

Michael L. Kent, Ph.D.

Gaylord College

Journalism and Mass Comm. 4970/5970: New Technology in Public Relations

Aug. 20–Dec. 13 | T/Th 9–10:15 a.m. | Gaylord Hall 2020

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Course Description

New Technology in Public Relations will explore the role that mediated technologies like the Internet/WWW, Blogs, RSS, and social networking play in professional practice. The approach to the course will be both applied and critical. That is, you will learn how to identify the strengths and weakness of the media explored, as well as how to use the media effectively as a communication professional. We will also examine several of the critiques of technology and explore the limitations. New Technology in Public Relations will also explore issues of “unintended consequences,” “extensions,” accessibility, and what you need to do to prepare yourself for new technology in years to come. Attention will be given to writing and designing effective content for the various media examined.

Objectives

- To understand new communication technologies.
- To learn how to critically evaluate new technologies.
- To learn how write/design mediated communication content.
- To learn how to monitor mediated content and improve professional practices.
- To become proficient with new communication technologies.
- To become an expert in at least two mediated communication areas.

Miscellaneous

- ***Come up with a method to help me remember your name (start with a sign).***
- *Having even one spelling error will result in a zero for an assignment.*
- All readings and reading questions are due on the date indicated.
- Missed exams cannot be made up for any reason.
- Exams may only be taken early with prior permission.
- Late assignments will be discounted 10% per *calendar day*.
- If you do not have an assignment ready to turn in, don't skip class.
- Come see me in office hours with questions or for feedback before assignments are due. Office hours are there for you; you pay for them so use them.
- Familiarize yourself with Associated Press (AP) style and follow it for all assignments.

Required Texts (Plus Readings TBA)

Bagdikian, B. H. (2004). *The new media monopoly*. Boston: Beacon Press. ISBN: 0807061875

Levinson, P. (1998). *The soft edge: A natural history and future of the information revolution*. New York: Rutledge. ISBN: 0415197724

McLuhan, M. (1999). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. ISBN: 0262631598

Postman, N. (1993). *Technopoly: The surrender of culture to technology*. New York: Vintage Books. ISBN: 0679745408

Class Policies

Formatting and Writing Expectations

Public relations is characterized by effective writing. As a result, professional writing standards are expected on all assignments. Professional standards include: correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and careful proofreading. No spelling errors are allowed. *Having even one spelling error will result in a zero for the assignment.* Documents (papers, handouts, etc.) prepared for *this* class should be double-spaced (27 lines-per-page), have one-inch margins all around, and be written in Bookman or Bookman Old Style 11 pt. **Never use** Arial, Helvetica, Times or Times New Roman, for any assignment in my class. I will not accept it and your assignment will be late when I send you back to fix it. For your Lab sections, the font rule does not apply but the others do.

Attendance Policy

Oklahoma University's attendance policy reads as follows: A student is responsible for the content of any course in which he or she is officially enrolled. The establishment of a specific policy concerning class attendance requirements, as well as announced and unannounced examinations, is the responsibility of the individual instructor. In other words, having an attendance policy is the prerogative of an instructor.

In the business world, attendance is an important aspect of professionalism. Indeed, "just showing up" is sometimes the most important aspect of job performance and can mean the difference between a promotion or a layoff. Additionally, attribution theory tells us that even the best employees/professors/students in the world will be perceived as slackers if they do not come to work/class. Getting all As on tests/assignments is necessary but not sufficient. Attendance is also a required aspect of class just like doing the reading and taking tests.

Attendance Policy: You may miss one week of classes without penalty. If you miss a third class (on a two day a week schedule), your final grade will be reduced by 5%. If you miss a fourth class your final grade will be reduced by 10%. *Missing a fifth class will result in a failing grade for the course. There are no excused absences.* Being sick, getting in an automobile accident, having your car break down, going on a job interview, attending an extracurricular event or conference, going to a funeral, getting arrested, etc., will not be excused. *Coming late or leaving early 2 times equals an absence.*

NB: If you plan to miss a day because of a religious holiday, you need to tell me early in the semester what day you will miss. The day *before* a religious holiday is unacceptable. All religions know the dates of religious holidays several months in advance.

The only other activities that I will excuse, besides religious holidays, are jury duty (and only if you are on a jury—some notice from the court will be required), and some *academic* conferences.

For all other reasons that you might miss class, be sure that you have not used your allotted absences so that you can afford to miss a class with no penalty when you need one.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the unauthorized or inappropriate use of the words or ideas of others. Plagiarism occurs when written or spoken material is borrowed (even from oneself), in whole or in part, and passed off as original by a writer or speaker. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, presenting someone else's ideas, speech, presentation, essay, book review, or news release as original. Plagiarism also includes failing to document or cite the source of word-for-word or paraphrased material in oral presentations or written assignments. *It is my policy to pur-*

sue plagiarism vigorously, to fail students who plagiarize for the entire class, and to report cases of plagiarism to the university administration.

The University is an academic community of scholars. Academic dishonesty is a very serious offense against the integrity of this community and will not be tolerated. All academic work submitted by you is assumed to be your own *original work* and to contain your own thought, research, and self-expression. Work that borrows the ideas, organization, or wording, from others must be properly acknowledged. Similarly, work that was conducted for another class should not be passed off as original.

Additionally, anytime a student or professional attempts to deceive another by pretending to do work, or take credit for work that s/he did not actually complete, including changing the font size or style, triple spacing, claiming to have submitted an assignment on time that the professor must have “lost” etc., s/he is engaging in academic dishonesty or “cheating.” What you are attempting to do is no different from copying from someone else’s test. The consequences of this will be just as serious as plagiarism.

NB: Many students are caught each semester and failed for plagiarism. If even one student in one hundred cheats, the number is too high. For students planning to graduate, plagiarizing an assignment is quite possibly the stupidest thing they could do. Do not engage in plagiarism in any form. If you are ever unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, ask me or someone else in the department. At the very least, send an e-mail out to me at two in the morning with your question to CYA and explain what you will do to try to be accurate with your citations. When you enter the business world, plagiarism will not only get you fired, but also may ruin your career and get you sued, depending upon what ideas/content you steal.

There is a very simple rule to follow in order to avoid plagiarism and never get in trouble. **Cite everything** that is not your own words or idea. If you know that someone else said it, wrote it, or thought it, anywhere, even someone at a party, cite the source. Do this and you will never get in trouble for plagiarism.

OU’s ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENTS

All work submitted for this course must be your work. All sources used for information must be properly cited. Students should adhere to the *A Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity* as defined by the office of the Senior Vice President and Provost at <http://www.ou.edu/provost/pronew/content/integritymenu.html>:

“Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication and fraud. *Cheating* is “the use of unauthorized materials, methods, or information in any academic exercise, including improper collaboration.” *Plagiarism* is “the representation of the words and ideas of another as one’s own.” Examples include: excluding others or claiming the work of others as one’s own; presentation of the same material as original in more than one publication; inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work published, and submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors.” *Fabrication* includes “the falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.” *Fraud* includes “the falsification, forgery, or misrepresentation of academic work, including the resubmission of work performed in one class for credit in another class” (OU Faculty Handbook, 2005).

Grading Scale

A+	98–100	B+	87–99	C+	77–79	D+	67–69	F	0–59
A	93–97	B	83–86	C	73–76	D	63–66		
A–	90–92	B–	80–82	C–	70–72	D–	60–62		

Assignments

Assignments	Points
Participation	20%
Presentation I (...)	15%
Presentation II (...)	15%
Exam I	10%
Exam II	15%
Research Paper (10+ pages, 10+ “scholarly” sources—no Wiki, Web sites, etc.)	25%
Total	100%

Journ. and Mass Comm. 3433: Public Relations Pub.

Tentative Course Calendar

Date	Day	Activity/Reading	Assignment Due
Aug. 21	1	Read: Begin reading Bagdikian Overview, Introductions, etc.	
Aug. 23	2	Read: continue reading Bagdikian	
Aug. 28	3	Read: continue reading Bagdikian	
Aug. 30	4	Read: continue reading Bagdikian	
Sept. 4	5	Read: continue reading Bagdikian	
Sept. 6	6	Read: finish reading Bagdikian	
Sept. 11	7	Read: Begin reading McLuhan	
Sept. 13	8	Read: continue reading McLuhan	
Sept. 18	9	Read: continue reading McLuhan	
Sept. 20	10	Read: continue reading McLuhan	
Sept. 25	11	Read: Finish reading McLuhan	
Sept. 27	12	Read: TBA	
Oct. 2	13	Read: TBA	
Oct. 4	14	Read: TBA	
Oct. 9	15 Exam I	
Oct. 11	16	Read: Presentation I	
Oct. 16	17	Read: TBA	
Oct. 18	18	Read: Begin reading Postman	
Oct. 23	19	Read: continue reading Postman	
Oct. 25	20	Read: continue reading Postman	
Oct. 30	21	Read: continue reading Postman	
Nov. 1	22	Read: finish reading Postman	
Nov. 6	23	Read: TBA	
Nov. 8†	24	Read: TBA	
Nov. 13	25	Read: TBA	
Nov. 15	26	Read: NCA	
Nov. 20	27	Read: Begin reading Levinson	
Nov. 22	28	Read: Thanksgiving	
Nov. 27	29	Read: continue reading Levinson	
Nov. 29	30	Read: continue reading Levinson	
Dec. 4	31	Read: finish reading Levinson	
Dec. 8	32	Read: Presentation II	
Dec. 11	33 Exam II	

Bagdikian Levinson McLuhan Postman

Get Out of Jail Free

This coupon entitles the bearer to one of the following (check box):

- Eliminate or reduce a late penalty on one written assignment (depending upon the severity of the infraction).
- Eliminate or reduce a time penalty on one speech/presentation (depending upon the severity of the infraction).
- Rewrite one assignment (not already an A- or above) within one week of it being returned.
- Make one "deal" with the instructor.



Request (be Specific)

This card *may not* be used to:

- Change the date or time of an exam.
- Obtain a makeup exam.
- Obtain additional absences.
- Eliminate an attendance penalty.
- Eliminate a late-to/early-from class penalty.
- Receive credit for work done in another class.

This offer is subject to change without notice. Coupons must be redeemed at the time of use. This offer is non-transferable and carries no cash value. This offer does not apply to class penalties not listed in this document. The professor reserves the right to revoke this coupon at any time. Void where prohibited by law.

Name (print)

Signature

Date