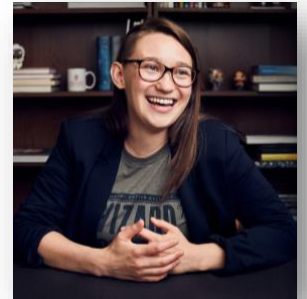# **COMM 221:** Introduction to Digital Media

Course Resources

Professor: Dr. Ashley Hinck
Xavier University
Communication Dept.
hincka@xavier.edu

DESCRIPTION: What is this course all about?

Course objectives/goals:
1. Understand the **history** of computing, digital media, and the internet, along with the implications of that history and how it is told;
2. Understand and summarize major **theories** of digital media, including technological determinism, social determinism, and technological affordances;
3. **Analyze** digital communication, using key concepts like affordance, rhetorical choice, and audience;
4. Interrogate the **implications** digital media offers for communication today.

Course questions we will answer:
1. **Unit 1: What is the history of computing, digital media, and the internet?** What are the implications of that history? What are the implications of how that history is told? What implications does that history have for digital communication today?
2. *Unit 2: How can we critically analyze communication messages made with digital media?* How can we conceptualize the audience within a context of digital media? How can we account for the technological aspects of communication made with digital media?
3. **Unit 3: What affects who can speak and who can be heard online?** How does a networked, many-to-many system affect communication with digital media? How do race, gender, and class affect who can speak and be heard through digital media?

Online Contexts: In this class, you are asked to engage in communication in class as well as on online public sites. If you are uncomfortable with this, or if you require special considerations, please see me in the first week of class.

GRADES: What will you have to do in this class?
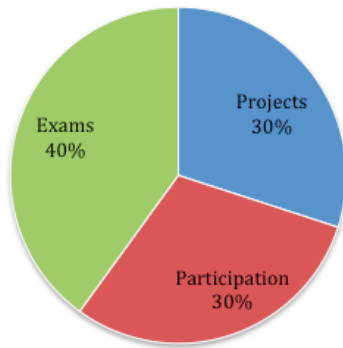
Participation (30%):

    Twitter Posts: 30 points

Projects (30%):

    Communication Analysis Paper   30 points

Exams (40%):

    Midterm Exam   20 points

    Final Exam   20 points

Total possible: 100 points

Extra Credit: There may be opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. The number and types of opportunities will vary depending on the semester and class. The **maximum** amount of extra credit any single student may earn is **2%.**

TWITTER PARTICIPATION ASSIGNMENT

The Assignment:

Post three tweets for each class day:
1) Post at least one tweet that responds to the reading. There are many ways to respond to the reading. The key is to respond in an honest and thoughtful way. Here are some of the ways you might choose to respond.
    - Your tweet may apply the reading to a new context.
    - Your tweet may give an additional example of a key concept form the reading.
    - Your tweet may critique the key argument of the reading.
    - Your tweet may disagree with the author.
    - Your tweet may offer an important question the author doesn't answer, and thus a useful question to discuss in class.
2) Post at least one tweet that responds to your classmates. As with the reading, there are many ways to respond to your classmates. The key is to respond in a way that is both kind (as we all learn together) and open (to learning from your classmates). Here are some of the ways you might choose to respond.
    - You may explain how one of your classmates' tweets helped you understand a concept that you didn't understand before.
    - You may disagree with one of your classmates' tweets.
    - You may extend the argument one of your classmates makes, adding additional evidence or ideas.
    - You may answer a question posed in your of your classmates' tweets.

    The key here is to do more than simply agree with your classmate's argument.
3) Post at least one question. This might be a clarification question (something you don't understand—a concept that is still fuzzy) or a question for discussion (an interesting idea that you'd like to pursue or hear what other people are thinking about).

Notes about your tweets:
- Your tweets can be tentative. They don't have to be final thoughts that you have no doubt about. There is room for fuzziness, uncertainty, and risk in learning.
- Your tweets must use the course hashtag #XUCOMM221 (otherwise, we won't be able to find them!).

Twitter Account:

- This assignment is an opportunity to begin to build a professional online identity. Many of us use social media for both personal purposes in personal contexts (share with friends and family) and for professional purposes in professional contexts. danah boyd calls these collapsing contexts—your boss can see the same thing your mom can. One way to manage these collapsing contexts is to have multiple social media accounts—one for your professional contacts and posts and one for your personal contacts and posts. This assignment falls into the professional category—these tweets demonstrate your expertise in digital media.
- If you do not have a twitter account, start a professional twitter account for this assignment. If you already have a personal twitter account, start a new professional twitter account. You may also use a pseudonym, rather than your real name, but be sure to choose a relatively professional pseudonym. If you have extenuating circumstances that make posting online dangerous or problematic for you, let me know ASAP.

Due Date: Each tweet is due before class begins.

Learning Goals:

This part of the assignment serves three goals:

1) For time in class to be most useful, you must come to class prepared—that means I expect you to read and engage the assigned material before class. This assignment encourages you to read the material carefully.
2) This assignment allows you to learn from your classmates. One of the reasons Xavier's education is so powerful (and so unique) is that you have an opportunity to learn with other really smart students. By making our thoughts, reactions, and critiques about the reading public for each student to see, we have the opportunity to learn from each other (That's why we're not doing this on pen and paper).
3) This assignment offers the opportunity to learn to use Twitter, a major digital media platform. It allows us to reflect on its technical affordances (favorites, @mentions, etc.) and its community norms.

Part 2: Turning in your tweets

The Assignment:

At three points in the semester, I'd like you to "turn in" your tweets by turning in a Microsoft Word document that gathers your tweets in one place by taking screenshots of your tweets. This gives you more control over your twitter participation assignment and the grade you earn. This is a chance to make sure you get credit for all of your tweets (even for

those times you forgot to use the course hashtag). This is also a chance for you to make an argument for the quality of your tweets. Use this as an opportunity to demonstrate to me that you completed the Twitter Participation assignment at a high level. This is your chance to give evidence of both quantity (that you tweeted every class period) and quality (that your tweets were evidence of engagement with the reading). This is also my chance to give you feedback about your Twitter participation throughout the course of the semester.

Section 1: Highlighted Tweets

At the top of your document, highlight two tweets:
- Choose one tweet that best shows your thoughtful response to the reading.
- Choose one tweet that best shows your openness to learning from your fellow students.

Include a paragraph that explains and analyzes why you chose to highlight those particular tweets.

Section 2: All of Your Tweets for This Period of the Semester

Then, put ALL of your tweets in a section below the highlighted tweets (including your two highlighted tweets). Organize these tweets by class period (and label them as such—there should be a heading for each class period). All of your tweets should be in this section (your highlighted tweets should be here as well as in the top section). I should be able to easily count the number of tweets here to see how many days you successfully completed the twitter assignment.

Due Dates:

Tweets Batch #1 (10 points)	Tweets Batch #2 (10 points)	Tweets Batch #3 (10 points)
Due: T 9/18	Due: T 10/23	Due: T 12/11
Include tweets for:	Include tweets for:	Include tweets for:
1. R 8/23	1. T 9/18	1. T 10/23
2. T 8/28	2. R 9/20	2. T 11/13
3. R 8/30	3. T 9/25	3. R 11/15
4. T 9/4	4. R 9/27	4. T 11/20
5. R 9/6	5. T 10/9	5. T 11/27
6. T 9/11	6. R 10/11	6. R 11/29
7. R 9/13	7. T 10/16	7. T 12/4
	8. R 10/18	

Total Points Possible: 30 points total

Turn in:
- Upload the word document to Canvas (.doc or .docx)

COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS PAPER

The Assignment:

This assignment invites you to explore the rhetorical dynamics of your own communication online. This will require you to develop critical distance to evaluate your own communication practices and will require you to practice using three key theoretical terms: rhetorical choices, audience, and technical affordances.

Choose three instances in which you engage in public communication online. Use variety in your posts: post to a wide range of websites, using a wide range of topics, for a wide range of communities, with a wide range of rhetorical strategies. Do not use one of your reading response tweets for this paper. I want you to analyze your everyday communication in a more natural setting, rather than a setting designed for this class. For each instance of communication, analyze your rhetorical choices, the audience, and the affordances at play. Explain how these affect the communicative interaction.

Your essay should be 1,300-1,500 words, single or double-spaced. Include at least one screen shot of each of your original posts as well as any responses you receive. Because you are analyzing your own communication, you may use first person. Because this is an analytical essay, you should use academic prose for your essay. You can think of your audience as your classmates—people who are familiar with the terms we learned in class.

You can organize your paper in many ways, but students often find the easiest organizational structure to be:
Paragraph 1: Post 1, Rhetorical choices
Paragraph 2: Post 1, Audience
Paragraph 3: Post 1, Affordances
Paragraph 4: Post 2, Rhetorical choices
Paragraph 5: Post 2, Audience
Paragraph 6: Post 2, Affordances

Paragraph 7: Post 3, Rhetorical choices
Paragraph 8: Post 3, Audience
Paragraph 9: Post 3, Affordances

Rough Draft due for Peer Critique Date: Thursday, November 1, 2018

Revised Draft due for In-Class Revision Workshop: Tuesday, November 6, 2018

Final Due Date: Thursday, November 8, 2018

Optional Revision Due: Thursday, November 29, 2018

Optional Revision: After you receive my feedback, you may choose to revise your essay. Highlight your revisions in yellow or use track-changes. To be eligible for the optional revision, you must turn in a full, complete paper at the original due date. Your new revision grade will replace your previous grade. Your new revision must still be within the word limit.

Turn In: Submit file (.docx or .pdf) to Canvas

Total Points: 30 points

Rubric:

Analysis of Rhetorical Choices	5 4	3 2	1 0
*What is your rhetorical goal? *What rhetorical choices did you make? *How did those rhetorical choices help you achieve your rhetorical goal?	Meets all criteria at high level	Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets few criteria
Analysis of Audience Social Norms	5 4	3 2	1 0
*Who is your audience? Be specific. Name them. What are their demographics? *What are the social norms/expectations of your audience? What are their values, beliefs, and/or standards or communication? *How did you post meet or violate those norms?	Meets all criteria at high level	Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets few criteria
Analysis of Technical Affordances	5 4	3 2	1 0
*What are the affordances of the platform you posted on? *What affordances did you use? Why? *What affordances did you choose not to use? Why?	Meets all criteria at high level	Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets few criteria
Overall Clarity of Writing	10 9 8	7 6 5 4	3 2 1 0

*Writing makes sense and is easy to follow *The paper is within the word limit *Structure is made clear with effective topic sentences, previews, and transitions *Writing is clear and concise *Avoids errors in grammar, punctuation, usage, and spelling *At least one screen shot was included of each post	Meets all criteria at high level	Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets few criteria
Peer Critique	5 4	3 2	1 0
*Full, complete rough draft ready for Peer Critique Day *Peer critique is specific and precise (no rubber-stamping) *Peer critique is kind, generous, and collaborative (embodies good critique norms) *Writer makes changes on Final Draft based on comments from Peer Critique	Meets all criteria at high level	Meets some criteria; uneven	Meets few criteria

SCHEDULE: When are readings and assignments due?

COURSE INTRODUCTION:
Day 1: T 8/21 (Syllabus)
- Read the Syllabus before class
- Read the "Advice for Future Students": http://ashleyhinck.com/COMM221Advice.html

Day 2: R 8/23 (Learning/Pedagogy)
- Freire, Chapter 2 (pdf)
- As you read Audrey Watters' blog post, think about how Canvas (aka the Learning Management System) affects learning—what kinds of things does it allow us to do? What kinds of things does it not do well? When should we use or not use the LMS? What does this case teach use about questions we should ask about how technology affects our learning? Watters: http://hackeducation.com/2014/09/05/beyond-the-lms-newcastle-university
- Sherri Spelic is a teacher and an expert in education, pedagogy, and class design. This particular YouTube video brings up questions of equity in education and how we design classes. She responds to the question: "*How would you design learning environments, exercises and even education in general if your aim was to suppress marginalized communities?*" Sherri answers that question from her own perspective—that of designing physical education classes. As you watch her video, think about how the choices we make in our class policies and structures affect equity and fairness—that is, how those class policies and structures might unfairly punish some students and not others. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slQ-WqBiykU
- Maha Bali: Thinking about the justification for deadlines and late policies: https://blog.mahabali.me/pedagogy/critical-pedagogy/negotiating-lateness-policies-with-students/

UNIT 1: DIGITAL MEDIA HISTORY:

Day 3: T 8/28 (Technological Determinism)
- Baym Chapter 2 (pdf):

Day 4: R 8/30: (Components of a Computer)
- Ceruzzi, Intro and Chapter 1 (textbook)
- Crash Course: Early Computing:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5nskjZ_GoI

Day 5: T 9/4 (Ada Lovelace)
- Padua (pdf) [be sure to read the footnotes, not the endnotes]
- The New York Times obituary for Ada Lovelace:
  https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/obituaries/overlooked-ada-lovelace.html
- Read Ceruzzi, page 28 (he refers to Ada Lovelace as Ada Augusta)
- Poke around online searching for Ada Lovelace Day

Day 6: R 9/6 (The First Computers)
- Ceruzzi, Chapter 2 (textbook)
- Crash Course: Electronic Computing:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LN0ucKNX0hc

Day 7: T 9/11 (Colossus and ENIAC Programmers)
- Abbate, Chapter 1 (pdf)
- Crash Course, Alan Turing:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TycxwFmdB0&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNlUrzyH5r6jN9uIIgZBpdo&index=16

Day 8: R 9/13 (Mainframes)
- Ceruzzi, Chapter 3 (textbook)

Day 9: T 9/18 (The Integrated Circuit)
- **Tweets #1 due (8/23-9/13)
- Ceruzzi, Chapter 4 (textbook)
- Crash Course: Integrated Circuits & Moore's Law:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-tKOHICqrI&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNlUrzyH5r6jN9uIIgZBpdo&index=18
- Joyner, "Jerry Lawson: The Black Man Who Revolutionized Gaming As We Know It": https://www.ign.com/articles/2019/02/22/jerry-lawson-the-black-man-who-revolutionized-gaming-as-we-know-it

Day 10: R 9/20 (Navajo Women and Microchips)
- Nakamura: http://www.computerhistory.org/atchm/indigenous-circuits/

Day 11: T 9/25 (The Personal Computer & Class Agency Check-In)
- Ceruzzi, Chapter 5 (textbook)
- Crash Course: The Personal Computer Revolution:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5BZou6C01w&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNlUrzyH5r6jN9uIIgZBpdo&index=26
- [In class, Class Agency Check-in]

Day 12: R 9/27 (The Internet)
- Ceruzzi, Chapter 6 and 7 (textbook)

- Crash Course: The Internet: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEaKrq3SpW8&index=30&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtNlUrzyH5r6jN9uIIgZBpdo
- Review for Midterm

Day 13: T 10/2 (Midterm Exam)

- **Midterm Exam

R 10/4 [no class: Fall Break]

UNIT 2: KEY THEORETICAL TERMS

Day 14: T 10/9 (Rhetorical Choices)

- Campbell & Huxman, Prologue & Chapter 1 (pdf)

Day 15: R 10/11 (Rhetorical Choices)

- Palczewski, Ice, and Fritch, Chapter 2 (pdf)
- Context for Obama's speech:
  - Read the excerpt from Robert Terrill's article (pdf)
  - To see the video that caused such a controversy, watch the first 2 ½ minutes of this YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFYeTrQMHA8
- Watch the first 15 minutes of Obama's speech "A More Perfect Union" while following along with the text of the speech.
  - Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrp-v2tHaDo
  - Text to follow along in: http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barackobamaperfectunion.htm

Day 16: T 10/16 (Context & Audiences)

- Hauser, Chapter 3 (pdf)
- Context for Fisher's speech
  - Excerpt from Lucas' *Top 100 American Speeches* (pdf)
  - Excerpt from McGee (.doc)
- Watch Mary Fisher's 15-minute speech, "A Whisper of AIDS", while following along with the text of the speech.
  - Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zB5K9k__SOo
  - Text to follow along in: http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/maryfisher1992rnc.html

Day 17: R 10/18 (Audience Online)

- PBS Idea Channel, "Are there internet dialects?": https://youtu.be/SDPasRas5u0
- Baym, Chapter 4 (pdf)

Day 18: T 10/23 (Technical Affordances)

- **Tweets #2 due (9/18-10/18)
- Winner (pdf)
- Pandel, "An Oral History of the History of Hashtag": https://www.wired.com/2017/05/oral-history-hashtag/

Day 19: R 10/25: (Writing Papers) → online class [Dr. Hinck at conference]

- Start writing your papers

Day 20: T 10/30 (Putting it all together)

- Keep writing your papers

- [In class practice analysis]

Day 21: R 11/1 (Peer Review)

- **Rough Draft of Analysis Paper due (bring 3 copies to class)

Day 22: T 11/6 (Revision Workshop)

- **Bring revised draft of paper, based on Peer Review comments
- In class revision workshop and writing

Day 23: R 11/8 (Analysis Paper due) → no class

- **Analysis Paper due

UNIT 3: WHO GETS TO SPEAK AND WHO GETS TO BE HEARD ON THE INTERNET?

Day 24: T 11/13 (Networked Publics & Class Agency Check-In)

- Class Agency Check-In
- Watch short 10 minute mini-lecture on the public sphere (video on Canvas)
- Benkler, Chapters 6-7 (pdf)

Day 25: R 11/15 (The Long Tail)

- Hindman, Chapter 3 (pdf)

Day 26: T 11/20 (Gender)

- Kimberle Crenshaw, "Intersectionality" Ted Talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en&utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
- Naomi Extra, "The Black Feminist Who Argued for Intersectionality Before the Term Existed": https://broadly.vice.com/en_us/article/xw7xnk/anna-julia-cooper-intersectionality-black-feminist
- Allen, "Gender Matters" (pdf)

R 11/22: [no class: Thanksgiving Break]

Day 27: T 11/27 (Gender Online)

- Hess, "Why women aren't welcome on the internet": http://www.psmag.com/navigation/health-and-behavior/women-arent-welcome-internet-72170/
- John Oliver, "Online Harassment: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuNIwYsz7PI
- Campbell, "Gaming's toxic men, explained": https://www.polygon.com/2018/7/25/17593516/video-game-culture-toxic-men-explained
- Cauterucci, "New Chrome App Helps Women Stop Saying 'Just' and 'Sorry' in Emails," http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2015/12/29/new_chrome_app_helps_women_stop_saying_just_and_sorry_in_emails.html
- Dash, "The Year I Didn't Retweet Men," https://medium.com/the-only-woman-in-the-room/the-year-i-didnt-retweet-men-79403a7eade1
- Sayagues, "Technology Isn't for Women," https://mg.co.za/article/2018-07-13-00-technology-is-not-for-women#.W0kfwLxaL3c.twitter

Day 28: R 11/29 (Race)

- **Optional Revision of Analysis Paper due
- Allen, "Race Matters" (pdf)
- Watch the videos in the "What is Systemic Racism?" playlist (8 1-minute videos): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPVXdjJCkCA&list=PL4ruTyc9FHOXSQYNEOQ7ePGQReN9sf5tb
- Taylor, "What is race" comic, https://thenib.com/what-is-race

Day 29: T 12/4 (Race Online)

- Vogt and Goldman, "Race Swap": http://www.onthemedia.org/story/tldr-31-race-swap/
- Hempel, "For Nextdoor, eliminating racism is no quick fix": https://www.wired.com/2017/02/for-nextdoor-eliminating-racism-is-no-quick-fix/
- Ellis, "Want to Profit Off Your Meme? Good Luck If You Aren't White": https://www.wired.com/2017/03/on-fleek-meme-monetization-gap/?mbid=social_fb_onsiteshare
- Jackson, "We Need to Talk About Digital Blackface in Reaction GIFs": http://www.teenvogue.com/story/digital-blackface-reaction-gifs
- Connor, "Giphy Debuts Collection of Black Ass GIFs Created by Black Ass Artists": https://www.theroot.com/giphy-debuts-collection-of-black-ass-gifs-created-by-bl-1833020498

Day 30: R 12/6 (Final Exam Review & Reflection)

- Instead of responding to the reading, I'd like you to reflect back on the active learning style we embraced this semester, setting aside the banking model for a problem-posing orientation. In your three tweets for today, reflect a little bit about how you adjusted your learning practices. What worked well for you? What didn't work well? What tips do you have to share with others? What would you tell future students taking COMM221 about how they should go about learning?
- Do course evaluations in class
- Review for Final Exam

Final Exam: 12/11

- **Tweets #3 due (10/23-12/4)
- **Final exam: Tuesday, December 11 @10:30am-12:20pm

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https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/xw7xnk/anna-julia-cooper-intersectionality-black-feminist

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