

DTEM 1401

Introduction to Digital Technology and Emerging Media

Fall 2017

Dr. Van Cleaf
Email: kvancleaf@fordham.edu
Office Hours: Monday 5-6 PM
(and by appointment)

Office Location:

Course Description: In this course, we'll consider the possibilities of communication and production in a digital world. This course takes a specific interest in understanding the constant evolution of digital media technologies and investigates the emergence of "new" media—from the original internet to various social media platforms. We will focus on the ways digital media folds into everyday life and shapes identities, relationships and exacerbates, as well as challenges, existing social inequalities. We will connect our own experiences with digital media to the theoretical course material.

Course Objectives:

- Understand the history of digital media.
- Understand the social context of digital media.
- Recognize the different forms of labor made possible by digital media.
- Develop competency in the social, economic, and technical issues associated with digital media
- Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts and issues relevant to digital technology and emerging media

Course Texts: All readings will be made available online.

Course Work:

Participation/Attendance (10%): Attendance and participation are imperative! I will measure your participation mainly through in class work, such as short in-class writing assignments that you turn in that day. These will not be graded: as long as you complete the exercise, you will receive credit. Attendance/participation work can never be made up. Sometimes I will pass around a sign in sheet, other times you'll work in groups. If everyone is participating in discussion, I will give everyone credit for the period.

You are allowed to miss 2 classes without penalty to your grade. Please contact me immediately if unforeseen circumstances cause you to miss 2 or more classes. If you are very ill, or have extenuating circumstances, you need to be proactive about contacting me. If you do that, makeup assignments are possible—but they **MUST** be cleared with me first. 3 absences automatically take your final grade down one tier of grade lower (i.e. from an A- to a B+). 4 absences result in a full letter grade lowering (A- to B-). **Fordham's university-wide policy is that 4 unexcused absences results in a failing grade.** It is your responsibility to get readings/assignments for missed days from other students, and you are encouraged to come to my office to discuss topics you're unclear on.

Concept-Connect (20%): Once during the semester you will have to bring in an example of an outside media supplement (an image, a campaign, a speech, video, article, hashtag trend, song...anything) that illustrates ONE concept from our scheduled reading for that day. You should spend no more than 1-2 minutes explaining the concept. You do not have to summarize the scheduled reading. In fact, if you do

summarize, I will deduct points! You *do* have to show and tell us how your media object exemplifies ONE key aspect of the reading. We will schedule these the first week of class.

Exams (40%): Two exams, midterm and final. The final will not be comprehensive. Multiple choice, true false, possible short answer.

Digital Labor Paper (30%): In an effort to understand how digital media and technology shape our world, we'll consider the labor that goes into making and sustaining such media. For this portion of your grade, you will need to focus on one form of digital labor—any type of labor that makes, reproduces or keeps the internet going. You can focus on any type of labor in one of the following three areas: physical (hardware, devices, fiber, cables), technical (coders, software, user experience, content development), or the affective (the moods, interpersonal or psychological ways we use/refuse digital media). You could examine anything from coders, critics, to yourself—how, when or why do you use digital media? You should create a short presentation for your paper. Details to come, but the paper should be around 5 pages. You should include two readings from the course. You should also include ONE outside, scholarly reading. You'll need to create a short, 5 minute media presentation to share with the class.

GRADING SCALE:

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|----------|--------------|
| 100=A+ | 79-77 = C+ |
| 99-93=A | 76-72 = C |
| 92-90=A- | 71-70 = C- |
| 89-87=B+ | 69-60 = D |
| 86-83=B | Below 58 = F |
| 82-80=B- | |

RULES/POLICIES: No cell phones—we can do it! No laptops (unless we are scheduled to have a tech day in class). No cheating, no plagiarism. Respect each other and different opinions.

- 1. No cell phones:** Silence them, put them away. If you cannot keep your hands and eyes off, I'm open to bringing a basket in for us all to leave them during class. If you have an emergency or childcare or need your phone on your desk, please let me know before class starts. If I see you using them, I will hold up class until the phone is put away.
- 2. Laptops:** Please do not bring to class unless I ask you to for specific workshop days. Laptops, like phones, are distracting to you, to me, and to those sitting around you.
- 3. No earbuds/headphones:** Seriously, DO NOT SIT IN CLASS WITH ONE EARBUD IN. If you do this, you'll be instructed to leave immediately and I will take 10 points off your next upcoming test.
- 4. Lateness/leaving early:** If you repeatedly are late to class or leave early (more than 3 times), I will take off a point for each late/early from your final grade. Let me know before class if you need to leave early.
- 5. Final grades are FINAL:** I do not negotiate grades. Do not ask. I do not need to hear about your GPA, or what grade you *need* or *must* get. You are responsible for your grades. Regardless of what other faculty tolerate, I do not negotiate grades with students. ALL GRADES ARE FINAL. If you wish to learn more about why you earned the grade you were assigned, you must see me *in person* during my posted office hours. Do not request email explanations of your grades; I will not respond in that venue. I also do not give extra credit. If you are struggling, be sure you come see me right away. Some of you might have to prepare yourselves to come see me on a regular basis. You may also have to prepare yourself to seek additional college services, such as tutors, if

your grades reflect that you are struggling. Do NOT wait until the end of the semester to tell me you have been struggling all along. By then, it is much too late in the course to remedy the situation. Nonetheless, students should remember that coming early and often for help *does not guarantee* that I will pass you. *In the final hour, you need to demonstrate proficiency in sociology, no matter how hard you tried.* Coming to class, trying hard/studying many hours in college is a given. In the end, you must produce college-level work.

*****I reserve the right to change, delete or ADD readings to this schedule. I will always give you notice but you must come to class to stay abreast of any changes.

*****Do not be offended if I call you and do not be offended if I do not call on you! I will try to call on everyone at least once over the course of the semester so be prepared.

*****Please email me if you are having trouble with the course material in anyway.

*****Plagiarizing in anyway, shape or form will result in a zero for that assignment or test. I take this very seriously so please see me if you're nervous about properly citing your work.

Schedule:

Aug 31: Intros, presentation sign ups,
Is the Internet Good or Bad? Yes. By Zeynep Tufekci, Feb 12, 2014.
URL: <https://medium.com/matter/is-the-internet-good-or-bad-yes-76d9913c6011>

DEFINITIONS, HISTORY

Sept 11: Castells, "Lessons from the History of the Internet"
"What is New Media" by Manovitch
"The Web at 25" by Berners-Lee URL:
<http://www.wired.co.uk/article/tim-berners-lee>

INFRASTRUCTURES

Sept 18: "Introduction: Against Flow" by Starosielski, Nicole. 2015.
"Where the Internet Lives" URL:
<https://www.wired.com/2015/11/peter-garritano-where-the-internet-lives/>
"The Geography of the Internet: Networked Places" by Castells

SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Sept 25: "Media, Situations, Behaviors" by Meyrowitz, Joshua

“Communication in Digital Spaces” by Baym, Nancy

DIGITAL LABOR

Oct 2: “Free Labor” by Terranova, Tiziana
“Hope Labor”
“Hate Sinks” URL: <https://thenewinquiry.com/hate-sinks/>

Oct 9: NO CLASS

Oct 16: REVIEW for Midterm

Oct 23: **MIDTERM**

INEQUALITIES: GENDER

Oct 30: “What was the Nerd?” URL: <http://reallifemag.com/what-was-the-nerd/>

“Women Used to Dominate Tech...Until They Didn’t” URL:
<http://thewisdomdaily.com/women-used-to-dominate-tech-until-men-pushed-them-out/>

“The Increasing Technology Divide: Persistent Portrayals of Maverick Masculinity In US Marketing” by Dempsey, S.E. 2009

INEQUALITIES: RACE

Nov 6: “We need to talk about digital blackface reaction GIFS” by Lauren Michele Jackson. URL: <http://www.teenvogue.com/story/digital-blackface-reaction-gifs>

“Poor Meme, Rich Meme” <http://reallifemag.com/poor-meme-rich-meme/>

Nov 13: “Combating White Supremacy in the Global Digital World” by Jessie Daniels URL: <http://www.english.illinois.edu/-people-/faculty/debaron/482/482readings/Daniels.pdf>

ALGORITHMS AND INEQUALITIES

Nov 20: “The Relevance of Algorithms” by Gillespie 2012
<https://medium.com/message/ferguson-is-also-a-net-neutrality-issue-6d2f3db51eb0>

https://www.academia.edu/1975319/Missed_Connections_What_Search_Engines_Say_About_Women

IDENTITIES AND INEQUALITIES

Nov 27: “My Cell, My Self” by Gilliom and Monohan URL:
<http://governingalgorithms.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/1-paper-gillespie.pdf>

“Machine Bias” by Angwin et al 2016 URL:
<https://www.propublica.org/article/machine-bias-risk-assessments-in-criminal-sentencing>

SURVEILLANCE

Dec 4: “Mark Zuckerberg is in Denial” URL:
https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/15/opinion/mark-zuckerberg-is-in-denial.html?mcubz=3&_r=0

Reading TBA

Film: Do Not Track