

## **COMM 200 SECTION 204 MERTZ**

**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION**  
**Spring, 2023**

**Comm 200 – 204 Digital Communication & Society M-W-F 2:45 – 3:35 Corby Law Center Room 301 Instructor:** Michael Mertz ([mmertz@luc.edu](mailto:mmertz@luc.edu)) 773 230 0158

**Office Hours:** I am an Adjunct Instructor and do not have regular office hours but I am happy to meet with anyone by appointment.

**TEXTBOOK:** Digital Media & Society (2017) Simon Lindgren, Sage Publications, London

### **COURSE OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the ways technology affects personal, cultural and mass communication through examining the historical, social and ethical implications of traditional media and newer, more interactive forms of media.

To be effective communicators in today's media environment one must understand the ever-changing media landscape, and know how to best adapt to it. Today's digital media allows individuals to communicate and send their messages to interested followers in ways unimagined even in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, never mind the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In this course, students will use audio, video and digital tools to research and produce projects and presentations that analyze the impact of technology on communication, in many areas and contexts.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, students should understand the effect of new media on both personal and mass communication, be able to identify the different audiences reached by various new media and know how to tailor communication for various types of new media.

This class will analyze how new media is impacting and being impacted by larger social, economic, political and cultural contexts. Students will learn to identify and explain changes that new media communication technologies have brought to our personal lives, specific media industries and to our community and society as a whole. They will also learn about the differences between the various new media platforms, understand the history and development of these platforms and understand how and why some prior platforms have become extinct, or lost much of their power.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS**

**ATTITUDE/ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:** This class includes traditional lecturing, but stresses interactive question and answer discussion during class time. All students are expected to

attend each class session and to be prepared to actively participate in the discussions and activities after reading the required material.

There IS a grade for this, and the biggest part of the grade is based on each student's class attendance and active contribution to the class's activities and discussions.

**MISSED CLASSES:** Again, you really need to be here. However, if you miss a session it's your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student. If you know in advance that you will miss a class you need to contact me and let me know. I will not require a note from your doctor if you're ill but do let me know that you will be absent as soon as you know. The same goes if and when you know that you'll need to leave a class early for some reason.

**LATE WORK:** Assignments should be turned in on time. If you need an extension for any reason please talk with me. If you need to turn in an assignment late, you need to talk to or email me. There is a place for late work under Assignments in Sakai, but – again – you need to talk to me before submitting any late work. Also, please be on time for class!

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:** Attendance is taken at the beginning of the class. Lateness up to 15 minutes is acceptable according to Loyola's academic rules but is frowned upon (by me!). If you join the class after attendance has been taken it is **your responsibility** to check with me after class to be sure you are not marked absent.

**TECH POLICY:** I do not allow phones or laptops to be used in my class unless student accommodations allow it. You will have to take notes with pen and paper. The only exception is for class sessions where students need phones or laptops for in-class work.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** Any student who needs special accommodations during exams or class periods will certainly get them. However, students should provide documentation from the Student Accessibility Center confidentially to me in order to confirm the need. I will accommodate each student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

**We'll discuss all of the assignments in detail well before they are due.**

**- READING must be done before the first class session of each week. For some of the reading assignments, you will be expected to submit questions and takeaways from the reading in Sakai.**

**- DISCUSSION THREADS**

Over the semester we will have three discussion threads on Sakai. Each will require each student to ask a question or bring up a topic related to readings and/or lectures, and to respond to other postings.

Each thread assignment is worth 75 points for a total of 225.

#### **- GROUP PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS**

There will be one group project this semester, which will require a presentation to the class. This is worth 250 points.

As of now, this section of the course has a small enrollment so the plan is to establish partnerships for this project rather than groups. If enough students end up adding the course this will change.

Students will work in small groups (or with partners) to research and analyze a form of New Media, answer specific questions, and present their findings to the class.

In addition, all students will need to submit Questions and Takeaways regarding the presentations.

#### **- EXAMS**

There is no Midterm in this course. The Final Exam will take the form of a paper, which you can write at home and submit on Sakai. This means we won't have to actually meet for the Final.

#### **POINT BREAKDOWN**

<b>Chapter ?s &amp; Takeaways (4 @ 35 pts. each)</b>	<b>140 points</b>
<b>Group Presentation</b>	<b>250 points</b>
<b>Presentation ?s &amp; Takeaways (6 @ 10 each)</b>	<b>60 points</b>
<b>Discussion Threads (3 @ 75 each)</b>	<b>225 points</b>
<b>Final Paper (Exam)</b>	<b>225 points</b>
<b>Attitude (Attendance, Engagement, etc.)</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

## **GRADING SCALE**

A (EXCELLENT) 950-1000

A-minus 925-949

B+ 875-924;

B (GOOD) 850-874

B-minus 800-849

C+ 775-799

C (AVERAGE) 725-774

C-minus 700-724

D (FAIR) 650-699

F (POOR) Anything below 650

**STATEMENT OF INTENT:** By remaining in this course, students are agreeing to accept this syllabus as a contract and to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

**This calendar represents the course PLAN but is open to change. You will be informed of any changes as the semester progresses.**

**Week 1 Begins Weds., 1/18 WE have only one class session this week. There is no class on MONDAY, 1/16 for the MLK HOLIDAY & no class on FRIDAY, 1/20 because I have minor surgery scheduled for that day**

Intro to the Course & the Syllabus, Assignments, etc.

**Week 2 Begins Mon., 1/23**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 1 – Digital Society. Again, and going forward, all reading is to be completed BEFORE the first class meeting of the week.

**Question & Takeaway from Reading due this Monday, 1/23**  
**Discussion Thread #1 assigned - due Monday, 2/6**

**Week 3 Begins Mon., 1/30**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 4 – Interaction & Identity  
**Question & Takeaway from Reading due this Monday, 1/30**

**Week 4 Begins Mon., 2/6**

No New Reading – continue Lindgren Chapter 4 in class.  
**Discussion Thread #1 due this Monday 2/6**

**Week 5 Begins Mon., 2/13**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 2 – Social Media  
**Question & Takeaway from Reading due THIS Monday, 2/13**  
**Discussion Thread #2 assigned – due Monday, 2/27**

**Week 6 Begins Mon., 2/20**

No New Reading – continue Lindgren Chapter 2 in class.

**Week 7 Begins Mon., 2/27**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 7 – Feeling Digital

No Questions/Takeaways for this chapter

**Discussion Thread #2 due THIS Monday, 2/27**

**NO CLASSES Mon., 3/6 thru Fri., 3/10 – SPRING BREAK**

**Week 8 Begins Mon., 3/13**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 11 – Mobile Culture

**Questions & Takeaways from Reading due THIS Monday, 3/13**

**Week 9 Begins Mon., 3/20**

No New Reading – Continue Lindgren Chapter 11 in class

**Discussion Thread #3 Assigned – due Monday, 4/3**

**Week 10 Begins Mon., 3/27**

Reading: Lindgren Chapter 6 – Digital Visuality & Visibility

No Questions/Takeaways from this chapter

**Week 11 Begins Mon., 4/3 - NO CLASS FRIDAY, 4/7**

Continue Lindgren Chapter 6 in class

**Discussion Thread #3 Due THIS Monday, 4/3**

**Week 12 Begins Weds., 4/12 (NO CLASS MON., 4/10)**

1 Presentation

**Week 13 Begins Mon., 4/17**

3 Presentations

**Week 14 Begins Mon., 4/24**

2 Presentations

Course Wrap-up

## **OUR LAST CLASS SESSION IS FRIDAY, 4/28**

**The Final Exam date is still to be announced. Again, we will not have a Final Exam session. (In other words, you won't have to be at school for the Final.) However, your Final Paper, which amounts to a take-home exam, will be due on that day. I'll let you know the day as soon as it's determined.**

## **INFO YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**MANAGING LIFE CRISES AND FINDING SUPPORT:** Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (<https://www.luc.edu/csaa/>) for yourself or a peer in need of support. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: <https://www.luc.edu/dos/> or [LUC.edu/csaa](https://www.luc.edu/csaa/); 773-508-8840; [deanofstudents@luc.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@luc.edu).

**This is very, very important. Loyola has really excellent resources when students need help for any number of things. You should take advantage of these if you need to.**

**Also, PLEASE reach out to me personally if you are experiencing any emotional or medical issues that you may need help with. I am always more than willing to help in any way I can. Don't be shy to ask for help. We all need it at times.**

**COVID, MONKEY POX, ETC.** At this point, there aren't any official guidelines for dealing with these or other viruses. Just use your common sense – get vaxxed, get tested if you've been exposed, stay home if you're sick, wear a mask if you feel the need, etc., etc., etc. Covid is NOT gone so we still need to be careful about it.

**SAKAI** (<https://sakai.luc.edu>) is an online learning tool that allows us to communicate and collaborate with each other. There, you will find the course syllabus, the e-mail addresses of all course participants, announcements, online assignments, the online gradebook, etc.

**E-MAIL:** I will often be using e-mail to communicate things you need to know to the whole class. You should check it every day.

**LOCUS** (<https://locus.luc.edu>) is Loyola's information portal for a wide variety of tasks. I will use Locus to post midterm academic alerts and the final grades.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** 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, 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. Academic cheating is a serious violation of academic integrity. **Cheating** includes, but is not limited to, obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher; providing information to another student during 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; 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 or any other action that, by omission or commission, compromise the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

**Plagiarism** is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty; it 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 other without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited, to submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as 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, or purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. 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 <http://www.luc.edu/english/aboutthewritingprogram/theuseandmisuseofsourcematerials/#d.en.238783>

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during 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. Plagiarism or any 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 appropriate area head and to the Office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The Office of the Dean 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](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 a similar organization.

**STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY CENTER (SAC):** If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact SAC as soon as possible. Formal arrangements must be made through the office before course adjustments can be made. Additional information about the services available at:

<https://luc.edu/sac/sacstudents/>