

COMM 370 Special Topics Psychology Of Media Technology

Online Asynchronous

Instructor

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Office hours

Via Zoom or in-person by appointment*

**Making an appointment in advance will ensure that we'll have enough time to talk.*

COURSE INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, media and information technologies have a significant impact on virtually every domain of our lives. Although it may be difficult to discern, the way these technologies influence our thoughts and behavior is the product of careful and deliberate design based on decades of socio-psychological research findings. This course aims to open your eyes to the socio-psychological mechanisms and principles that underlie our engagement with these technologies (e.g., attention, motivation, and memory) and the processes by which they influence our emotions, thoughts, and behavior. Through class projects, you will build a skillset to utilize this knowledge to, for example, enhance people's well-being, facilitate learning, or achieve strategic communication goals. Students who successfully complete this goal should:

1. Be critically aware of the effects of media and information technologies on yourself and others, as well as society as a whole, as well as their ethical considerations.
2. Be able to make connections between everyday media use experiences and the theoretical explanations or concepts covered in the class.
3. Be able to apply the knowledge in social and psychological principles to the design of technology to achieve a strategic communication goal.

COURSE MATERIALS

All required reading and viewing materials for the week will be uploaded on Sakai on Mondays. Students will need their Loyola UVID and password to access some content through LUC libraries. Students are responsible for checking Sakai regularly for any additional reading or viewing materials assigned for the week, and complete related weekly assignments to successfully pass the class. The course content will be drawn from a variety of resources as well as the following three books:

1. Persuasive Technology: Using computers to change what we think and do By B.J.Fogg (Available for free as an eBook through LUC libraries)
2. Design for the Mind: Seven psychological principles of persuasive design By V. S. Yocco (Available for free as an eBook through LUC Libraries)
3. Online Influence: Boost your results with proven behavioral science By B. Wouters & J. Groen (Available on Amazon or elsewhere)

COURSE ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

<i>Type</i>	<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>
<i>Individual</i>	Participation and Professionalism	100 points
<i>Individual</i>	Weekly Quizzes and Discussions	200 points
<i>Individual</i>	Discussion Leader	150 points
<i>Group</i>	App Analysis Project (Blog Post or Presentation)	200 points
<i>Group</i>	Persuasive Technology Project*	Total 350 points
	- Project Plan (Report)	50 points
	- Midterm Project (Report)	150 points
	- Final Project (Report and Presentation)	150 points
	TOTAL (*Group project score will be weighted based on the peer evaluations)	1,000 Points

Participation and Professionalism

Your regular attendance in class and the attitudes you approach class with will account for 10% of your final grade. This 10% is not given, but it is earned starting from zero points. Since this is an asynchronous online class, your diligence and regular participation will be critical in determining your success in the class. Your basic duty as a student is to complete assigned viewing and reading materials on time, turn in assignments on due dates, and actively participate in class discussions. On Sakai, the instructor will check each student's progress with assigned class materials.

Also, it is my responsibility and intent to create a class where each and everyone's unique value and integrity are appreciated and well respected, regardless of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability, age, socioeconomic status, and cultural background. This principle applies to both the professor (myself) and all members of the class. I urge you to be always considerate, respectful, and caring to your classmates. If your utterance or behavior is deemed inappropriate and disrespectful to any member of this class, including myself, it will result in a heavy deduction from the participation and professionalism score, or you may be asked to leave the class.

Weekly Quizzes and Discussions

There will be weekly quizzes and reflective discussions on course materials to ensure that everyone is keeping up with the course progress on time. The weekly quizzes and discussions will account for 15% of your final grade (150 points). The quizzes will focus on building accurate and clear knowledge and understanding of socio-psychological theories or concepts covered in the lectures or readings. The weekly discussions will prompt you to contemplate social issues related to media and information technologies and share your critical thoughts on these issues through engaging and candid conversations with your classmates. Be sure to check Sakai and your email for more detailed guidelines on these weekly assignments.

Discussion Leaders

Each student will choose two weeks to lead class discussions. Each week, two or three discussion leaders will conduct additional research on the topic of the week and share relevant reading or viewing materials that will help deepen our understanding of the subject. They will also write a short reflective essay on the week's topic (1 page, 400-600 words) and pose 2-3 discussion questions for the class. Other students will engage in the class discussion by leaving comments and responding to or expanding upon the discussion questions.

App Analysis Project (Group)

In this project, students will gather as a group to select and try an app designed to facilitate behavioral changes, such as workouts, learning, productivity, mindfulness, etc., for a couple of weeks. Afterward, you will analyze the socio-psychological principles applied in designing this app, based on your experience of using it. Your group will then compose a detailed blog post or deliver a 10-12 minute presentation about the chosen app's functions and design, your assessment of the app, and ideas for its improvement. More detailed guidelines for completing this assignment will be provided on Sakai.

Persuasive Technology Project (Group)

In this project, you will conceptualize and design a persuasive technology with a strategic communication goal over the course of the semester. Examples may include a VR environment for a brand or non-profit, an AI-enabled chatbot for various purposes, or a mobile application for health or time management. The final project should demonstrate your in-depth understanding of the socio-psychological principles applied to the design of persuasive technology (e.g., user needs, motivations, and emotions) as well as other considerations for effective design and user experience. The project consists of three parts: 1) project ideation, 2) consumer research and conceptualization, and 3) the final product prototype. More detailed information about this assignment will be provided in class and on Sakai.

1) Project Ideation

You will submit an initial one-page ideation for the project (500 to 700 words) during Week 4. Your task is to consider use needs, outline your strategic communication goal for the design project, specify the technology type (e.g., mobile app, VR environment, robot, etc.), and draft your plan for researching additional information needed for the subsequent steps. This ideation report will be shared among the class, and as a class, we will share and provide constructive feedback on each group's ideas.

2) Midterm Project: Consumer Research and Conceptualization

The goal of this midterm project is for you to make meaningful progress with the final project by mid-semester. In this assignment, your group will develop and elaborate on the initial ideation. You will submit a 3-4 pages long report (either in Word format or presentation format; 1500-2000 words) that includes user and market research, user scenarios, and task flows. This assignment should demonstrate your reflection and application of the socio-psychological principles covered in class.

3) Final Project: Final Prototype

For the final, you will complete the remainder of the project and present it to the class. The final report will be 3-4 pages long and will include design prototypes, expected effects/results/outcomes, and user evaluation agendas. You will present the final project to the class (less than 20 minutes long presentation, either synchronous or asynchronous), and other classmates will provide feedback on your final outcomes.

GRADING SCHEMES

A	940+	C+	770 to 790
A-	900 to 930	C	740 to 760
B+	870 to 890	C-	700 to 730
B	840 to 860	D+	670 to 690
B-	800 to 830	D	640 to 660
		F	630 or below

WEEKLY PLANS

** Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes in the course schedule and class assignments for the good of the class. Students should attend class, and check Sakai and your email regularly to make sure they are aware of any changes.*

Week	Topics	Assignments & Due Dates
Week1 (8/28-9/1)	Introduction to the course and get to know each other	Syllabus Quiz Due by Friday (9/1) at 11:59PM
Week 2 (9/4-9/8)	An Overview: What do technologies have to do with changing our minds and behavior? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasive Technology - Psychological principles that underlie media and communication technologies and their applications 	Weekly Q & D Choose Discussion Leader Weeks by Wednesday (9/6) at 5:00PM
Week 3 (9/11-9/15)	Social media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does social media influence our life? - Psychological processes involved in the design and use of social media 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #1
Week 4 (9/18-9/22)	Social media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Algorithm and attention economy - Digital detox practice <p>Online dating apps or meet-up, bumble bff, etc... -> meeting people through online platforms</p>	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #2 Project Ideation by Friday (9/22) at 11:59PM
Week 5 (9/25-9/29)	Mobile apps for a better life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - B.J. Fogg's Behavior Model - Apps for mental and physical health 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #3 Group/Individual Meetings by request
Week 6 (10/2-10/6)	Mobile apps for a better life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apps for learning - Gamification - Data and surveillance (Quantified Self) 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #4 Education apps, time management apps etc.
Week 7 (10/9-10/13)	Happy Fall Break ☺ – No Class	App Analysis Project by Friday (10/13) at 11:59PM Group/Individual Meetings by request
Week 8 (10/16-10/20)	Trust and credibility in online environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand communication: How to foster people's liking and trust in your brand and products online - Mis/disinformation 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #5 App Analysis Project Feedback by Friday (10/20) at 11:59PM

Week 9 (10/23-10/27)	Practices for Midterm Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Midterm project - User & Market Analysis - User Scenarios and Task Flow 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #6
Week 10 (10/30-11/3)	Virtual Reality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How VR can change people's minds and behavior - The Proteus Effect - Experience VR (TBD) 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #7 Midterm Project Due by Friday (11/3) at 11:59PM Group/Individual Meetings by request
Week 11 (11/6-11/10)	The Autonomous Machines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AI, chatbots, robots, virtual humans and more - How do we communicate with autonomous machines? 	Weekly Q & D Discussion Leader #8
Week 12 (11/13-11/17)	Practices for Final Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prototyping interfaces for a persuasive technology - Guideline for user evaluation tests - Guideline for effective and constructive peer-review 	Schedule group meetings on W13 for Final Project by Friday (11/17) 11:59PM
Week 13 (11/20-11/24)	HAPPY THANKSGIVING ☺ - No Class	
Week 14 (11/27-12/1)	Group Meetings with the instructor for Final Project (Zoom or In-Person)	Share your progress with the final project with the instructor by Monday (11/27) 11:59PM
Week 15 (12/5-12/9)	PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PROJECTS	Final Project Presentation Due in Class
Week 16 (12/12-12/16)	SUBMIT YOUR FINAL PROJECT (No Final Exams)	

OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES

EMAIL AND COMMUNICATION

I will try to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week. If you contact me during the weekend or holidays, it may take more time for me to get back to you. Although I will try my best to respond to your email as soon as I am able, if you have not received any response during this period, please feel free to approach us again to ensure your communication was received. Also, Students are responsible for any information distributed via email and/or Sakai. Please check Sakai and your Loyola email accounts regularly to stay up-to-date on announcements.

LATE WORK POLICY

Life happens. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to plan ahead to complete your work by the due date. You are expected to turn in all assignments on their assigned due dates and times. If you think you cannot submit the work by the assigned time, make sure that you communicate it with me in advance. Late work will only be accepted in certain situations, including but not limited to illness or family emergencies. If an assignment is turned in late without prior communication with me, it will receive a zero.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Loyola University Chicago, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Failing to meet the following standard is a serious violation of personal honesty and the academic ideals that bind the University into a learning community. These standards apply to both individual and group assignments. Individuals working in a group may be held responsible if one of the group members has violated one or more of these standards.

1. Students may not plagiarize.
2. Students may not submit the same work for credit for more than one assignment (known as self-plagiarism).
3. Students may not fabricate data.
4. Students may not collude.
5. Students may not cheat.
6. Students may not facilitate academic misconduct.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the instructor
- Providing information to another student during an examination
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without the consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted

- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. Plagiarism involves taking and using specific words, phrases, or ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources. Students may not:

- Submit material copied from a published or unpublished source.
- Submit material that is not cited appropriately.
- Use another person's unpublished work or examination material.
- Allow or pay another party to prepare or write an assignment.
- Purchase, acquire, or use a pre-written assignment for credit.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is an act of personal and professional courtesy, as well as intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism.

Your assignments will be checked for originality using academic honesty software. If you turn in an assignment that contains plagiarized material, you will receive zero points. This is *non-negotiable*.

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes without the expressed prior permission of all instructors will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The use of AI language models, such as ChatGPT, for the creation of written assignments is strictly discouraged and considered a form of plagiarism. While AI can be a valuable tool for research and generating ideas, it is essential to understand that using AI-generated content without proper attribution or without contributing significant original thought constitutes academic dishonesty. Students are expected to engage actively in the writing process, exercise critical thinking, and develop their own ideas and arguments in all assignments. Any instances of using AI-generated content without proper citation and original input will be treated as a violation of academic integrity, and appropriate actions will be taken in accordance with the university's policies on plagiarism.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course.

All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the chairperson of the department involved, and to the Dean of School of Communication. The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances.

The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans. Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations. (The School of Communication policy is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.)

Please refer to the following sources for further information.

- <https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg.shtml>
- <http://www.plagiarism.org/>

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All lectures, notes, PowerPoints, and other instructional materials in this course are the intellectual property of the professor. As a result, they may not be distributed or shared in any manner, either on paper or virtually without my written permission. Lectures may not be recorded without my written consent; when consent is given, those recordings may be used for review only and may not be distributed. Recognizing that your work, too, is your intellectual property, I will not share or distribute your work in any form without your written permission.

LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, all personnel of institutions of higher education are classified as "mandated reporters" who must report to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) if the reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a minor under 18 years of age known to the reporter in his or her official or professional capacity may be abused (physically or sexually) or neglected.

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including professors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of Loyola University Chicago community members and others. If you would like to talk about issues that are

threatening your own health and safety in a more confidential setting, I encourage you to make an appointment with the [LUC Health Center](#).

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student with a disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from the Student Accessibility Center to the instructor.

The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH CHILDREN

Students who are the caretakers, guardians, or parents of children are allowed to bring their children with them to class in the event of an emergency, if childcare plans fall through, etc.

Please let me know ahead of time if you will be bringing your child/children to class and also sit near the door in the event that the student needs to leave the classroom to tend to the child/children. If the child/children are using devices like phones, tablets, etc., to entertain them during class time, I also ask that the student who is their caretaker/guardian/parent to make sure to provide headphones as to not disturb the rest of the class.