Using Communication Technology at Work

CMS 346
Unique # 07547
Fall 2016
CMA 3.124
11-11:50pm, MWF

Instructor:	Dr. Jeffrey Treem
Office Hours:	Mondays & Wednesdays, 10-10:45 am, CMA 7.122A – or by appointment
Contact:	jtreem@austin.utexas.edu

Overview

How do people use email, instant messaging, knowledge management systems, social media, and other communication technologies in the contemporary workplace? This course examines how communication technologies both help and hinder workplace communication. We examine theory, practical applications, key scholarship, and current empirical research. There is a heavy focus on using case studies that provide context for learning how to thrive in contemporary, often global for-profit and non-profit organizations. In addition to the core workplace technology tools covered in the class, each student will choose a unique communication technology tool to research for the course. This is a major research project that includes researching scholarly and popular press literature. By the end of the semester, students will have a robust understanding of the vast options for communicating with others at work.

Specific Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Identify key theories, scholars, and major research findings concerning workplace Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use.
- Understand practical issues in using email, PowerPoint, and other common workplace communication technologies and evaluate others' use of these workplace tools.
- Critically evaluate their personal ICT use.
- Better understand how to conduct and read research on workplace ICTs.
- Synthesize scholarly and practical literature on one specific workplace ICT and create a final presentation that comprehensively applies course knowledge.
- Feel more prepared to enter the workforce and understand ICT use.

Text and Readings

- D. Shipley & W. Schwalbe (2007). *Send: The Essential Guide to Email for Office and Home.* Knopf. You may also have the more recent version of the book.
- Additional articles for each week will be available on the course's Canvas site (http://courses.utexas.edu)

Class Format

Classes will take one *of three forms:*

1. Discussion – On these days the instructor will present material to the class and facilitate interactive discussion related to that week's topic. Discussions will cover key points emerging from the week's reading assignments and students should come to class having read the material and prepared for discussion.
2. Class Activities – On these days students will engage in an interactive in-class assignment. This will often take the form of a hypothetical organizational situation. Students will assume the role of organizational members and be asked to determine appropriate actions.
3. Guest Speakers – Occasionally, an expert on social media and organizations will visit the class (either in-person or virtually) to discuss a relevant topic.

Tentative Course Schedule

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes will be communicated clearly, are not unusual, and should be expected.

Date	Class Topic	Reading (to be done *BEFORE* class)	Assignment
WEEK 1			
Wed 8/24	Introduction: Review Class Goals and Expectations		
Fri 8/26	*Discussion:* Overview of Workplace Communication Technologies		
WEEK 2			
Mon 8/29	*Discussion:* Role of ICTs in the Workplace	1. Zuboff	"Determinism in the News" Introduced

Date	Class Topic	Reading (to be done *BEFORE* class)	Assignment
Wed 8/31	*Discussion:* Generational Differences in ICT Use	1. Wright 2. Salkowitz	
Fri 9/2	*Discussion:* Media Choice		
WEEK 3			
Mon 9/5	NO CLASS: Labor Day		
Wed 9/7	*Discussion:* Media Choice	1. Narratives, Ch. 1 2. Turner	"Cutting-Edge Updates" Begin
Fri 9/9	*Class Activity*: Media Choice		"Determinism in the News" Due
WEEK 4			
Mon 9/12	*Discussion:* Diffusion of Innovations	1. Narratives, Ch. 3	
Wed 9/14	*Discussion:* Diffusion of Innovations /Technology Adoptions	1. Knight	
Fri 9/16	*Discussion:* Impression Management	1. Narratives, Ch. 5	
WEEK 5			
Mon 9/19	*Discussion:* Impression Management	1. Walther	
Wed 9/21	*Class Activity:* Impression Management		
Fri 9/23	*Discussion:* Credibility	1. Narratives, Ch. 2	
WEEK 6			
Mon 9/26	*Discussion:* Credibility		"Are You Hirable?" Introduced
Wed 9/28	*Discussion:* Multitasking	1. Pattison 2. Claypool	
Fri 9/30	*Class Activity:* Multitasking		
WEEK 7			
Mon 10/3	Guest Speaker		

Date	Class Topic	Reading (to be done *BEFORE* class)	Assignment
Wed 10/5	*Discussion:* Multicommunicating		
Fri 10/7	*Discussion:* Multicommunicating	1. Turner 2. Stephens	"Are You Hirable?" Due
WEEK 8			
Mon 10/10	Midterm Review		
Wed 10/12	*Class Activity*: Applied Midterm Review		
Fri 10/14	*EXAM 1*		
WEEK 9			
Mon 10/17	Introduction of Research Project and Discussion of Research Process		
Wed 10/19	*Discussion:* Email Use	1. Send: Introduction, Ch.1 & 5	
Fri 10/21	*Discussion:* Email Use		
WEEK 11			
Mon 10/24	*Class Activity*: Email Use	1. Send: Ch. 2, 3, 4 & Appendix	"Explain Your Media Use" Introduced
Wed 10/26	*Discussion:* PowerPoint and Presentations		
Fri 10/28	*Discussion:* PowerPoint and Presentations	1. Tufte 2. Gaskins	
WEEK 12			
Mon 10/31	*Discussion:* Social Media in the Workplace (external)		
Wed 11/2	*Discussion:* Social Media in the Workplace (internal)	1. McAfee	"Practice Annotation" Introduced
Fri 11/4	Guest Speaker		"Explain Your Media Use" Due

Date	Class Topic	Reading (to be done *BEFORE* class)	Assignment
WEEK 13			
Mon 11/7	*Discussion:* Meetings and Communication Technology Inside of Organizations	1. Wharton 2. Chudoba	"24 Hours of Comm. Tech Turned Off" Introduced
Wed 11/9	*Discussion:* Meetings and Communication Technology		
Fri 11/11	NO CLASS – Project Work Day		"Practice Annotation" Due
WEEK 14			
Mon 11/14	*Discussion:* Distributed Work	1. Kurkland 2. Leonardi	
Wed 11/16	*Discussion:* Distributed Work		
Fri 11/18	*Class Activity/Exam Review*		
WEEK 15			
Mon 11/21	*EXAM 2*		
Wed 11/23	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING		
Fri 11/25	NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING		
WEEK 16			
Mon 11/28	Class Presentations		"24 Hours of Comm. Tech Turned Off" Due
Wed 11/30	Class Presentations		
Fri 12/2	Class Presentations		
WEEK 17			
Mon 12/5	Class Presentations		Final Paper Due

Grading

Students will be assessed on four different criteria:

1. Participation (10% of class grade, 40 points) – This consists of active and meaningful participation in class. Participation includes participating in discussions, coming prepared with questions, and being an active member of class activities. We understand that not everyone is equally comfortable speaking up in class, however it is important that each student find ways to participate.

2. Individual Assignments (25 % of class grade; 2 assignments are 2.5% each; 4 assignments are 5% each) – There are six assignments over the course of the semester (additional details are provided below). More detailed instruction and expectations will be provided for each assignment. Students' assignments should be posted to Canvas by **midnight on the due date listed on the syllabus**.

3. Exams (40% of class grade, 80 points each) – The exams will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions that will ask students to apply concepts from lectures and readings that have been discussed to that point in the semester.

4. Research Project and Presentation (25% of class grade, 100 points) – This assignment will ask students to individually research a communication technology and prepare a class presentation to share findings.

Summary of Course Assignments

The following are summaries. See Canvas (Assignments) and in-class discussion for details.

Workplace Technologies Research Project (100 points)
Assume your manager has asked you to research and report on a communication technology that your company is considering purchasing or implementing. Choose a communication technology used in organizations today. You might want to apply this technology to a particular industry that interests you. Choose any technology where you can address communication issues within the workplace. If you choose a technology discussed in class, be sure you offer fresh information. You will be required to review the scholarly and popular press literature about this technology. Your final submission consists of an executive summary/memo, a presentation, interview transcripts, and annotated bibliography.

Determinism in the News (20 points total)
Based on our discussion of of perspectives regarding technology use and its effects, search for a deterministic media portrayal of a workplace technology and write up an analysis of the message provided, speculating on why you think the technology is viewed in that manner.

Cutting Edge Update (10 points total)
Throughout the course we cover various communication technology topics. On one occasion, you will be responsible for bringing a popular (or scholarly) press article to class and contributing to our discussion on that day. You will also post a copy of the article in Canvas before class starts. I will ask you to sign up for a cutting edge update that interest you.

Are You Hirable? (20 points)
You will do a self-assessment of your online presence and create a plan for how to manage it.

Practice Annotation (10 points)
Find a scholarly article and summarize it using the annotated bibliography format. We will provide detailed feedback valuable in constructing the annotated bibliography for your workplace technologies research project.

Explaining Your Own Use of Media Paper (20 points)
Apply the theories we learn about ICT use to your own communication technology behaviors.

24 Hours of Comm. Tech Turned Off Paper (20 points)
You will go 24 hours with NO access to communication technology. You will keep field notes and link your experiences to class readings, and write up reflections.

Assessments

Cutting Edge Update	10 points
Practice Annotation	10 points
Determinism in the News	20 points
Are You Hirable?	20 points
Explaining Your Own Media Use	20 points
24 Hours of Tech Turned Off	20 points
Exam 1	80 points
Exam 2	80 points
Workplace Technologies Research Project	100 points
Participation	40 points
TOTAL:	**400 possible points**

Grading procedures

- Grades will be posted on the course's Canvas site. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that posted grades are accurate.

- Late papers will not be accepted. If there are extenuating circumstances, please discuss these with us *before* the assignment is due. Response papers should be submitted via Canvas by **midnight on the day they are due.** Due dates will be listed on Canvas.

- Around the mid-point of the semester each student will receive an indication of their participation grade to that point, along with comments about how to improve or maintain participation.

- For all assignments students will be provided with guidelines that indicate the required elements. These guidelines will be used as rubrics to provide assessments.

- Every effort will be made to provide clear rationale for assessments on all graded assignments. However, should a student wish to dispute a grade, it must be done within two weeks after the grade has been provided.

- Final grades will be determined based on the aggregate of the weighted percentage of points earned for each of the five assessment criteria in the course. Numerical grades will correspond to the following letter grades for the course.

Percentage	Grade
92.01+	A
90-92	A-
88-89.99	B+
82.01-87.99	B
80-82	B-
78-79.99	C+
72.01-77.99	C
70-72	C-
68-69.99	D+
62.01-67.99	D
60-62	D-
59.99 and below	F

Course Information and Communication

- In this class I use Canvas—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at http://canvas.utexas.edu/ —to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, and to submit and accept assignments. You can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

- Both the instructor and teaching assistant will make every attempt to be responsive to questions, concerns, and inquires from students – and students should feel free to approach us to discuss anything. However, students should not expect immediate responses to emails, and messages sent during evening or weekend hours may not receive as prompt a response.

University Resources and Policies
Disability Services
Any students with a disability may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Academic Integrity
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code:
The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Additional information regarding what constitutes plagiarism can be found here: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_plagiarism.php. Penalties for plagiarism or other violations of the Honor Code may include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

Religious Holy Days
By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students
All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at http://www.utexas.edu/its/help/utmail/1564 .

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)
If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Q drop Policy
The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:
> "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Emergency Evacuation Policy
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire. Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.
- More information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency