COMM 5392-002

Seminar in New Media & Society

**The University of Texas at Arlington**

**Spring 2013**

**Thursday 6-8:50 p.m.**

### Professor: Mark Tremayne, Ph.D.

### Fine Arts Building (FAB) Room 414

### Telephone: (817) 272-3241

### E-mail: tremayne@uta.edu

### Office hours: Tu & Th 11-12:30 and by appointment

#### Course Description/Goals

This class is intended to introduce students to a thriving area of communication inquiry. We will review new media research with an eye toward the theories and methods that have proven promising thus far, and work to extend the field with new work of our own. This class is a seminar, each week we will discuss a selection of readings. You are expected to complete the readings for each week prior to class and be ready to discuss them. Please, come prepared with opinions, suggestions and questions.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the past communication research in this area

- Explain how new media research is approached using related communication theories

- Analyze communication research reported in scholarly journals

- Develop and apply hypotheses and research questions for a communication research proposal

A major requirement of this course is an individual 8-10 page research paper proposal. Class projects will normally be original content analyses. No IRB approval will be needed for a content analysis.

**Grade policy, test times and scale**

**Grades**

Paper Proposal 15%

Final paper 30%

Midterm 25%

Abstracts 10%

Participation/Attendance 10%

Leading Discussion 10%

TOTAL 100%

Points will be totaled and your final grade will be based on the following grading scale.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 90 – 100% = **A** | 60 – 69% = **D** |
| 80 – 89% = **B** | 59% and below = **F** |
| 70 – 79% = **C** |  |

The mid-term exam will cover specific reading material, lecture, speakers, discussion, and other material presented in class. Students will not be allowed to make up an exam, exercise, project or paper without a valid excuse approved in advance of the time due by the professor.

*Research Proposal Paper*

This will be a complete research study and should address some topic relevant to this class. This paper should be 20 pages or more. Be prepared to present your paper in class during the final week.

*Abstracts*

For every week we have readings I’ll expect each student to write an abstract of the articles. These should be one or two pages single-spaced and consist of two parts: a summary of the article including key findings and conclusions, and a section consisting of your opinions of the piece including any thoughts you have on how the work could be extended to other domains or improved upon.

*Participation*

There are four parts to participation. The first is attendance. The second is participating in class discussion. The third is participation in the group projects. The fourth is participation on the electronic discussion forum. Let me expand on the last one. Each week prior to class I will ask you to post your thoughts and opinions on the readings. At a minimum, this can consist of posting the second paragraphs of the article abstracts described above. But please feel free to do more…ask each other questions, take a position, etc. This will give me time before class to read what you are thinking. It will also help your discussion leaders in preparing for class.

*Leading Discussion*

Each week one students will be assigned to lead discussion. Although everyone should be prepared to discuss the readings, this person will do three things. First, they will begin the discussion by posing a questions or showing us something interesting that is related to the topic of the day (perhaps something on the Web). Second they will help keep the discussion moving. Third, at the end of the discussion, they should point us toward other research or resources that may help us understand this topic of inquiry. Nothing needs to be printed out but could be posted to the discussion forum.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Make-up Exams**: Make sure you don’t miss exams as I rarely allow make-ups and only in extenuating circumstances.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Course Schedule: Handed out separately.**