Com 691: Communication Technologies and Culture: Identity, Community & Politics
Hugh Downs School of Human Communication Fall 2012

Professor: Dr. Pauline Hope Cheong
Office Location: Stauffer Hall A462
Office Hours: 2:00 – 3:00 pm Wednesday, or by appointment
E-mail: pauline.cheong@asu.edu (type com 691 in the subject)
Class Time: Wednesday, 3:15-5:45pm
Classroom: Stauffer Hall A431

Overview and Course Description

This graduate seminar will examine what the changing technological landscape means in terms of mediated modes of communicating and cultural change(s). The course will focus on theoretical and empirical research on new media and social theories and its application to the “information” and “network(ed) society” and accompanying cultural institutions and practices. Throughout the class, the emphasis will be on theory, evidence, applications and directions for praxis, policy and future research.

Course Goals

Com 691 has the following learning objectives:

1. To help you understand the key social theories relevant to information and communication technologies (ICT)s.
2. To promote critical awareness of the classic and contemporary perspectives on how technology culturally shapes society and vice versa.

More specifically, to facilitate your thoughtful address of the following questions concerning the cultural dynamics and contexts of communication technologies, for example: Is it technology alone that determines social change? How does technology interact with cultural change? Can socio-technological ties facilitate community? To what extent do newer media subvert established orders? How does technology both constrain and develop social institutions and processes? Etc.

3. To highlight different methodologies and approaches to communication technology research.
4. To encourage you to become acquainted with relevant books, academic journals, and trade journals on new media and society.
5. To develop your ability to research a topic and write high quality papers that engages the key perspectives presented in the course and illustrates the arguments with contemporary examples.

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Course Readings

Beginning in week 2, readings are required for each module of the course (4-5 readings + supplementary materials). They are assigned from your course textbook and found in the learning module sections on Blackboard, available on the course’s website, located at http://my.asu.edu. (timed release),. The Course textbook is available in the ASU campus bookstore, or online e.g. www.amazon.com. Cheong, P.H., Martin, J.N. & Macfadyen, L. (Eds) (2012) New Media and Intercultural Communication: Identity, Community and Politics. New York: Peter Lang. Doing all of the readings thoroughly—such that you are able to comprehend, apply, evaluate, and critique the information presented—is required for all assignments and is thereby essential for success in this class.

Topic Areas

Module 1- Sept 5th: Rear view Mirror- Historical perspectives
Module 2- Sept 12th: Growing up digital: Mediatization, Mediation and Hyperconnectivity
Module 3- Sept 19th: Participatory & Convergence Culture, Transmediation
Module 4- Sept 26th: (Dis)connections, Creative renewal and Sustainability
Module 5- Oct 3rd: Identity and (re)presentations of self
Module 6- Oct 10th: Branding, Celebification and (Im)material Labor
Module 7- Oct. 17th: Authority, Power and Legitimation
Module 8- Oct. 24th: Community Norms, Trust and Relationships
Module 9- Nov. 7th: Civic Engagement and Political Communication
Module 10- Nov. 14th: Transnationalism and Global connections

Assignments and Evaluation

Each participant is expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss the course materials. The readings will be the shared knowledge base among participants that will serve as the core of our discussion. Like most graduate seminars, our success depends to a large degree on you being prepared. Please do the readings carefully, critically, and prior to class meetings. Come prepared to share your ideas, thoughts, and questions and to contribute to our collective discussion on the topic of the day.

The following assignments have been designed to help you achieve the learning objectives of the course:

a) Integrative Report: Summary and Critique of reading

After week two, the class will divide the readings among each other. For each reading, a brief summary of the key ideas should be posted for the rest of the class by 2359 (11:59pm) on the Sunday before the regular class session. The summary should be posted in the course blog on blackboard. It should include a discussion of key themes, methodological issues, theoretical issues, critique, and future directions. It should not only integrate, but also critique. The document should also include 2-3 questions for the next seminar conversation.

Each summary (2-4 pages, single spaced, each) should have 4 parts.

Part 1: Review the key points of the work.

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Part 2: Your own comments and analysis.
Part 3: Questions for discussion.
Part 4: Rate the piece (on a scale of 1-5).

Determine what you believe to be the major contribution, most interesting finding, or most intriguing point suggested by the reading. Critique the methods of theory development, review, or empirical research. What credibility do you give to the work? What should we take away from it? *How does this reading fit with other works in the area?

b) Book review

For this assignment, students are to select a book and review how the topic of new media and culture has been addressed in the current and past (one) to three years. The book may come from any related field of the student’s interest and should include substantial attention to new media and mediated phenomenon. Students are to write a book review, (12-14 pages, double spaced, 3000 words maximum) of their findings and observations. Be prepared to present your review to the rest of the class.

Each report should encompass the following sections:
   Part 1: Brief history, nature, context and summary of the book
   Part 2: Critique the contents
   Part 3: Your ranking and recommendation

c) Course Wiki

In this course, we will be encountering a “new” vocabulary associated with “new” media, including a bricolage and portmanteau of terms. Throughout the semester, students are to create a new term, and develop an ongoing folksonomy within our interpretative community.
   Part 1: Create a new term/concept or modify an existing one
   Part 2: Explain this term, its origins, denotative and connotative connections, and provide at least two citations to the course’s readings. (up to 500 words)
   Part 3: Contribute to other entries (edit, revise etc., at least 500 words)

d) Term Paper

A term paper is required for this course (5,000 words maximum). This paper can take the form of a) a white paper or policy oriented paper, with recommendations for a practitioner audience, b) an integrated review of the literature or meta-analysis, c) a critical review of the literature, d) a case study, framed using theories discussed in class, e) a grant or research proposal or g) an app development.

The paper should be consistent with graduate level work – thus, you should produce a thorough, well-researched, and well-written course paper that demonstrates mastery of the topic (including discussions of course readings), theoretical facility, and original thinking. The paper should be presented in APA (American Psychological Association style) format or any other recognized style e.g. MLA as long as the in-text and references are presented consistently. Think toward eventual publication or, at least, conference presentation of your work. All topics and ideas should be approved well in advance with the Professor and we will make a point of discussing everyone’s papers and ideas in class meetings.

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The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary reports of readings</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Wiki</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Throughout semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>October 3rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
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<td>- Proposal</td>
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<td>October 31st</td>
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<td>- Class presentation</td>
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<td>Dec. 5th</td>
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<td>- Term paper due</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Dec. 13th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Throughout semester</td>
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If a student is on the borderline between two grades, the decision as to which grade will be given will be based on the student’s participation in the class. Extra credit and incompletes may not be obtained. The grade for this course is based on the performance of this class in this semester.

**NO late assignments** will be accepted. Absences in class will only be discharged for medical emergencies involving life and limb in the immediate family.

**Course Policies and Procedures**

*Email and Communication:*
I certainly want to get to know you in order to help you learn and contribute to making your graduate experience with the Hugh Downs School as fruitful as possible. Therefore, please feel free to come by my office during my office hours if you have any questions or need any clarifications with regard to course work. If you have class time that clashes with my office hours, let me know and we can figure an alternative time to meet.
With regard to email, please allow me at least 48 hours in two office days to respond to your inquiry. Please **entitle your email with the course number: Com 691**, to ensure that your mail receives its due prompt attention.

*Classroom and Attendance Policy:*
Discussion and punctual attendance are essential to make this course successful. I expect the normal courtesies regarding attendance including not arriving late and respectfully letting me know ahead of time if you are going to be absent or have to leave class early.

Keep in mind that:
  a) You are responsible to complete all readings assigned before each class.
  b) There will be no make-up assignments, exams or extra credit assignments so chronic absences or tardiness is not in your best interest.
  c) No potentially disruptive activities (including the use of electronic devices like cell/handphones, smoking and eating in class) are allowed during class time.
  d) Unwarranted absences or any other disrespectful behaviors that affect the learning conditions of this course will result in the lowering of your grade. The Professor reserves the right to publicly address students whose behavior disrupts the learning environment and to arrange for disciplinary action according to policies set by the university.

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e) On the other hand, active participation and punctual attendance may contribute to the bonus mark-up of your grade at the end of the semester. Students are expected to show respect for the Professor and one another regardless of opinion, value, cultural, and other group differences. Students should give one another equal opportunity to express opinions, experiences, and ideas. All students should be supportive of a cooperative learning environment.

Emergency: The Professor may excuse certain absences such as those authorized by the University administration for participation in athletics and personal emergencies. Proof for excused absences must be documented within one week of the absence and must clearly state that the emergency required that the student miss the course on the date and at the time of the absence. No assignment will be accepted beyond one week past the due date without prior written consent from the instructor. No assignments will be accepted after the final paper.

Religious Observation and School Excused Activities: Students who miss class for these reasons are responsible for contacting the Professor to pick up returned assignments and to review class announcements. It is their responsibility to obtain class notes from other students. Students who miss class work as a result of their participation in a religious observation or school excused activity will be allowed to complete these activities or substitute activities on an alternative date. Contact the Professor at least one week prior to these absences to reschedule activities. Assignments should be submitted prior to the absence.

Grievances: Students with concerns or questions about assignment grading should address those grievances to the Professor in memo form within one week of receiving the grade. The graded assignment should accompany the memo. The Professor will consider the concern and respond or request a meeting with the student to discuss the matter. If a student feels that a correct response was marked incorrectly on a paper, the student may submit a written case for his/her answer. This case should include evidence supporting the student’s response from the text or lecture materials. Other concerns may be discussed with the Professor during regularly scheduled office hours, or by appointment.

Drop Policy: Students may drop the course with written approval of the course director through the date specified in the current schedule of classes. After this date, students with extreme emergencies may withdraw from the course by filing a written appeal and written permission from the Professor with school advising office.

Special-Student Resources: A variety of services are available to students who need special accommodations for success in this class. These students should contact the Professor during the first week of class.

Academic Dishonesty:
In the “Student Academic Integrity Policy” manual, ASU defines “Plagiarism” [as] using another’s words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another’s work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.” You can find this definition at: http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm#definitions

Academic dishonesty, including inappropriate collaboration, will not be tolerated. There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty, including failure for the course, and for the program of study.

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Course Calendar (subject to change)

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<th>Date</th>
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| Aug 29<sup>th</sup> | Course Introduction  
*Overview of the aims and requirements of this course; including an introduction to the basic issues, concepts and cross cutting themes as well as this semester’s interpretative community.* |
| Sept 5<sup>th</sup> | Rear view Mirror- Historical perspectives |
| Sept 12<sup>th</sup> | Growing up digital: Mediatization, Mediation and Hyperconnectivity |
| Sept 19<sup>th</sup> | Participatory & Convergence Culture, Transmediation |
| Sept 26<sup>th</sup> | (Dis)connections, Creative renewal and Sustainability |
| Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> | Identity and (re)presentations of self  
*Book review due  
*Email paper, in word document format, 12 point font, double-spaced, 3000 words maximum, by 8 a.m. Be prepared to present your review to the rest of the class.* |
| Oct 10<sup>th</sup> | Branding, Celebrification and (Im)material Labor |
| Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> | Authority, Power and Legitimation |
| Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> | Community Norms, Trust and Relationships |
| Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> | Term paper proposal discussion  
*Students are to come prepared to class to discuss their term paper proposal. Please bring a 1-2 page summary of your proposed idea for the term paper, and a listing of 8-15 references that you are considering for the paper.* |
| Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> | Civic Engagement and Political Communication |
| Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> | Transnationalism and Global connections |
| Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> | No in-class meeting |
| Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> | Open topic and/or Methods, Big data, Ethics |
| Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> | Paper due  
*Email paper, in word document format, 12 point font, double-spaced, up to 5,000, by 5:00pm. Expect a 24-48 hour confirmatory receipt.* |
| Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> | Presentation |