation effect (SEME) and its possible impact on the outcomes of elections. *PNAS*, 112(33), E4512-E4521.

Digital tools: Google trends, Google Ngram Viewer, and Google correlate.

Week 11 – November 20

Attention, reputation, and credibility

Assignment due: One-page research talk outline (submit through *Assignments* on Sakai)

Required: Webster, J.G. (2014) *The marketplace of attention: How audiences take shape in a digital age.* Ch.1 The marketplace of attention.

Lampe, C. (2012) *The Reputation Society: How Online Opinions Are Reshaping the Offline World.* Ch.7 The Role of Reputation Systems in Managing Online Communities.

Green, M. C. (2007). Trust and social interaction on the Internet. *The Oxford handbook of Internet psychology*, 43-52.

Metzger, M. J., & Flanagin, A. J. (2015). Psychological approaches to credibility assessment online. *The handbook of the psychology of communication technology*, 32, 445.

Optional: Gandini, A. (2016). T*he Reputation Economy: Understanding Knowledge Work in Digital Society*. Ch.3 Reputation, the Social Capital of a Digital Society

Digital tools: Evernote (evernote.com)

Week 12 – November 27

Media, news, and information

Required: Metzger, J. M. (2014). Broadcasting versus Narrowcasting: Do Mass Media Exist in the Twenty-First Century? In K. Kenski & K. H. Jamieson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Mitchelstein, E., & Boczkowski, P. J. (2013). Tradition and Transformation in Online News Production and Consumption. In W. H. Dutton (Ed.), Oxford Handbook of Internet Studies (pp. 151-172). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Westerwick, A., & Johnson, B. K. (2015). Selective Exposure in the Communication Technology Context. In Sundar, S. (Ed.) *The Handbook of Psychology of Communication Technology* (pp. 407-426). Boston, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

Thorson, K., & Wells, C. (2015). Curated Flows: A Framework for Mapping Media Exposure in the Digital Age. *Communication Theory*, 1-20.

Optional: Bright, J. (2016). The Social News Gap: How News Reading and News Sharing Diverge. *Journal of Communication*, 66(3), 343-365

Digital tools: Feedly (feedly.com) and Pocket (getpocket.com)

Week 13 – December 4
Research talks

Week 14 – December 11
Research talks

December 15
Final exam due