Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

CONTENTS

Courses taught

Modality Key: [None] Face-to-Face; *Asynchronous Online; **Synchronous Online; ***Sync/Async Blend Online

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

Fall 2019 – Spring 2021

COMM 025: Introduction to Communication Studies (1 section; 1 section**)
> Description: Course offers a survey overview of the Communication discipline, focusing on four main areas: Rhetoric; Empirical Social Science; Media & Technology; and Critical/Cultural Studies.

COMM 027: Public Speaking (4 lecture sections; 2 lecture sections*)
> Description: Course offers students basic training in effective public speaking. Students form, deliver, and evaluate speeches on civically engaging topics.

COMM 050: Communication Technologies (2 sections, 1 section*, 1 section***)

> Description: Course details theories and applications of communication technologies, focusing on digital media platforms. Students learn critical concepts as well as skills in web design, image and audio editing, and social media.

PACS 001: Pacific Seminar – What is a Good Society? (1 section)
> Description: Course provides a first-year writing experience for all students at University of the Pacific. The course involves significant reading and writing as an introduction to college learning.

COMM 293A: Communication Technologies and Social Change (1 section**)
> Description: This graduate seminar, developed for Spring 2021, examines how communication technologies intersect with social change. Focusing on social justice and race in communication technologies, the seminar trains students in critical, textual, and rhetorical analyses of technologies.

PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

Summer 2013 – Summer 2019

CAS 100A: Effective Speech (9 sections)
>   Description: Course develops effective skills in public speaking. Students form, deliver, and evaluate speeches on civically engaging topics.

CAS 100B: Group Communication (3 sections, 1 section*)
>   Description: Course develops group communication skills through deliberative models of communication and interpersonal communication theories.

CAS 100C: Message Analysis (3 sections*)
>   Description: Course develops skills in public speaking through the emphasis of critique, similar to a basic rhetorical criticism course.

CAS 175: Persuasion and Propaganda (TA, 2 sections)
>   Description: Course teaches the historical development of propaganda in the 20th and 21st centuries.

CAS 215: Argumentation (1 section)
>   Description: Course teaches principles and theories of argumentation, culminating in a debate showcasing student skills.

CAS 395: Forensic Practicum (3 sections)
>   Description: Course provides assessment mechanisms for students participating in speech and debate, including attendance at practices and public debate functions.

Mentorship

University of the Pacific
>   *Advisor for MA Thesis*, Spring 2020
>   >   Andrew Morgan, "Masculinity and Fatherhood Through Procedural Rhetoric in *God of War*

>   *Mentorship of Graduate Teaching Assistants, 2019-2020*
>   >   Provided guidance for new teaching assistants and offered pedagogy-based discussions and workshops. Created a TA training site on Canvas for all department TAs. Mentored MA students Megan Chatelain, Malik Henry, Kelly Hutchison, Bradi Kooyman, Brigid McNally, Andrew Morgan, Jessica Nguyen, Ali Pellegri, Gustavo Rivera, and Mikayla Wagner.

Student Evaluations

Across the range of courses I have taught, student evaluations have been overwhelmingly positive. Students consistently assess me as an engaging, responsive, and effective instructor. They appreciate my enthusiasm, my commitment to a comfortable learning environment, and my direct and helpful feedback. After taking my courses, students have remarked that they

developed helpful knowledge and skills in critical thinking, writing, speaking, argumentation, debate, and civic discourse. Below, I provide summaries and representative examples of student feedback. More thorough metrics, full teaching evaluations, and other materials are available upon request.

Learning Environment

Students have expressed appreciation for my development of a comfortable learning environment and a tight-knit classroom community:

"Jeremy has a way of NEVER making you feel embarrassed for speaking your mind, even if you have an opinion that is different than all others in class. He also has a way of showing reasons and truths about communication and discrimination and what is happening today in comparison to historical communication methods, and broaden your view and understanding of topics. He does this, and also he can share his viewpoint, without sounding condescending or judgmental if you have a different view or understanding. I really enjoyed learning from him, and the others in this class, because he created a safe environment for everyone to share. I will forever have a broader, more tolerant and open mind than I did before I took this class." (COMM 25, F'20, UOP)

"I appreciate how open Jeremy is to new ideas and how he embraces diversity and inclusion in his lecture and his daily life. He supports everyone in a way they need it and encourages people to step out of their comfort zone." (COMM 27, F'19, UOP)

"He was incredibly kind and respectful, and maintained an open mind during discussions while still pushing provocative topics. His assignments and teachings were very helpful and applicable to the class. Overall he made the class enjoyable and helpful to me, and as a student I could tell he genuinely cared about my education." (PACS 001, F'19, UOP)

"Jeremy is a fantastic instructor. He always made sure that everyone understood each thing we learned in class and that everyone was comfortable and up to date. He encouraged discussion in the classroom, even if it was things that were outside the classroom. He created a safe space for learning, discussion, and debate." (CAS 100A, F'18, PSU)

"The strengths of the professor was community. What I mean by this is that it was always an open floor to discuss about each topic, and it was never a wrong answer." (COMM 25, F'19, UOP)

Energy and Passion

Students appreciate my energy and passion, which tend to stimulate their involvement. By centering class discussions and student voices, I create a comfortable and enjoyable classroom environment:

"He is very passionate about public speaking. He always tells us that the purpose of this class is not to just be a good public speaker, but to also use our ability to speak publicly for betterment of society; to make change." (COMM 27, F'19, UOP)

"Very informational, motivational, and enthusiastic. Explained things very well." (COMM 27, F'20, UOP)

"I could tell he loved what he does and it showed through his teaching which helped us absorb it better" (COMM 27, SP'20, UOP)

"Jeremy made a course I was dreading into something that was one of my most enjoyable courses at Penn State. His passion and enthusiasm is infectious and made every class fun and informative. I cannot stress what a difference Jeremy has made in my own public speaking skills and those of my classmates. His teaching style is nothing short of incredible." (CAS 100A, SP'14, PSU)

"He just brought so much energy and ideas to the class that one could not help but enjoy learning the material." (CAS 100A, SU'13, PSU)

"Great teacher. Made me want to come to class. Enthusiasm. 10/10, would take again." (CAS 100A, SU'15, PSU)

Compassion and Care

Students laud my connection with them and my personal care for their well-being:

"He really understands his student's workload and helps them in any way possible! I really appreciated him as a professor!" (COMM 50, SP'21, UOP)

"Rarely I have seen a professor care for students like he has. He provided support for his student, allowed them to adjust to college, allowed them to feel comfortable in the environment, and gave various feedback throughout all assignments. Rarely you have a professor who genuinely cares and helps the student and knows the material he is teaching." (PACS 001, F'19, UOP)

"The professor actually cares about each students well being, making the students want to come to class and engage in discussion. Views students as people with a life outside of school like everyone else." (CAS 215, F'18, PSU)

[Instructor's strengths included] "understanding during this pandemic. always encouraging and supportive, animated and really clued into the material and how it is relevant to today." (COMM 50, F'20, UOP)

"Teacher genuinely cares about the progress of the students and teacher treats students as academics with valuable insight which allows for great class discussions." (CAS 100A, SU'13, PSU)

"[Jeremy] was very responsive and understanding of my circumstances when I needed extensions and was struggling" (PACS 001, F'19, UOP)

Guidance and Feedback

"always available and so helpful – overall, very nice and a fun instructor" (COMM 50, F'20, UOP)

"Jeremy Johnson has always made office hours and encouraged us to come in for help. I have a taken advantage of this and as a result have come out with a good grade in the class. He is willing to help if you spend the time and put effort in to improve." (CAS 100A, F'14, PSU)

"[Jeremy] is always willing to share his experience with us and offer guidance and encouragement when we need it. I dreaded this class initially and even though I did not do as well as I wished I would, the journey has been an enriching one with such a superb teacher as Jeremy." (CAS 100A, SP'14, PSU)

"Jeremy was extremely helpful during this course. It was challenging, especially with some of the terminology, but he was always available to answer questions." (CAS 100C, SU'18, PSU)

"Mr. Johnson encouraged us to reach out on anything and always gave constructive feedback." (CAS 100C, SU'16, PSU)

Teaching Techniques

"Going over each of the readings in class helped to clarify and reinforce the concepts, which is how I learn. What also helped was the fact the exams actually consisted of what we went over in class, not making it 10X harder like some other courses." (CAS 215, F'18, PSU)

"The objectives and flow of the course were very clear from the beginning. Even though we only met once a week, it was easy to stay caught up and stay on track. The discussion in this course was very nice. I enjoyed being able to share ideas and debate with classmates instead of a typical lecture style class." (COMM 25, F'19, UOP)

"He used great media to present his videos! I loved the format of his videos. His presentation slides were fun, the fact that he could stand directly in front of his slides was cool, and he was clearly very enthusiastic about the content. Videos were nice because they freed up the time slot that I had for the discussion lecture scheduled." (COMM 27, F'20, UOP)

"The instructor did a good job of presenting the information in an escalating manner that built on previously given material." (CAS 215, F'18, PSU)

"The lectures broke from the typical lecture style and was interactive. The lectures also included lots of real life examples of what we were learning being put into use." (COMM 27, F'19, UOP)

"The best instructor I have ever met. Great explanation and from the first day I were listening to him as a friend, what helped me during the course." (COMM 27, F'19, UOP)

Summary

I believe that care, compassion, a comfortable learning environment, and clear communication are crucial for student success. I am proud that students highlight these themes in their assessments, as it suggests that I deliver on the teaching philosophy that governs my pedagogy. As any instructor does, I have areas in which I would like to improve—such as better

incorporation of textbook materials—but it is clear that my teaching style and methods are effective in helping students learn and grow.

Peer Evaluations

Dr. Teresa Bergman
Professor and Chair of Communication
University of the Pacific, Fall 2019
COMM 50: Communication Technologies

Selected Comments:

"Dr. Johnson appeared to genuinely care about his students and he began class by asking students about their weekends and he exuded a friendly and approachable demeanor."

"Dr. Johnson asked students to form small groups with people you do not normally work with . . . He worked well with the small groups by going to each group and working with them individually."

"One of Dr. Johnson's strengths was connecting the small group discussions to the assigned reading. He posed a very interesting question to the students that built on the reading, which was what should you be trained to do if artificial intelligence is taking away so many jobs? Dr. Johnson nicely interpreted students' comments to keep them on topic."

"Dr. Johnson made excellent use of small group discussions to convey the meaning of the readings and the overall point concerning artificial intelligence and privacy and democracy. He is very enthusiastic, has good energy, uses board to summarize comments, poses good questions for students and interpreting students' answers."

Dr. Anne Demo
Assistant Professor of Communication
Penn State University, Spring 2019
CAS 100A: Public Speaking

Selected Comments:

"Johnson demonstrated not only command with content but also a skillful approach to the learning process."

"Students clearly . . . connected with Professor Johnson as there were friendly exchanges about music and campus events before class officially started. Another noteworthy practice was his pre-class email reminder about the assignment schedule and relevant terms for the upcoming class. These two details speak to both his success creating community and scaffolding strategic dialogue about assigned material."

"Because I was sitting in back, I could see a few students' notebooks and laptops and was impressed with their ability to quickly find notes from that day, which suggests Johnson's lectures are consistently clear and engaging."

"Like most of the rooms on campus, physical seating arrangements work against student engagement with each other. Johnson negotiated such constraints with questions or prompts that encouraged students to respond to and build off each other. This strategy was contagious."

"Given the amount of sustained participation in the previous class activity, the buzz of students during this last bit of class was amazing to see and, again, spotlights Johnson's ability to motivate his students."

Sample Syllabi

COMM 293A: Communication Technologies and Social Change
4 Credits, Spring 2021

Instructor Information

Dr. Jeremy David Johnson (Preferred Name: Jeremy, Pronouns: He/Him/His)

Lecturer, Department of Communication

Email: jjohnson8@pacific.edu (I will respond within 24 hours unless otherwise noted)

Course Time: Wednesdays, 5-8:30 pm PT, via Zoom

Office Hours: TR 12-1 pm PT, or by appointment, via Zoom

This syllabus may be changed at any time during the term due to unforeseen circumstances, life events, and student needs. Any changes will be communicated via Canvas.

Course Description

This seminar will explore the relationship between communication technologies, broadly construed, and social change. The seminar will trace communication technologies from ancient history to today, studying how technologies are used as mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion and how communication technologies intersect with activism, social justice, and social change. Methodologically, we will focus on textual analysis and critical theory, considering how technologies mediate and reshape civic discourse. Students will be expected to complete a substantial paper or project using critical, textual, or rhetorical, or mixed methodologies.

Course Texts

Catherine D'Ignazio & Lauren Klein, *Data Feminism* ([Open Access Available Here](#))

Safiya Noble & Brendesha Tynes, *The Intersectional Internet*

Ruha Benjamin, *Race After Technology*

Safiya Umoja Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression*

Cathy O'Neil, *Weapons of Math Destruction*

Zizi Papacharissi, *Affective Publics*

Zeynep Tufecki, *Twitter and Tear Gas*

Please note: if you will have any issues obtaining these books (for example, for financial reasons), please get in touch with me. I don't have access to a scanner right now, but I will do what I can to get you access. I have, however, selected these texts in part due to their reasonable prices, so I hope that has helped shed some of the burden.

Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

1. *Describe relationships between communication technologies and inequality, discrimination, and oppression.*
2. *Identify patterns in digital texts, interfaces, and ecologies that distribute networked power.*
3. *Identify and cite literature in communication, rhetoric, and technology studies shedding light on race, digital cultures, algorithms, and networked publics.*
4. *Provide written and oral critiques of contemporary networked social movements and digital systems.*

Modes of Instruction

This course will primarily rely on synchronous Zoom discussions but will also integrate asynchronous discussion boards on Canvas. During our Zoom sessions, please have your video on as much as possible. There are very few of us, so if folks are not active, the synchronous sessions are sure to lack energy.

Equipment Requirements

To complete this course, you will need access to a steady internet connection and a device that can read or print PDFs. If you do not have that equipment available to you, please contact me right away and I'll help you sort out other options.

Assignments

Discussion Board Participation

As I will detail more specifically later on, each week we will have 2 students prepare introductory questions and/or remarks and post them to Canvas at least 24 hours prior to our synchronous sessions on Wednesdays. Following our synchronous session, 2 students will post follow-up questions, observations, examples, etc. to enrich our future discussions.

Synchronous Participation

Participation in discussions is especially crucial in a seminar course. I won't be lecturing much, if at all, so I will expect you to be active in asking questions, making observations, providing examples, and diving into the texts together.

Synopsis Readings

During each part of the class, each student will be assigned to read and present a summary of one supplemental article (available on Canvas) during one of the synchronous meetings. Many meetings will have more than one article presented. Each presentation should be around ten minutes long, offering enough information that other students in the course will have an understanding of the article's key points and insights without everyone having to read every article.

Response Papers

At the end of parts 1 and 2 of the course, you'll be asked to write a ~3-4-page response paper. While I will be fairly open to how you respond, these should not be summary papers. You should be taking our materials in new directions and adding your own insights. Ideally, one or both of these papers would be oriented toward your final project topic so you can make use of your research and ideas in your final project. These papers will be due on February 14 and March 28, respectively.

Final Project

In this final project, I'll ask you to explore a specific case, example, or text relating to communication technologies and social change. Our course texts should serve as a foundation for your research, but you should also be doing additional research and analysis. I am open to various methodologies for this final project. The project may be done in any of a number of formats, though an essay of substantive length (~15-20 pages) is the default. If your project takes another form (such as a video/film, podcast, piece of art, detailed lesson plan, etc), you should consult with me first to make sure we're on the same page.

I will ask you to submit a brief proposal (~1 page) by March 1, which we should then discuss in the week preceding Spring Break. Your final project will be due May 3.

Grade Calculation

Assignment Values

Assignment	Point Value
Discussion Board Participation	100
Synchronous Participation	100
Synopsis Presentations	3 x 50
Response Papers	2 x 75
Final Project	500
Cumulative	1000

Point Ranges for Final Grades

930-1000 points	A
900-929 points	A-
870-899 points	B+
820-869 points	B
800-819 points	B-
700-799 points	C
600-699 points	D
599 and below points	F

[Course Policies Omitted]

Course Schedule

Part 1: Race, Technology, and Digital Cultures		
Week	**Date**	**Reading**
1	1/13	*Data Feminism*, Intro, Chapters 1-2
2	1/20	*The Intersectional Internet*, Intro & Part 1
3	1/27	*The Intersectional Internet*, Part 2
4	2/3	*Race After Technology*, Intro & Chapters 1-2
5	2/10	*Race After Technology*, Chapters 3-6

Part 2: Algorithms, Models, and Social Justice		
Week	**Date**	**Reading**
6	2/17	*Data Feminism*, Chapters 3-5

		Jeremy David Johnson, "Algorithm"
7	2/24	*Algorithms of Oppression*, Intro & Chapters 1-3
8	3/3	*Algorithms of Oppression*, Chapters 4-6 & Conclusion
9	3/17	*Weapons of Math Destruction*, Intro & Chapters 1-5
10	3/24	*Weapons of Math Destruction*, Chapters 6-10 & Conclusion

Part 3: Networked Publics and Social Change		
Week	**Date**	**Reading**
11	3/31	*Data Feminism*, Chapters 6-7 & Conclusion
12	4/7	*Affective Publics*, Prelude & Chapters 1-2
13	4/14	*Affective Publics,* Chapters 3-5
14	4/21	*Twitter & Tear Gas*, Intro & Part 1
15	Async	*Twitter & Tear Gas*, Parts 2-3

Synopsis Readings
These articles are all posted on Canvas under Files. You are, of course, welcome to read all of the articles, though you will only be assigned one for each part of the course.

Part 1
Jaime Banks, "Multimodal, Multiplex, Multispatial"
André Brock, "'When Keeping it Real Goes Wrong'"
Jessica Brophy, "Developing a Corporeal Cyberfeminism"
Leigh Gruwell, "Wikipedia's Politics of Exclusion"
Jeff Rice, "Urban Mappings"
Cynthia Selfe and Richard Selfe, "The Politics of the Interface"
Niels van Doorn, "Digital Spaces, Material Traces"
Langdon Winner, "Do Artifacts Have Politics?"

Part 2
Estee Beck, "The Invisible Digital Identity"
David Beer – "Power Through the Algorithm?"
Casey Boyle – "The Rhetorical Question Concerning Glitch"
Kevin Brock and Dawn Shepherd, "Understanding How Algorithms Work Persuasively Through the Procedural Enthymeme"
Taina Bucher, "Want To Be On the Top?"
John Cheney-Lippold, "A New Algorithmic Identity"
Ted Striphas, "Algorithmic Culture"
Emily van der Nagel, "'Networks That Work Too Well'"

Part 3
Amber Davisson, "Beyond the Borders of Red and Blue States"
Dustin Edwards, "Circulation Gatekeepers"
Anne Demo, "Hacking Agency"
Jenny Edbauer (Rice), "Unframing Models of Public Distribution"
Jiyeong Kang, "Call for Civil Inattention"
Adrienne Massanari, "#Gamergate and The Fappening"
Nick Paliewicz and Guy McHendry – "When Good Arguments Do Not Work"
Damien Pfister – "The Logos of the Blogosphere"

Comm 25: Introduction to Communication Studies
Fall 2020, 2 Units

Instructor: Dr. Jeremy David Johnson (He/Him)
E-mail: jjohnson8@pacific.edu (I will respond to emails within 24 hours unless otherwise noted)
Course Time: R 12:00 – 2:00 pm Pacific, synchronously via Zoom
Office Hours: T/R 3-4 Pacific Time, or by appointment, via Zoom

This syllabus may be changed at any time during the semester due to unforeseen circumstances, life events, and student needs. Any changes will be communicated via Canvas and announced in class.

Course Description

Communication is everywhere and in everything. We communicate with ourselves, with other people, with nonhuman animals, and with technologies, landscapes, and other natural phenomena. Our communication may not always be reciprocated—at least in ways we understand—but it always matters. This course explores how humans communicate, offering a history of communication via the discipline of Communication Studies. Drawing from ancient traditions of rhetoric, modern conceptions of social science, histories of media, and critical theories of communication, students will gain a broad and diverse sense of communication as a discipline and as a practice.

Course Catalog Text: This course is designed to introduce students to areas of human discourse: interpersonal communication, group and organizational communication, mediated communication, and public speaking. Students experience both theoretical and practical aspects of this through a combination of lectures, demonstrations, and exercises of the subject. Students see an exhibition of various styles, techniques and real-life applications of the subject matter. Additionally, students hone their critical thinking skills. This course also introduces students to the careers and skills people may pursue with a degree in communication.

Course Objectives

1. **Development of critical skills.** Students will be able to assess theories of communication across millennia, challenging established principles and developing their own perspectives through critical reflection.

2. **Disciplinary knowledge.** Students will learn concepts and theories of communication developed in various sub-disciplines and through a variety of methodologies. Students will be able to assess the broad trajectory of Communication Studies and the tensions therein.
3. **Construction of communication.** Students will practice communicating in various ways, creating projects and performances that demonstrate their mastery of course materials.

Course Texts and Materials

To diversify our conversations and to reduce costs for students, this course does not require a textbook. I will provide files and/or links to articles for you to read on Canvas.

You will need a relatively up-to-date computer (last ~5 years) and a stable high-speed internet connection to access course materials and Zoom meetings. <u>If you anticipate any issues with technology access, please let me know right away</u>. I will help you to ensure you have access and can succeed in the class.

Course Assignments

Written assignments should be delivered via Canvas in Microsoft Word or PDF format, double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman or equivalent font and standard 1" margins.

Written assignments are due on Canvas before class on the date indicated on the course schedule. Detailed assignment descriptions will be posted to Canvas.

Assignment Name	Points
Dissoi logoi debates	200
Interpersonal interaction analysis	200
Media analysis	200
Critical analysis	200
Attendance & participation	200

Dissoi logoi debates
For this assignment, you will pair up with a classmate to engage in two-on-two debates in the spirit of Sophistic dissoi logoi. These short debates will engage resolutions relating to principles of rhetoric developed in ancient Greece.

Interpersonal interaction analysis
For this paper (~3 pages), you will observe an interpersonal interaction among friends, roommates, colleagues, family members, or other people you can directly observe (remotely is fine as long as it's synchronous). You will need to characterize the type of interaction, analyze the participants' behaviors, and any other factors you find important to the interaction. You should only observe the interaction, which must not include personally identifying information without prior consent.

Media analysis

In this ~3-page paper, you will analyze the communicative processes at play in a work of media. Media applies broadly here. You will assess who or what is communicating, what is being communicated, and, if applicable, what the reception of the work was/is.

Critical analysis

In this ~3-page paper, you will offer a critical dissection of a communication-focused public problem. The paper will examine the context of the public problem, use critical theories and concepts to analyze it, and, if applicable, consider possible remedies to foster inclusivity, diversity, or equality.

Attendance and participation

This is a discussion-based class, so your participation is necessary. I will not lecture but will rather ask for your thoughts as we work through the course material together. You'll be expected to offer your insights and engage in debates together. You should be active and courteous, contributing to a healthy and insightful classroom environment.

As part of a Zoom-based classroom, your participation can come in various forms. The most traditional form would be in our synchronous meetings, but you will also have the opportunity to participate in text-based discussions. **If you miss a synchronous meeting, I will expect you to be active in the text-based discussions on Canvas.** That said, text-based discussion can't be a full substitute for our conversations, so I hope you will be in our synchronous meetings as much as possible. If you need to miss a class, please just let me know as much in advance as you can. **If you miss an excessive number of meetings without active participation on Canvas, I will deduct points from your participation grade.**

Part of class participation is having familiarity with the reading and being able to discuss with the class. I am not expecting that you have read every single word of every single article, but I expect you to understand each article's main arguments and to engage each article critically.

GRADING SCALE

920-1000 points	A
900-919 points	A-
880-899 points	B+
820-879 points	B
800-819 points	B-
780-799 points	C+
720-779 points	C
700-719 points	C-
680-699 points	D+
600-679 points	D
599 and below points	F

[Course Policies Omitted]

Course Schedule

UNIT 1: COMMUNICATION AND RHETORIC ACROSS THE AGES

Week 1, 8/27	What is communication?
Week 2, 9/3	Ancient roots of rhetoric
Week 3, 9/10	Argumentation, debate, and speech
Week 4, 9/17	Communication and social change **Due: Dissoi logoi debates**

UNIT 2: SOCIAL SCIENCE AND EMPIRICAL COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Week 5, 9/24	Interpersonal communication and relationships
Week 6, 10/1	Intercultural communication
Week 7, 10/8	Health communication **Due: Interpersonal interaction analysis**

UNIT 3: COMMUNICATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Week 8, 10/15	Mass media, public relations, and propaganda
Week 9, 10/22	The digital revolution and its discontents
Week 10, 10/29	Gaming and gamification
Week 11, 11/5	Communicating science **Due: Media analysis**

UNIT 4: CRITICAL STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION

Week 12, 11/12	Communicating race
Week 13, 11/19	Communicating gender
Week 14, 11/27	**Thanksgiving break – No synchronous class**
Week 15, 12/3	(Dis)ability studies; the future of communication **Due: Critical analysis**

Sample Assignments

Invention Project: Lost in the Digital Woods
Various Courses

Most of us are accustomed to using search aggregators such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, DuckDuckGo, or even the Penn State Libraries' LionSearch. These search aggregators use algorithms to make our work easier for us when we want to find something. But, as we've discussed in class, search engines also aren't "objective" ways to find information: they have their own biases, prioritizing ad revenue, sponsored content, or specific kinds of sources.

Your task

To find a few items of research on your speech topic *without* the use of search engine aggregators. Your research should still be done online, so this will usually entail visiting sites with which you're familiar and following links—exploring the digital landscape without a map, in essence. How you go about the task is up to you, but at the end, I'd like you to reflect on the methods you chose to find information.

Annotated bibliography

Locate 6-8 distinct sources (articles, books, videos, etc.) related to the topic on which you plan to speak in speeches 2 & 3. Each of these items should come from a different publication or source.

You will then compile an annotated bibliography for what you found, including a citation for each source and 2-3 sentences describing how the source might be useful for your speech.

With each citation, you should describe how you found the item.

Comparison

After you do research without using search aggregators, try your research with a search aggregator. Find a few items you might also use for your speech.

Reflection

In 450-550 words, reflect on the differences between the research you found through each method. I encourage you to think through a few questions:

- *How did getting "lost in the digital woods" compare to the regular experience of searching on an aggregator?*
- *Were the sources you found significantly different through each method?*
- *What, if anything, does your experience tell you about your own leanings and biases or about the leanings and biases of the search aggregator you used?*
- *After completing this activity, how might you go about future research? What are some strategies you might employ to work around the biases of search aggregators?*

Informative Twitter Thread Assignment
Pacific Seminar (First-Year Reading & Writing)

In this assignment, you will take on the role of an informed citizen trying to educate others via a Twitter thread. Most of you—but not all of you—will have experience with Twitter, but perhaps fewer of you have encountered Twitter threads.

Science Twitter has been growing rapidly over the last few years. Many scientists try to translate their technical research into easily readable material by posting a series of Tweets explaining something to a lay (uninformed) audience. Here are a few great examples:

> Nuclear Katie on Iranian weapons
> Brian Skinner on superconductivity science
> ScienceVet on physical & biological sex
> Dan Singleton on questionable science

And a couple from some historians:

> Jenny Bann on 18th century student disciplinary records
> Keri Leigh Merritt on non-slaveholding southerners in the Civil War

Your Task

This assignment will ask you to design (but not necessarily publish) a Twitter thread explaining something you know well or are skilled at to an audience largely uninformed on your topic. Your job will be to grab the audience's attention, keep their interest, and help them learn something new.

A few topic ideas:

- *Sports you're skilled in; games you're skilled in; visual or performing arts; cooking and baking; technologies you're familiar with; books and movies you know really well; places you're familiar with; etc.*

What I'm Looking For

- *350-550 words, divided into Tweet-sized chunks (280 characters or less); this will be at least ten or so Tweets*
- *Clear explanation of what the thread will be doing (thesis)*
- *Simple and clear explanation of how something works, what it does, etc.*
- *Sensible organization of the thread*
- *Style and format appropriate for a general audience on Twitter*
- *Use of sources to back up some of your claims (links are fine on Twitter; no need for full citations)*
- *Suggested but not required: incorporation of images and gifs to keep the thread interesting*

You are not required to post this publicly on Twitter. When creating a Twitter thread, many people will compose it in a Word document first. For simplicity's sake, you can craft your thread in Word and submit the file on Canvas that way. I'd just place a line between each hypothetical Tweet, like so:

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or

Feel free to incorporate images/gifs or links to images/gifs in the document. You are also free to post a thread on Twitter and screenshot it as your submission.

Rubric

I will use the default rubric for this assignment. That means I'm still looking for an intro and conclusion, good organization, appropriate style and language, and strong use of evidence. I'll tailor my feedback to composition on Twitter for a general audience.

Due Date

Please submit this assignment on Canvas by Sunday, September 15, at 11:59 pm

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Networked Argument Analysis Assignment
Argumentation

This is a fairly open assignment that asks you to analyze an argument or series of arguments in a networked environment. By networked environment, I mostly mean social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, etc. But you may find that other sources (such as online publications) share dynamics such as commenting, sharing, editing, or linking—all of which are important considerations in networked argument.

Ideally, you would analyze an argument that you can directly observe. For example, you may see a relative or friend post on Facebook, and find people responding to the post in some argumentative fashion. After you identify such an event, start to think about why argumentation is interesting in this context: what is different about argumentation in this space? What theories from class can help you understand the argumentation? What is interesting about the argumentation *beyond* what we've talked about, and what does that say about what we've learned?

Your paper should total 2-3 pages, which is approximately 500-750 words. I am asking for you to make some observations and to offer insight, but this should not be a major stress on you. In essence, I want you to practice thinking about argumentation where you actually encounter arguments.

Beyond the 2-3 pages, I am offering up to 20 points extra credit for additional diagramming. To earn these points, you must scan, standardize, and diagram the argument(s) you are studying. If you choose to do this extra credit work, the argument you analyze should be substantive enough that scanning, standardizing, and diagramming are feasible. A one- or two-sentence argument, for example, will likely be too short.