SYLLABUS

I. Course Title

COMM 5308 – Seminar in Communication Theories

II. Course Credit

Three (3) credit hours

III. Placement in Curriculum

Core courses (Non-thesis track)

IV. Prerequisites

Admission to or good standing in Online MA in Communication program.

V. Course Professors

Lead Professor

Name: Dr. Terry L. Britt
Title: Assistant Professor of Communication
Phone: (903) 565-5713
Email: tbritt@uttyler.edu

VI. Course Description

Survey of major theories that inform communication studies and their philosophical assumptions and implications.

VII. Course Rationale

This course introduces graduate students to media theories and their applications in digital media and social media uses and analytics. The content and learning outcomes will be valuable to anyone seeking or advancing in a communication-based career field, such as public relations, content or product marketing, digital news development, or social media account management.

VIII.   Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:
- Gain knowledge and application of media and communication theories developed to address the unique problems of digital communication.
- Develop digital and social media content strategies for audiences, and management and evaluation skills for platforms and content.
- Development of critical thinking and analytical skills pertaining to legal and ethical issues of digital communication platforms and content.

IX.   Materials

Textbook

Lehmann, W. (2023). Social Media Theory and Communications Practice. Taylor & Francis. ISBN: 9781000900682

Desktop, laptop, or tablet device, or regular access to one of these.

Additional readings as posted on Canvas site.

Other Resources

Desktop, laptop, or tablet device, or regular access to one of these.

Additional readings as posted on Canvas site.

X.   Course Outline and Expectations

This is a seven-week course, fully online, and structured in seven weekly units as outlined in the Course Topics section below. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and multimedia viewing, discussion board activity, and assignments by the stated due dates. Any extenuating circumstances that inhibit a student's ability to meet these expectations should be brought to my attention immediately.

Participation/Attendance

Since this is an asynchronous online course, your participation and attendance will be evaluated by your discussion board participation and submission of assignments.

Academic Honesty

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

Statement on Artificial Intelligence

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

Special Accommodations

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 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. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email saroffice@uttyler.edu, or call 903.566.7079."

Military Affiliated Students

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu or via phone at 903.565.5972.

Students on an F-1 Visa

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.

Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.

Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

Course Communication Policy

The best way to contact me is by email at tbritt@uttyler.edu. On weekdays until 10 p.m., I will try to respond to your email within 1-2 hours, sometimes sooner. Email received after 10 p.m. or on weekends will be answered as soon as possible the following day.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Much of our communication in this course will take place in the forums and through email. Here are some guidelines for online communication in this course:

- Be sensitive to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs.

- Use good taste when composing your responses. Swearing and profanity should be avoided. Also consider that slang terms can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

- Don't use all capital letters when composing your responses. This is considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.

- Be respectful of others' views and opinions. Avoid "flaming" (publicly attacking or insulting) others.

- Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.

- Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text messaging shortcuts.

- In emails, always identify yourself and what class and section you are in. It is a good practice to put your course and section in the subject line. This helps your instructor identify course related emails.

XI. Technology Requirements

Computer/Technology Requirements

Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

Learning Management System

Students are provided with guides and online ticketing service when an LMS issues arises. To access the 24/7 help desk and resources, access the Help option by clicking on the question mark icon in the navigation bar on the left side of your course page.

Web Conferences/Synchronous sessions

There are no web conferences or synchronous sessions scheduled for this course. However, if you would like to discuss this course or your performance in it, I will gladly set up a virtual meeting with you via Zoom.

XII. Grading and Evaluation

Final Grade Calculation

Assessments	Percentages
Discussion	50%
Assignments	50%
Total Percentage For Course	100%

Blanket Statement on when assignments/assessments are due should go here.

Grading

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used:

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

70 or below = F

I will provide feedback and grades as quickly as possible after the assignment due date, typically within three days, and will alert students if there is a reason for a delay beyond that time frame.

Rubrics

Rubrics are included in the course Canvas site and will provide an understanding of how work will be assessed on the course's assignments.

Late Work Policy

The only late work that will be considered are those instances where the student has communicated with their instructor regarding unavoidable circumstances, such as reporting an illness and submitting a doctor's note to their instructor, a death in the family, or a broad, extended internet service outage that disables your ability to sign in to Canvas and/or submit assignments.

XIII. Course Evaluation

At the end of this course, students are encouraged to complete a course evaluation that will be distributed to them via email and through a course link.

XIV. Course Topics

Module 0	Content goes here.
Module 2	Introduction to Digital and Social Media Theories
Module 3	Social Media – Uses and Platform Changes over Time
Module 4	Mass Media Uses of Social Media
Module 5	Business Uses of Social Media
Module 6	Personal Uses of Social Media
Module 7	Social Media and Communication Law
Module 0	Ethical Issues in Social Media Use

XV. Additional Course Information

Syllabus Subject to Change

While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, it should be understood that content may change in keeping with new research and literature and that events beyond the control of the instructor could occur. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.