COMM 200: Digital Communication & Society

Section 203

Instructor: Matthew Jungsuk Howard, Ph.D. (Dr. or Professor Howard) **Pronouns**: he/him/his	**Course Credit Hours**: 3.00 **Prerequisites**: COMM 175 or 201 **Tags**: Film & Digital Media Studies & International Film & Digital Media Studies

Course Overview

This course explores the way technology affects personal, cultural, and mass communication through examining the historical, societal, and ethical implications of new and interactive forms of media.

Learning Objectives

Over the course of this class, students will:

1. Define, Deconstruct, and Reconstruct definitions of "digital communication" and "new media."
2. Learn to recognize and contextualize communication phenomena within socio-historical contexts.
3. Break down mentally assumed barriers between the "digital" and "real" worlds.

Required Texts

There is a textbook for this class, Lindgren's *Digital Media & Society*, but other readings and course materials will be uploaded on Sakai.

Lindgren, S. (2017). *Digital Media & Society*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- New editions of the Lindgren book will be out there online, but I encourage you to use the older editions from 2017 to save on the cost of the book. The second

edition costs around $40-45 on Amazon, whereas you can find used copies of the first edition for fractions of that cost.

Technology Requirements

This course relies heavily on PDFs, Sakai, and multimodal projects. Therefore, you'll need access to a computer and the internet in order to complete the work. If you have difficulties with access, please reach out to the library or to me to discuss how we can make the class more accessible.

Course Policies

Class Meeting Structure

My aspiration in class is twofold: 1) I want us to build a collaborative environment of respect; and 2) I want to have an invitational environment and discussion structure when we're together. This is the sort of course that we really should tackle as an extended conversation, and your participation in this conversation is both required by me and, ultimately, of central importance to you getting the most you can out of our time together. We have the advantage of not being a giant class in a cavernous lecture hall, so let's make the most of that opportunity.

My aim in the course's structure is to focus our denser reading due dates on Tuesdays so that you have the whole week including weekend time to chip away at them. If I assign material for you outside of the class, it will be due on Thursdays. That way, my hope is, you can watch TEDxTalks and Movies on Wednesdays and do readings on other days of the week.

Trans- and LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Syllabus Statement

In the interest of inviting everyone into this course and this classroom in the spirit of their entire selves, I welcome you to let me know your pronouns, preferred names, and any other identifying information that will help you feel accepted in your entirety. You are welcome to do this in class during attendance or what have you, or privately through email or after class as desired.

Communication with Me

I am best reached by email, and I will do my best to respond to student emails within 24 hours unless they pertain to an absence or project extension. If you do not hear from me within 72 hours (3 days), please follow-up with me so I can make sure I address your questions.

Attendance

TL;DR: Be in Class. My policy for this course is that if you miss 2 weeks or more of class (more than 3 sessions), then it becomes difficult to say that you're getting out of this experience what

you should be. Therefore, if you miss more than 3 class meetings unexcused, you will fail the course due to excessive absences.

That's the broad point for this section. However, I get that life happens, COVID happens, illnesses other than COVID (yup, those still exist) happen, etc. The world is a complicated place, and we're all just trying to live, so, there are some exceptions to the above rule. If you experience things that would cause you to miss more than 3 classes, please get in touch with me **immediately** so that we can talk through logistics to help you pass.

Grading

This course will utilize a milestone grading model. Here's how that works:

Milestone I (D-Level)	• Student logged no more than 3 unexcused absences. • Student took the School of Comm Pre- and Post-Course Assessment. • Student led class reading discussion at least once.
Milestone II (C-Level)	• Student logged no more than 3 unexcused absences. • Student took the SoC Pre- and Post-Course Assessment. • Student led class reading discussion at least once. • Student completed 1 assignment Packages.
Milestone III (B-Level)	• Student logged no more than 3 unexcused absences. • Student took the SoC Pre- and Post-Course Assessment. • Student led class reading discussion at least once. • Student completed at least 2 assignment Packages.
Milestone IV (A-Level)	• Student logged no more than 3 unexcused absences. • Student took the SoC Pre- and Post-Course Assessment. • Student led class reading discussion at least once.

	• Student completed at least 3 assignment Packages.

Package I	Working with A.I. Project & Reflection (1200 words)
Package II	The Digital Media Fast Project and Reflection (1000-1500 words total)
Package III	Two Reflective Blog Entries (500 words ea.)
Package IV	Digital Communication News Feature Project

The rationale behind using this model, from my perspective, is that it helps both of us do what we're here to do better. Waiting for grades, earning grades, doing grading, and discussing grades can be deeply stressful and draining. With this model, I am aiming to ease everyone's burden. Since my teaching approach is built on slowing us down and getting us thinking about and discussing phenomena that we may gloss over normally, I think many traditional grading systems are not the best fit for that objective. Given the cost of attending college, many of you work outside of class. You're probably all taking other courses. To add to all of that, life just happens. So, if you get to the semester's end, and you just don't have the final push in you for the A-Level milestone, you can take the B, not stress as much, show up and discuss things in class, and we all go home a little bit less stressed. I'm happy to discuss and clarify aspects of this model in class and office hours, etc.

Assignments

To start, I want to make you this promise: I will not assign you projects for which I cannot also provide free-to-use resources/tools to complete them. In other words, you and I both understand that college costs a lot of money, and that commuting to and from classes is not always free. Therefore, projects I assign to you in this course will also include recommendations for free software you can use, library resources you can leverage just by being a Rambler, and so-on. As an academic and former journalist, I can wholeheartedly say that I hate paywalls, so there won't be any extra ones for my courses.

Due Dates and Late Work

I will accept assignment submissions up to one week late. However, this will have an effect on your grade. An assignment turned in late will bring down your milestone progress by half a letter grade. So, if you turned in 3 Modules, but one of them was 3 days late, you would get an A- instead of an A, if you showed up to class and participated effectively in discussions.

Extensions

Again, life happens. If you have something come up that will render you unable to turn in your project module on-time, please notify me by email. While I prefer to know at least 24 hours in

advance, I also realize that emergencies are a thing. If you have an emergency that comes up within 24 hours of the assignment due date, please send me an email to let me know. If this happens, even if I do not respond, please consider yourself given a 24 hour extension on your deadline. Me not seeing the emergency does not negate its effect on you.

If you require a longer extension than 24 hours, please notify me in your email when you reach out to let me know you need an extension. We'll settle on something that works for us both.

On Generative A.I. and This Course

The following language was sent out by the Provost's Office on the use of generative A.I. for courses:

> *To maintain our culture of excellence and integrity, students are not to use AI assisted technology in the classroom unless they are specifically authorized to do so by their faculty for an assignment, a test, a quiz, or any deliverable that will be graded.*

In the spirit of this statement, I will encourage you only to use generative A.I. in this course in a limited capacity. That is, if I receive papers or reflections that come back from TurnItIn with a massive A.I. score, I will schedule a conversation with you to talk through those findings and the assignment in question. If we find that you've had the A.I. do the work for you, then that will be grounds for unsatisfactory grades on your work. However, I won't "outlaw" generative A.I. use entirely. Because we are going to be living with and alongside these kinds of technologies for a *very* long time at this point, I think that the use of generative A.I. for helping you get started in the ideas or planning stage of your projects can be useful, not just for now, but for your professional work in the future. If you use generative A.I., please disclose that as part of your project deliverables and note the ways that it affected your work process. Lack of disclosure will be treated as an incident of Academic Misconduct.

Course Calendar

I've built this course calendar along the following format:

- [Course Day & Date] -- Course Meeting Title
    - [Reading/Homework due ON THIS DAY]
    - **[Project/Package Announcement and/or Due Date]**
    - ***[LOGISTICS NOTE, I.E. CLASS SESSION CANCELLATIONS, UNIVERSITY BREAKS]***

Please note that the homework, readings, and project due dates I'm putting on the calendar indicate an assignment <u>due that day</u>. So, for Week 2, I'm asking you to have reading X done for Tuesday's class. It is listed as a bullet under Tuesday, September 5th.

<u>All deadlines, assignments, guest speakers, and the like are subject to change. If that happens and we have to shift, for whatever reason, I will let you know as soon as possible.</u>

Week 1: Syllabus and Introduction Week

- Tuesday, August 29 – Syllabus Day & Pre-Course Knowledge Assessment
    - Reading: Skim the syllabus and come in with any questions you've got for me.
- Thursday, August 31 – It's a PANIC: Technology and Morality
    - Watch [ContraPoints]. (2018, July 13). The West | ContraPoints [Video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/hyaftqCORT4?si=Er5XCVaeIsNgc9UQ.

Week 2:

- Tuesday, September 5
    - Lindgren, pp. 1-26
- Thursday, September 7 – But, What is the Digital Really?
    - Blum, A. [TED]. (2012, September 19). Andrew Blum: What is the Internet, really? [Video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/XE_FPEFpHt4?si=UzXTESmzZ5iiH7uf.
    - [First We Feast]. (2018, January 23). How to Make Spicy Korean Fried Chicken with Maangchi | Sean in the Wild [Video]. *Sean in the Wild*, Season 1, Episode 42. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/oqeoOph7Lts?si=dlpgyyrd65eWgUjg.

Week 3:

- Tuesday, September 12
    - Lindgren, pp. 27-44
        - <u>Discussion Leader: Trinity</u>
- Thursday, September 14
    - Watch these CollegeHumor videos (Content Warning: Language):
        - https://youtu.be/BWFLztKBrLY?si=FjU8YQPJ4SanczmL

- https://youtu.be/ZI0w_pwZY3E?si=dvZ83nGPIjOtKDzC
- https://youtu.be/tIsXEkR5OVs?si=C6kOlcgVgu_X4N7s

Week 4:

- Tuesday, September 19
  - Lindgren, pp. 45-84
- Thursday, September 21
  - **Working with A.I. Assignment Package Due (Package I)**

Week 5:

- Tuesday, September 26
  - Lindgren, pp. 85-106
    - Discussion Leader:
- Thursday, September 28
  - Read Sree Sreenivasan's "America the Lonely" (2023)
    - https://sreenet.substack.com/p/america-the-lonely.

Week 6:

- Tuesday, October 3
  - Lindgren, Chapter 6 (Visuality & Visibility)
    - Discussion Leader: Nate
- Thursday, October 5
  - **Digital Media Fast Assignment Package Due (Package II)**

Week 7:

- **Tuesday, October 10: FALL BREAK; NO CLASS TODAY**
- Thursday, October 12:
  - Read 2-3 (or more, if you'd like) pieces from the Viral Blackness zine uploaded on Sakai. We'll discuss in class.

Week 8:

- Tuesday, October 17
  - Lindgren, Chapter 8 ()
    - Discussion Leader: Katherine
- Thursday, October 19
  - Watch:
    - [BETNetworks]. (2019, February 27). Jimmy "The Rent Is Too Damn High" McMillan Recalls The Memes And Mayhem Of Going Viral | I Went Viral [Video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/OUx_32ABtw4?si=jIdg8qBoStzxMBA6.

- [oliSUNvia]. (2022, April 5). The self-fetishization of east-asia: koreaboos & weebs aren't the only problem [Video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/LNkZIJkXI6g?si=2Gs8W_A8SSCdsBh_ .

Week 9:

- Tuesday, October 24
  - Lindgren, Chapter 9 & 10
- Thursday, October 26
  - **Reflective Blog 1 (Half of Package III) Due**

Week 10:

- Tuesday, October 31
  - Lindgren, Chapter 11
    - Discussion Leader: Finley
- Thursday, November 2 – Food TV and Community/Networks
  - *Hanwoo Rhapsody* in Class

Week 11:

- Tuesday, November 7
  - Lindgren, Chapter 12 & 13
    - Discussion Leader:
- Thursday, November 9
  - [Life of Boris]. (2022, December 31). My hopeless situation [Video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/qkNw7m51aCc?si=ZmR7lBVCbOdT4it6.

Week 12:

- Tuesday, November 14
  - Read: Singh, R. (2018). Platform Feminism: Protest and the Politics of Spatial Organization. *Ada New Media* (14), pp. 1-10.
- Thursday, November 16
  - **Reflective Blog 2 (Half of Package III) Due**

Week 13: NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14:

- Tuesday, November 28 – Film Screening Day (Film in Question Decided by Vote)
- Thursday, November 30 – Film Screening cont. And Discussion

Week 15:

- Tuesday, December 5 - Post-Course Knowledge Assessment and Workshop for Package IV

- Thursday, December 7: LAST DAY OF CLASS – Workshop Day for Package IV
  - **Digital Communication News Feature Project (Package IV) Due**

FINAL EXAM: There is no Final Exam for this Class.

University and School of Communication Policies

Instructor Reporting Obligations as a Responsible Campus Partner

As an instructor, I am considered a Responsible Campus Partner ("RCP") under Loyola's **Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation** (located at **www.luc.edu/equity**). While my goal is for you to be able to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, I want to be transparent that as a RCP I am required to report certain disclosures of sexual misconduct (such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner and/or domestic violence, and/or stalking) to the University's **Title IX** Coordinator.

As an instructor, I also have a mandatory obligation under Illinois law to report disclosures of or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect (**https://www.luc.edu/hr/legal-notices/mandatedreportingofchildabuseandneglect/**).

The purpose of these reporting requirements is for the University to inform students who have experienced sexual/gender-based violence of available resources and support. Such a report **will not generate a report to law enforcement** (no student will ever be forced to file a report with the police). Furthermore, the University's resources and supports are available to all students even if a student chooses that they do not want any other action taken. Please note that in certain situations, based on the nature of the disclosure, the University may need to take additional action to ensure the safety of the University community. If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact the **Office for Equity & Compliance** at **equity@luc.edu** or 773-508-7766.

If you wish to speak with a confidential resource regarding gender-based violence, I encourage you to call **The Line** at 773-494-3810. The Line is staffed by confidential advocates from 8:30am-5pm M-F and 24 hours on the weekend when school is in session. Advocates can provide support, talk through your options (medical, legal, LUC reporting, safety planning, etc.), and connect you with additional resources as needed. More information can be found at **luc.edu/coalition** or **luc.edu/wellness**.

Accommodations for Differently-Abled Students

Loyola University Chicago provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Professors will receive an accommodation

notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with their professor individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. Please note that in this class, software may be used to audio record class lectures in order to provide equitable access to students with disabilities. Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity. Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester. For more information about registering with SAC or questions about accommodations, please contact SAC at 773-508-3700 or SAC@luc.edu.

Accommodations for Students with Children

Students who are the caretakers, guardians, or parents of children are allowed to bring their children with them to class in the event of an emergency, if childcare plans fall through, etc.

Please let me know ahead of time if you will be bringing your child/children to class and also sit near the door in the event that the student needs to leave the classroom to tend to the child/children.

If the child/children are using devices like phones, tablets, etc.to entertain them during class time, I also ask that the student who is their caretaker/guardian/parent to make sure to provide headphones as to not disturb the rest of the class.

Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher.
- Providing information to another student during an examination
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the
- instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor.
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted.

- Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy.
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom.
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines.
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as the Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material.
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit.
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.
- Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and

documentation when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of their findings and sanction.

The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.