

**COMM 5345 – New Media Theories and Applications**  
**Thursdays, 6-8:45 p.m.**

**Room: CAS 258**

**Syllabus—Spring 2020**

Professor: Dr. Terry L. Britt  
Office Hours: Mondays 1-3 p.m., Wednesdays 11 a.m.-noon., and by appointment  
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**Note: Syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be posted under “Announcements” on the class Canvas site, by email through Canvas, and verbally announced in the next class meeting.**

## **I. Course Description**

Catalog: This course involves an exploration of the cognitive, linguistic, and interpretive approaches to the study of new media. Consideration will be given to both the practical and theoretical values of new media.

## **II. Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

### **A. Research**

1. Students will be able to conduct original research using a method appropriate to the research question.
  - a. Develop an understanding of the structures, theories, and applications of new media in the context of potential research questions and research projects pertaining to new media.
  - b. Write a fully developed research study proposal pertaining to new media usage, content, effects, production, control, or dissemination.

### **B. Theoretical knowledge**

1. Students will be able to explain communication from a variety of communication theoretical perspectives.
  - a. Apply critical thinking skills to literature within the study and research of new media theories and applications, and contribute significantly to group discussions of the same.

- b. Identify and analyze scholarly literature pertaining to new media theories and applications for inclusion in a full research proposal and any future research articles developed from that research proposal.

### **C. Communication Assessment**

1. Students will be able to evaluate the communication rules, norms, listening skills, and rhetorical strategies used by people.
  - a. Successfully lead and moderate a group discussion on a topic within new media theories and applications, and relevant literature.
  - b. Successfully communicate issues and points pertaining to new media theories and applications through outlines, information, and relevant media content to colleagues within a group setting.

### **III. Things to Know For This Class:**

#### **A. Attendance:**

1. Attendance is mandatory and it is expected of you, as graduate students, to carry the commitment level and self-discipline to attend class each meeting. Participation and attendance does constitute part of the course grade (see below).
2. Bereavement: Students will be given an excused absence to attend the funeral service of someone in the immediate family or first level of relatives (aunts, uncles, first cousins); however, the absence needs to be documented through a printed or online obituary, or copy/scan of the service program.
3. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second class meeting.
4. You are responsible for turning in all assignments by deadline even though you may be absent.
5. You are also responsible for lecture materials, announcements and assignments made during any absence.
6. If you must be absent or late to class, please notify me by email as soon as possible.

#### **B. Assignment Policy:**

1. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the announced time via Canvas. Late assignments will be penalized by one grade level per day late. (i.e. if it is one day late, you lose 10 percent off the top.)
2. Assignments must be typed and submitted using the format required for the assignment.
3. Assignments and due dates may change at the instructor's discretion with fair notice.
4. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. This does not mean, however, that merely completing all assignments guarantees a passing grade.
5. All assignments must include student name, date, assignment name, course name and word count.

#### **C. Classroom Courtesies:**

1. No cellphone use during class. No calls, no texts, no status update checks. In an emergency, please exit the classroom to use your device.
2. As we are meeting each week in a room that is not a computer lab, I am fine with it if you need to bring a beverage with you to class, but I would ask that all such beverages have a lid or other top on them to minimize spills. Please do not bring any food into the class. If you need to eat something, do so outside the room door and then re-enter when finished.
3. Laptop and tablet use is for note taking and class-related research. Other uses will be noted and these devices can be restricted in class.
4. Talk, debate, ask questions and challenge but stay on topic.

**D. Access to Technology:**

1. I use Canvas to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback, and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. Check Canvas regularly.

**E. Email Policy:**

1. On weekdays, you should expect my response in 24 hours. On weekends, I will do my best to answer your questions in 48 hours.

**F. Academic Honesty:**

1. Practice academic integrity and accept responsibility for your actions.
2. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others' work (including test and paper "banks"), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor.
3. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
4. **PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** This includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Go here for more:  
<http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>

**G. Course grading**

**Participation and attendance (20% of course grade)**

Graduate school and the courses/seminars you take in a graduate program are heavily dependent upon your regular participation in class sessions and discussions that take place therein. Essentially, if we have everyone here each class session – this is particularly crucial with a small enrollment and only one meeting per week – we have a much better discussion and overall experience in the course. To that end, if you attend and actively take part in discussion each week, you will receive full credit for this part of the course grade. I may also set up a topic forum on our course Canvas site for relevant posts that could help spur our discussions each week.

Absences may be excused for a documented illness, documented death in the immediate family or first branch of relatives (aunts, uncles, first cousins), or a university-sponsored activity

or academic conference. Unexcused absences will affect the points earned for this part of the course grade. If an unusual situation has arisen, please contact me as soon as possible.

### **Discussion lead and presentation (40% of course grade)**

In the first class meeting on Jan. 16, I will present the course schedule of topics (included below). Following a brief summary of each topic, I will have each of you draw a number to determine order of selection and each of you, in turn, will choose one of the course topics to function as discussion moderator that week. You will also provide a short presentation about your topic; although it can be as simple as a PowerPoint or similar file, since this is a course on new media, I would encourage each of you to incorporate new media examples or content in the presentation. Having been through many graduate seminars with this type of assignment as part of the course grade, I can tell you that simple effort and enthusiasm about your topic will likely result in full marks here.

### **Research proposal (40% of course grade)**

One of the objectives of this course is to help you develop a research agenda that will include projects dealing with new media (effects, structures, communication channels, etc.). To that end, the other part of the course grade here will be based on submission of a thoroughly developed research proposal (10-12 pgs., double-spaced, with citations in APA 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> edition). In the proposal I would like to see the following:

- a. The research question(s) being addressed and support for their inclusion in the research.
- b. Relevant literature
- c. Method(s) employed for the research and support for those methods
- d. Expected findings and contribution(s) to scholarship within new media.

I will be available for consultation on research ideas and guidance in writing the proposal, during office hours stated above or by appointment. I strongly encourage each of you to reach out to me once you have a proposal in mind and for any questions thereafter.

### **Grade scale:**

**A – 90-100%**

**B – 80-89%**

**C – 70-79%**

**D – 60-69%**

**F – 59% and below**

**Reminder:** A letter grade of B or better is required for course credit for any graduate-level course in the Department of Communication at the University of Texas at Tyler.

### **Course schedule (Subject to change):**

Jan. 16 – Course introduction, personal introductions; What is “new media”?

- Jan. 23 – Media theories: Revisit, revise, or replace?
- Jan. 30 – Marshall McLuhan and his connections to new media
- Feb. 6 – The World Wide Web: How we set the stage for new media applications
- Feb. 13 – Prosumerism: Changing the rules of media production and distribution
- Feb. 20 – Blogging then and now
- Feb. 27 – Streaming video: The revolution that wasn't televised
- March 5 – New media as the new marketplace
- March 12 – Spring break week; no class meeting
- March 19 – TBA; possibly no class meeting due to conference
- March 26 – The rise of social media: New connections, new concerns
- April 2 – Social media as news channels
- April 9 – New media as memory and cultural archive
- April 16 – What's the next wave of "new media"?
- April 23 – No class meeting; Research proposals due by 5 p.m.

#### **IV. University Policies**

##### **A. UT Tyler Honor Code:**

1. Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do. Students Rights and Responsibilities To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

##### **B. Campus Carry:**

1. We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

##### **C. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:**

1. All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates,

contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free).

**D. Academic Honesty Policy:** Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker’s or writer’s indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

**E. Student Standards of Academic Conduct**

1. Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

a) “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) copying from another student’s test paper;
- (2) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- (3) failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- (4) possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- (5) using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- (6) collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- (7) discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- (8) divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;

- (9) substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
  - (10) paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
  - (11) falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
  - (12) taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
  - (13) misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- b) “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.
  - c) “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
  - d) All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

F. **The U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: CAS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

G. **Disability/Accessibility Services:**

1. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application.
2. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.utt Tyler.edu/disabilityservices> , the SAR office located in the University Center, #3150 or call 903.566.7079.

#### **H. Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:**

1. Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (STE 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the **Census Date is September 9, 2019.**) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.
2. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.
3. The **Census Date (September 9, 2019)** is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:
  - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
  - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
  - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
  - d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
  - e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

#### **I. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:**

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

#### **J. Student Absence due to Religious Observance:**

1. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

#### **B. Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:**

1. If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned



absence. At that time, the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**K. Social Security and FERPA Statement:**

1. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**L. Emergency Exits and Evacuation:**

1. Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

**M. UT Tyler Resources for Students:**

1. UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)
2. UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)
3. The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
4. UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)