

Syllabus for COMM 0300

Course Description

Students in this course will examine social, cultural, and environmental consequences of technology. Students will use computers and the Internet extensively. The abilities to work in groups and individually are key components of the course.

Course Goals/Objectives

At the end of the course, learners will be able to apply critical thinking techniques to their evaluation of technology and its impact on the global society. Learners will understand the costs and benefits of a technology and be able to discourse and write in an informed manner.

Participants will experience teamwork in an online environment. As evidence of this experience, participants will produce a web page that incorporates their ideas as well as their team members'.

Participants will use campus resources, such as computer labs, the library, and tutoring. Should you elect to pursue your higher education goals at another institution, this framework will enable you to locate those services at your subsequent institution(s).

Participants writing and research skills as well as the ability to participate in class discussions will have improved.

Course Materials

Golding, P., and Peterson, J. A. (2001). *Viewing Technology and Society*. 4th Ed. IA: Peosta, Eddie Bowers Publishing Co., Inc.

Stoll, C. (2000). *High-Tech Heretic*. NY: Anchor Books.

Additional sources will be posted in the:

--*Webliography*. If you have sites that are relevant to our discussions and of interest to your classmates, please post them there. Just like the *Conferences* area, the *Webliography* is a dynamic place. Plan to visit it often!

--*Reserved Readings* is where related electronic articles and chapters will be posted. Please be sure to observe any **Copyright** notices that accompany those items. *Reserved Readings* is another dynamic site and worthy of frequent visits.

Grading Information

Grading Policy:

Class Participation	20%
Web-page Project	25%
Personal Journal	15%
Class Quizzes	15%
Essay	25%

Grading Standard:

A	90	-	100%	Excellent
B	80	-	89%	Good
C	70	-	79%	Meets Standard
D	60	-	69%	Below Standard
F	0	-	59%	Failure

Class Participation:

Part of being an informed member of society is the ability to communicate clearly one's thoughts and ideas, verbally and in writing. Because this class meets virtually, discussions will also be written, but the style of writing may be less formal than would be expected of any written assignments. It is expected that you will log on and post comments at least three times each week, once at the beginning of the module, once midway, and once at the end. Your comments may be in the form of your thoughts on the topic(s) for that week, or they may be responses to your colleagues' comments. Both forms of comments are encouraged.

The quality of your comments is more important than the quantity of them. You should strive for posts that express your reaction to the question (or to your colleague's post), then explain why you agree or disagree. Please use citations from assigned material or supplemental readings to support your position. As an example, "I agree" or "I disagree" is the *start* of a post and should be followed with an explanation of *why* you agree or disagree.

Web-page Project

The Web-page Project is a team project to which you will contribute an individual page (or more, if you're so inclined, and your team members agree). The theme of the web page is a bridge. How you, as a team, interpret the theme is part of your task.

Why a bridge? Mauch Chunk University is located near the Lehigh River. There are several bridges that connect our community. Commerce and people flow across those bridges 24/7, and the bridges are a very important part of our lives, regardless of which side we call home. Bridges are also a very tangible form of communication.

Enough philosophy. Our goal is to have you thinking -- creatively, out-of-the-box -- and we look forward to seeing how you as a team will interpret this theme.

Don't know how to do a web page? Don't worry. Someone in your group might know how -- and what a great icebreaker question! Regardless of the answer, Mike knows how, and he'll be sharing his knowledge as we go along through the semester. Can't wait? He's as close as your email -- maybe you can arrange a chat session.

Short on design ideas? The Webscavenger hunt will help. And, you'll be practicing what you learned in the library skills module. Participation in the hunt counts 5% of the Web-project grade.

Personal Journal

Journals are a wonderful way to gather your thoughts, let off steam, test your learning, make plans and schedules. Each of you will develop and maintain a journal of your experiences in this class. The only limit on how you do your journal is that it's electronic. If you want to include animations and links to other sites, go for it! But please note that it's your *content* that will be graded. A text journal reflective of your journey through this course will be valued higher than one with lots of "sound and fury [that] signifi[es] nothing" (with due apologies to Shakespeare). Length? Please don't ask us to place restraints on your creativity! As a very general guideline, about two pages a week is the least that we'd expect. Some weeks you may have more, some less. Please use your judgment.

Class Quizzes

Quizzes will be conducted online and will consist of approximately five short-answer questions on the assigned material. Each quiz will be sent to one team member, selected randomly. The team may decide whether or not the quiz will be a team project or an individual effort; regardless of the decision, all team members will share equally in the grade earned. This decision will be made without knowledge of the quiz contents because the time allotted begins once the quiz is opened. Once opened, the respondent will have ten minutes to respond and submit the quiz for grading.

Essay

Here's another opportunity for creativity. We've included some suggestions below, but *please* look beyond them.

If approved prior to the 5th week of class, the essay may be a further development of a graded paper from one of your previous classes. Part of the requirement process is that you submit the original graded paper with a brief (1 - 2 paragraphs) description of how you intend to build upon the paper to make it relevant to this course. To ensure time for the instruction team to review the original paper and your proposal, the packet must be submitted no later than the end of the 4th week of class.

Online resources are required for this project. Two modules will help you find, evaluate, and use correctly the wealth of information available -- the library skills module and the plagiarism module. Completion of both modules counts 10% (5% each module) of the essay grade.

Essay topic *suggestions*, all taken from one small section of *High-Tech Heretic*. You are not restricted to these; please pick a topic of interest to you.

p. 113 -- "Futurists view computing as a pathway to Tomorrowland, where the Internet will somehow bring freedom, diversity, and well-being."

For those who like to write, write your version of a utopia.

p. 114 -- quotes Nicholas Negroponte: "Digital technology can be a natural force drawing people into greater world harmony."

Is this true? Give examples to support your position, then compare and contrast with examples of f2f communication in similar situations.

p. 115 -- "But we're no closer to any foreign culture. ... What's really shrinking is the American view of the world: We are unable to speak foreign languages, unwilling to read foreign news, and unequipped to understand foreign cultures."

Will we communicate better online compared with f2f? Or are we communicating a new form of colonialism?

Policy on Academic Integrity (Plagiarism):

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of another person's idea or product as one's own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following: copying verbatim all or part of another's written work; using phrases, charts, figures, illustrations, or mathematical or scientific solutions without citing the source; paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source; and using all or part of a literary plot, poem, film, musical score, or other artistic product without attributing the work to its creator. Students can avoid unintentional plagiarism by carefully accepted scholarly practices.

Notes taken for papers and research projects should record accurately sources of material to be cited, quoted, paraphrased, or summarized, and papers should acknowledge these sources in footnotes.

The penalties for plagiarism include a zero or a grade of "F" on the work in question, a grade of "F" in the course, suspension with a file letter, suspension with a transcript notation, or expulsion.

Note: Work submitted for this class must be your own, and it must be original to this course. If you have questions regarding this stipulator, please consult instructor.

(Above plagiarism statement taken from UMUC OMDE 0607 syllabus.)

Policy on Extensions and Late Submissions:

Extensions will be granted if requested no later than 48 hours in advance of the due date.

Late submissions will be accepted although there will be a one letter-grade deduction for every 24-hours beyond the due date.

Project Descriptions

Topic/Themes: Library Skills Module

Due Date: 3/3/02

Description:

Please access the module through the Week 3 "Course Content" area. Submission is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The Library Skills module will count for one-fifth of your essay course grade.

Topic/Themes: Webscavenger Hunt

Due Date: 3/10/02

Description:

Using what you've learned in the "Library Skills" module, locate at least 5 web sites that contain the "reliability" indicators. Prepare a summary consensus report identifying your criteria and how each site fulfilled the criteria. The report should be approximately 3 pages long. Each group member must submit individually through the "Assignments" area. Submission is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The Webscavenger Hunt will count for one-fifth of your web-project course grade.

Topic/Themes: Web-page Project Review

Due Date: 3/17/02

Description:

Please submit the link for your web-page project in the "Assignments" area. Each group member must submit the link individually. Submission is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The Web-page Project will count for 25% of your course grade. This review will NOT be graded.

Topic/Themes: Plagiarism Module

Due Date: 3/25/02

Description:

Plagiarism is always a concern. This module will familiarize you with UTEP's definition of plagiarism and help you understand what is permitted and what is not. At the end of the module is a practice area. Please access the module through the Week 7 "Course Content" area. The module is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The Plagiarism module will count for one-fifth of your essay course grade.

Topic/Themes: Personal Journal Review

Due Date: 4/7/02

Description:

Please submit personal journal in the "Assignments" area. Submission is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The Personal Journal project will count for 15% of your course grade. This review will count as one-third of that grade.

Topic/Themes: Essay

Due Date: 5/16/02

Description:

The essay is to be 5 - 8 pages in length. Spelling and grammar count, and APA format is required. Submit the essay through the Assignments area and is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The essay will count for 25% of your course grade. The Library Skills module, which was due March 3, counts for one-fifth of the total. The Plagiarism module, which was due March 25, counts for one-fifth of the total.

Topic/Themes: Personal Journal -- final submission

Due Date: 5/18/02

Description:

Please submit your personal journal in the "Assignments" area. Submission is due by midnight Mountain Time

Zone.

The personal journal will count for 15% of your final grade. This submission will count for two-thirds of that grade.

Topic/Themes: Web-page Project

Due Date: 5/18/02

Description:

The web-page project is to be at least 6 pages -- an introductory page and one page from each group member. It may be longer, depending upon your group's decision. However, each member must submit at least one individual page. Please submit the link to your web page in the "Assignments" area. Each group member must submit individually. Please title your submission with the group name and the name of each individual group member. Submission is due by midnight Eastern Time Zone.

The web-page project will count for 25% of your course grade. 5% of that total is the Webscavenger hunt that was due March 10.

Schedule

Week	Session Dates	Readings, Assignments, and Due Dates
1	February 4 - 10, 2002	Introductions Introduction to online classroom If not done in Pre-Week, complete pre-course survey and submit Discuss Chapter 1 of "VTS"
2	February 11 - 17, 2002	Introduce groups; groups select name and inform instruction team Group work concepts Explain web page requirements -- group and individual components Quiz on Chapter 1 of "VTS"
3	February 18 - 24, 2002	Discuss Chapter 15 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 1 - 34 of "HTH" Online library skills module available -- two weeks to complete
4	February 25 - March 3, 2002	Discuss Chapter 13 of "VTS" Introduce guest instructor for Chapter 8 of "VTS" Quiz on readings -- weeks 3 & 4 Deadline for request to do essay as a further development of prior graded work Online library skills module -- complete by 03/03
5	March 4 - 10, 2002	Discuss Chapters 2 and 7 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 35 - 68 of "HTH" Webscavenger hunt -- due 03/10
6	March 11 - 17, 2002	Discuss Chapter 3 of "VTS" Submit link for web page -- progress review NOT graded -- due 03/17 Quiz on readings -- weeks 5 & 6
7	March 18 - 24, 2002	Discuss Chapter 9 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 69 - 102 of "HTH" Online plagiarism module available -- one week to complete
8	March 25 - 31, 2002	Discuss Chapter 14 of "VTS" Quiz on readings -- weeks 7 & 8 Online plagiarism module -- complete by 03/25
9	April 1 - 7, 2002	Discuss Chapter 6 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 103 - 134 of "HTH" Submit "personal journal" for review
10	April 8 - 14, 2002	Discuss Chapter 4 of "VTS" Quiz on readings -- weeks 9 & 10
11	April 15 - 21, 2002	Discuss Chapter 11 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 135 - 170 of "HTH"
12	April 22 - 28, 2002	Discuss Chapter 10 of "VTS" Quiz on readings -- weeks 11 & 12
13	April 29 - May 5, 2002	Discuss Chapter 5 of "VTS" Discuss pp. 171 - 214 of "HTH"
14	May 6 - 12, 2002	Discuss Chapter 12 of "VTS" Quiz on readings -- weeks 14 & 15
15	May 13 - 19, 2002	Wrap-up discussions Essay due -- 05/16 Personal Journal due -- 05/18 Web-page Project due -- 05/18

Additional Information

Study Groups

You will be assigned to a study group no later than the third week of the semester. Please check the "Study Groups" area on the menu bar to the left of the screen. Once you have been assigned, please meet with your team mates to select a team name, then decide who will be "president," "vice president," "secretary," "treasurer," and "parliamentarian." Once those items are decided, please post that information in the "Communications Cafe" area. One of the instruction team members will then enter your study group's name.

Class quizzes will be posted to the "Study Group" area no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time Zone each Wednesday. The group member who is to respond will be identified by title. Responses are due no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time Zone the next day, Thursday, and should be submitted by the designated group member. Collaboration on the quizzes is permitted but is not required.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments will be submitted electronically, through the "Assignments" area. Please prepare the assignments in the appropriate Microsoft Office program, then "attach" them to the cover sheet (automatically created when you access "Assignments") for submission. PLEASE BE SURE TO IDENTIFY WHICH VIRUS PROTECTION YOU USE -- INCLUDING THE NAME, RELEASE NUMBER, AND DATE -- AS A PART OF THE MESSAGE ON YOUR COVER SHEET. You have the option of submitting your work as html or .rtf, but *please* do not use Microsoft Word 2000's "save as html" option -- there are incompatibilities between that option and this course management system.

At the top of the first page, please include the following:

[your name]

COMM 0300 12345

Assignment #[X]

[date]

If you have problems or need assistance to submit an assignment, please contact the HELP Desk at helpdesk@jtu.edu or (800) 377-HELP. Particularly for your first assignment, it is recommended that you submit in advance of the deadline.

Contact Information for Your Instructional Team:

Instructor: Dr. Susan Schmidt – schmidt@mcu.edu - (610) 377-1758

Peer Leader: Ms. Annette Haupt – ahaupt@mcu.edu - (610) 377-1700

Academic Policies

Academic Policies are not course specific and are therefore created and housed separately from this syllabus. You may access and print Academic Policies from the Syllabus sub-menu in your classroom.