

COMM 442: Digital Media and Society

Mondays, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. – Minard 302 – Spring 2015 – 3 credits

Instructor: Dennis Owen Frohlich, Ph.D.
Office: Minard 338B1
Office Hours: Mondays, Noon to 1:45 p.m. Also by appointment (please email me three times that work for you).
Email: dennis.o.frohlich@ndsu.edu

Required Texts

Athique, A. (2013). *Digital Media and Society: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Couldry, N. (2012). *Media, Society, World: Social Theory and Digital Media Practice*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

From time to time online readings will also be required. When these readings are added to the syllabus, you will be notified of the changes via email.

Readings are to be completed by MONDAY the week they are assigned, in other words, by class time. So the Week 3 readings, for instance, are should be completed by Monday, January 26. We will be discussing the readings in class that day, so if you haven't completed them you will not be prepared.

Bulletin Description

Explore the impact of technological developments on media and mediated culture.

Course Objectives and Description

Digital media now permeate every aspect of society and culture—from the arts to business to education to government—and affect our relationships with others. Digital media provide many people, and society at large, with numerous opportunities to affect change and improve our daily lives. Because of the fast pace of digital media development, however, digital media also present many challenges, not only in implementing change, but to our way of thinking about the role of media in our everyday lives. Despite the many positive effects of digital media, negative effects are also present, as digital media provide new ways for people to hurt one another and exercise power over groups of people.

In this course, we will examine many facets of how digital media affect our society, from effects on the individual to effects on communities. We will also examine how digital media challenges our democracy, government and the institutions of society.

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

- Analyze and discuss contemporary examples of digital culture using digital media theories
- Assess both positive and negative effects of digital media on individuals, communities, and institutions
- Explain how digital media affect your personal and professional lives
- Articulate how digital technology influences social practices, and how people shape digital technology

Class Meetings

The class will meet Mondays from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. Classes will consist of lecture, videos, and frequent discussion with your classmates. Because digital media is constantly evolving, and influences people in varying ways, you will learn much through discussion with your classmates. Thus, it is imperative that you attend class every week.

One unfortunate reality of this class being scheduled on Monday afternoons is that we will miss four class sessions this semester, meaning we will be in class for 12 of 16 weeks, or 75% of the time. To rectify this imbalance, on the weeks where the university is closed on Mondays, we will have online classes instead. I will upload brief video lectures, found under “Tegrity Classes” on BlackBoard, and you will participate in online discussions with your classmates.

Assignments

Your grade will be based on the following assignments. More descriptive assignment sheets for each assignment are located on BlackBoard.

Attendance and Participation	100 points
Discussion Boards (4):	200 points
Reaction Papers (6):	150 points
Midterm Exam:	150 points
Research Paper:	200 points
<u>Final Exam:</u>	<u>200 points</u>
Total:	1,000 points

Grading

Grading will be based on the following scale:

A	900-1,000 points
B	800-899 points
C	700-799 points
D	600-699 points
F	0-599 points

The grading scale is non-negotiable. A final grade of 899, for instance, is a B. All grades are final unless questions about grades are addressed in writing within **2 weeks** after the grade is posted. If you have concerns about your grades please check with me *sooner* in the semester rather than *later*.

Attendance

Attendance is required and will be taken 11 times throughout the semester via a sign-in sheet. Leaving class after you've signed in does not count as attendance for that day: staying the entire class period is considered attendance, unless other arrangements have been made. Should you come into class late, it is your responsibility to sign-in. Each class period is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points: additionally, you may miss 1 class day (unexcused) throughout the semester, after which point each additional day absent will result in a 10-point deduction in your final grade.

If you miss class due to illness or any other EXCUSED reason, email me BEFORE class starts. If this is not possible, email me as soon as possible. You are responsible for all material missed. For more information about missing class due to illness, see the section on Special Needs.

Late Work

You will have a 10-minute grace period for each assignment to account for possible issues when uploading your assignment, after which time the assignment will be considered late. Please do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments. Due dates are clearly listed in the course schedule. Assignments turned in late will be accepted for half-credit. Late work will **only** be accepted for **24 hours** after the due date. Work turned in later than 24 hours will not be accepted.

Under an extreme circumstance, if you have an excused absence AND the instructor was notified in advance, an exception may be made.

Academic Honesty

All work completed for this course must respect the intellectual property of others. When using somebody else's copyrighted material, whether words, images, media, or ideas, proper credit must be given. If direct quotations are used, they must be enclosed in quotation marks and properly cited. If copyrighted material is used indirectly, it must still be properly cited!

If in doubt, include a citation. If you have any questions at all, ask your instructor *before* the assignment is submitted. *Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an excuse!*

The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the

Office of Registration and Records. Informational resources about academic honesty for students and instructional staff members can be found at www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty

Special Needs

Any students with disabilities or other special needs who need special accommodations in this course are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and contact the Disability Services office (www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices) as soon as possible.

If you become sick during the course of the semester, or have some major personal crisis going on, please let me know as soon as possible so I can help you work around it. When I was an undergraduate, I was very sick one semester and missed a lot of classes, but my professors were willing to work with me. I'm sensitive to these issues and am willing to work with you, but if you don't tell me there's a problem I can't help you.

Course Schedule

The current version of the course syllabus will be uploaded to BlackBoard with the revision date included in the file name

Week	Date	Topics	Assignments/Readings
Module 1: Foundation for Understanding Digital Media			
1	Jan. 12 (M)	<p>CLASSES BEGIN AT 4 P.M. (No class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • Living in a Digital Society • The Sources, the Mirror, and the Network 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 1: Building a Digital Society, Chapter 3: Typing the User <p>Assign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board 1 due by 1/18 at 11:59 p.m.
2	Jan. 19 (M)	<p>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY (No class Monday, 1/19)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Digital Media: The Role of Social Science Theory • Digital Theories of the Individual • Digital Theories of Society 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 2: The Socio-technical Interface • <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 1: Introduction: Digital Media and Social Theory <p>Assign:</p> <p>Discussion Board 2 due by 1/25 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
3	Jan. 26 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Do People Do with Media? • Adapting Media to Social Contexts 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 2: Media as Practice
Module 2: Mass Media and the Individual			
4	Feb. 2 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and the Body • The Constriction and Expansion of the Human Body via Digital Technology • Violence to the Digital Body 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 5: Pleasing Bodies • USA Today: Supreme Court faces new frontier: Threats on Facebook <p>Assign:</p> <p>Reaction Paper 1 due IN CLASS 2/2</p>
5	Feb. 9 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Media: Access to the World at Your Fingertips • The Prevalence and Persistence of Mobile Technology • Everybody is Now Watcher and Watched 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 8: Going Mobile • Aaron Smith: The Best (and Worst) of Mobile Connectivity <p>Assign:</p> <p>Reaction Paper 2 due IN CLASS 2/9</p>

6	Feb. 16 (M)	<p>PRESIDENTS' DAY (No class Monday, 2/16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Injustice: Digital Crime and Digital Pain 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 15: Managing Risk <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 8: Media Ethics, Media Justice <p>Assign: Discussion Board 3 due by 2/22 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
7	Feb. 23 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveillance Society Who's Monitoring Who? Digital Threats to Identity 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 14: Under Scrutiny Antonio Casilli: Four Theses on Mass Surveillance and Privacy Negotiation
8	Mar. 2 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolution of Video Games Effects of Gaming on Players and Society Gamification of Learning and Engagement 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 6: Reality Checks Jennifer Van Grove: Gamification: How Competition Is Reinventing Business, Marketing & Everyday Life Michael John: 'Gamification' Is Dead, Long Live Games For Learning <p>Assign: Midterm Exam (online) due by 3/5 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
Module 3: Mass Media Connections			
9	Mar. 9 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media that Bring People Together Media Rituals Being a Part of Something Greater 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 3: Media as Ritual and Social Form
10	Mar. 16 (M)	SPRING BREAK WEEK!	
11	Mar. 23 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media Cultures: How Different People Use the Same Media in Different Ways 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 7: Media Cultures: A World Unfolding <p>Assign: Reaction Paper 3 due IN CLASS 3/23</p>

12	Mar. 30 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Communities and Digital Relationships • Crossover between Digital Communities and Physical Communities • The Reality of Digital Communities 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 4: Audience as Community, Chapter 7: My Personal Public • Aaron Smith and Maeve Duggan: Online Dating and Relationships <p>Assign: Reaction Paper 4 due IN CLASS 3/30</p>
13	Apr. 6 (M)	<p>SPRING RECESS (No classes Friday or Monday)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud-Society • The Digital Hive Mind • Trusting the “Mass” in “Mass Media” 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 16: Living in a Cloud <p>Assign: Discussion Board 4 due by 4/12 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
Module 4: Media and Power			
14	Apr. 13 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who Owns the Media? • Exchanging Digital Property for Convenience 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 10: Digital Property • Kathryn Zickuhr: Who’s Not Online and Why <p>Assign: Research Paper due by 4/16 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
15	Apr. 20 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and Power • Do People Control Media, or do Media Control People? 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 9: The Road to Serverdom, Chapter 11: Consuming Power • <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 4: Media and the Hidden Shaping of the Social <p>Assign: Reaction Paper 5 due IN CLASS 4/20</p>

16	Apr. 27 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Democratization of Media, and the Mediation of Democracy • Media Threaten the Power of Governments • Governmental Control through Media 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 13: Virtual Democracy • <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 5: Network Society, Networked Politics? • Aaron Smith: Cell Phones, Social Media and Campaign 2014 <p>Assign: Reaction Paper 6 due IN CLASS 4/27</p>
17	May 4 (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-Media Effects: How the Media Influences Other Spheres of Society • How Digital Media Shapes the Economy 	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Digital Media and Society</i>, Chapter 12: Information at Work • <i>Media, Society, World</i>, Chapter 6: Media, Capital and Authority
18	May 11 (M)	FINALS WEEK	<p>Assign: Final Exam (online) due by 5/13 at 11:59 p.m.</p>
19	May 21 (Th)	Final grades are viewable online	