

Spring 2008**Course Syllabus**

Instructor: Ben Lee
Office: ASC 221
Office hours: Mon Wed 4:00-5:15 pm, Tue 2:45-5:15 pm
best by appointment
Mobile: 626 221 7833
Email: bblee@usc.edu

Course Description

This course introduces students to contemporary issues surrounding communication technology. We will explore the historically important communication technologies, their origins and characteristics, and their impact on human activity. Students will have the opportunity to build a basic technical vocabulary to better understand current computing technology, as well as to develop practical experience engaging with issues current in today's technology-immersed environment.

Course Materials

- Course reading packet (available from University Graphics at University Village)
- Supplemental reading materials (to be provided in time)
- Lecture outlines (available on Blackboard)

Evaluation of Performance

Examination 1	24%
Examination 2	24%
Final examination	24%
Assignments	12%
Attendance and participation	10%
Random quizzes	05%
Instructors' judgment	01%
Extra credit activities	max 1%

This course uses the following grading scheme:

A	95% or higher
A-	90%-94%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C+	77%-79%
C	73%-76%
C-	70%-72%
D+	67%-69%
D	63%-66%
D-	60%-62%
F	59% or lower

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Examinations

There will be three examinations for this course. The later examinations may be cumulative in part. In general, no more than 20% of the later examinations tests materials covered in prior examinations. The purpose is not to impose excessive burdens on students during examinations; rather, the purpose is to highlight how the topics are inter-linked. The examinations consist of multiple choice, short answers and essay questions. More details will be given in time for each examination.

Assignments

There are three discussion section assignments, worth a total of 12% of your final grade. These assignments allow you to apply concepts to understand better a specific case or a problem involving communication technology. More details will be provided as the course progresses.

Attendance and Participation in Class

This part of the evaluation is designed to set incentives for a desired behavior – punctual attendance in discussion sessions, and participation in discussion and lecture sessions. For discussion sessions, the instructors take attendance. Arriving past five minutes to class is considered poor form, and will represent a penalty. Participation can take many forms. One basic form is contribution to the class' learning experience when discussing materials. Generally, if you ask a meaningful question, or can help answer a question, or otherwise contribute to a discussion, that will count towards participation.

Random Quizzes

It is difficult to take accurate attendance for 120 people every lecture session. However, we have incentives for attending: quizzes held during lecture. There will be five quizzes, each given during a random lecture session. Lecture material covered that session forms the basis for the quiz questions. Each quiz can be completed in five minutes. As long as you answer with thought and intelligence, you get full score.

Instructors' Judgment

This small portion of the evaluation represents the instructors' prerogative. It simulates the less tangible aspects of any evaluation. Generally, it may be awarded to a student who has contributed to the class in ways the other parts of the evaluation cannot capture. Qualities such as enthusiasm, initiative, consideration for peers, and the like count. Also, we are inclined to reward effort and improvement. What we will not reward, among other things, is disrespectful behavior towards other students or the instructors. Note that this part of the evaluation is entirely at the instructors' discretion. It may or may not be awarded.

Extra Credit: Participation in other research projects

You will also have opportunities to participate in research studies conducted by Annenberg faculty and graduate students. Participation is voluntary. Credit earned depends on effort and time required when participating. For example, participating in a 90-minute focus group earns 0.33%, participating in a 15-minute survey earns 0.20%. More details will be provided as each opportunity arises.

Academic Integrity

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion of the Communication major or minor.

All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by Turnitin technologies (<http://www.turnitin.com>) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and Turnitin is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work.

USC Policy for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure this letter is delivered to your TA or professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in the Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

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Jan 14, 2008 (M)	Course introduction Review of syllabus, materials, and expectations
Jan 17, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Evolution of communication technology
Jan 21, 2008 (M)	<i>Martin Luther King Day</i>
Jan 23, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Being digital Reading: “The DNA of Information” by Negroponte “The Nature of Technology” by Burger, pp. 31-35
Jan 28, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Technology as a deterministic force Reading: “The Slings and Arrows of Outrageous McLuhan” by Mackenzie http://www.thewritingworks.com/mcluhan.html [Read the first four sections, stop at “The Etiology of Freakoutitis...”]
Jan 30, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Technology as tools and as culture Reading: “Technology: Practice and Culture” by Pacey
Feb 4, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Utopian and dystopian perspectives of technology Reading: “Technology today: Utopia or dystopia” by Winner http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2267/is_n3_v64/ai_19952021 “Why the Future Doesn’t Need Us” by Joy
Feb 6, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Science fiction and the culture of technology
Feb 11, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Technology and the body Reading: To be determined
Feb 13, 2008 (W)	Review for Examination 1
	Deadline: Assignment 1 due in discussion sessions.
Feb 18, 2008 (M)	<i>Presidents’ Day</i>
Feb 20, 2008 (W)	Examination 1

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Feb 25, 2008 (M)	Lecture: The birth of Silicon Valley Reading: “The Tech Model Railroad Club” by Levy “Amateur Hour” by Cringely
Feb 27, 2008 (W)	No lecture
Mar 3, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Technology stocks, the dotcom bubble, and Bubble 2.0 Reading: To be determined
Mar 5, 2008 (W)	Lecture: A brief tour of early computers; Inside the black box: PC hardware Reading: “Fundamental Computer Concepts” by Davis “Faster, Cheaper, Better – Forever” by Hutheesing
Mar 10, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Basic software – BIOS and OS Reading: “In the Beginning... was the Command Line” by Stephenson, pp. 1-8
Mar 12, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Applications, GUIs, and end users Reading: “In the Beginning... was the Command Line” by Stephenson, pp. 15-23
Mar 17 & 19, 2008	<i>Spring Break</i>
Mar 24, 2008 (M)	Lecture: The cathedral and the bazaar: Open source software Reading: “In the Beginning... was the Command Line” by Stephenson, pp. 25-45 “The Cathedral and the Bazaar” by Raymond
Mar 26, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Web 2.0 technologies and their potential Reading: To be determined. http://youtube.com/watch?v=6gmP4nk0EOE&feature=related http://youtube.com/watch?v=-4CV05HyAbM&feature=related
	Deadline: Assignment 2 due in discussion sessions.
Mar 31, 2008 (M)	Review for Examination 2
Apr 2, 2008 (W)	Examination 2

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Apr 7, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Video games (I) Readings: To be determined
Apr 9, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Video games (II) Readings: To be determined.
Apr 14, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Viral marketing Readings: To be determined.
Apr 16, 2008 (W)	Lecture: Database culture and surveillance Reading “Database Nation” by Garfinkel
Apr 21, 2008 (M)	Lecture: How to keep a secret Reading: “Why Cryptography is Harder Than It Looks” by Schneier
Apr 23, 2008 (W)	No lecture
Apr 28, 2008 (M)	Lecture: Pornography and technology. Reading: To be determined.
Apr 30, 2008 (W)	Review for Final Examination
	Deadline: Assignment 3 due in discussion sessions.
May 12, 2008 (M) 2:00-4:00 p.m.	Final Examination