

## **COMM 405 – Social Implications of the Information Society - 3 Credits**

**Instructor:** Jay Mindeman

I am the creative director at an advertising and new media agency in Grand Forks. I bring a unique view to communication theory because I deal with practical, real-life professional communication situations every day.

**Email:** jay.mindeman@UND.edu (this is absolutely THE BEST way to contact me - in fact, email me via Blackboard when possible, and *always use your UND-issued email account no matter what*)

### **Required Texts:**

Miller, Vincent, [2011]. Understanding Digital Culture

Thompson, Clive [2014]. Smarter Than You Think: How Technology Is Changing Our Minds for the Better

**The University of North Dakota Communication Department takes scholastic dishonesty and plagiarism very seriously. Read the following information closely and complete the assigned tutorials and corresponding tests if you haven't already.**

If you engage in scholastic dishonesty, disciplinary action at both the departmental and university level will be taken, which could result in failing the course and/or expulsion from the university. Examples of scholastic dishonesty include:

**Recycling prior work:** submitting work previously submitted and evaluated for course credit in prior sections of this course or in other courses.

**Cheating:** copying from another student's test; possessing or using material during a test not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the instructor; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an unadministered test; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself to take a test; bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.

**Plagiarism:** appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another person's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own work.

**Collusion:** unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing any academic work offered for credit.

**All COMM majors and students taking COMM classes are required to pass a brief online course that teaches them how to recognize plagiarism.** This course was put together by Indiana University, which has kindly allowed us to utilize it for our own students. To pass the course, use the links provided below. Obtain the certificate, then upload it to the Assignment in this course entitled Plagiarism Certification by the date indicated on the schedule. If you have already

obtained this certificate, you don't need to take the Indiana University course again. Simply upload the certificate that you have already earned for all COMM courses. Finally, if you do not turn in this certificate by the deadline indicated on the schedule, you will not receive a grade for this course.

**Watch the "How to Recognize Plagiarism" tutorials here:**

<https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html>

**and learn about registration / certification tests here:**

<https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/certificationTests/index.html>

**(1) STRUCTURE:** UND's course catalog describes this course like this:

Considers and evaluates different perspectives on the information society, ranging from humanistic and Neomarxist critiques to the optimistic scenarios of some futurists. Examines the implications of new means of creating, storing, manipulating and disseminating information. Discussion of whether or not the potential benefits will be realized.

Since I am a real-world kind of guy, even my theory classes are grounded in the reality of day-to-day business and life. Don't worry - this is still a theory class, but you will get your information from four places, all of which will blend into a more holistic view of the information society we live in:

**Miller Text:** More theory than the other sources, read these chapters before you watch the lectures on Tegrity.

**Supplemental Reading:** Some weeks I will assign additional required readings from the web. These will help to keep our analysis up to date.

**Mindeman Lectures (via Tegrity):** My lectures will seek to ground the course in today's business reality. Watch these before you start to work on your assignments. I will upload these by noon on Tuesdays. However, I may get ahead on lectures, and you are welcome to watch them in advance. Just keep in mind that I expect your weekly writing assignments to account for and make reference to that week's corresponding readings and lecture.

**Thompson Text:** Read this throughout the semester. Another theory book with a slightly different take, you will write your final paper based on this text (while blending in information from the other three sources above).

By the end of this semester, it is my hope that you will be able to:

- > Understand what we mean when we discuss the information society
- > Explain how the technology of this "information society" has changed how humans interact

> Understand and explain how your knowledge of the information society can be leveraged into more effective communication in your career after college

## **STRUCTURE**

Each week you will read an assigned chapter or chapters from the Miller text, read / view any assigned online content, then watch my Tegrity lecture. Then you will write a one page essay based on a theoretical question I pose to you. Each assignment is worth 10 points. They will be assigned on Tuesdays at noon and due the following Tuesday at noon (see the calendar). They should be one page with 12-point type, double spaced. Papers must be turned in as a PDF document.

There is also an open book midterm test taken from the Miller text, any assigned online readings and my lectures. *No proctor is necessary for this test.* It will be assigned on Tuesday at noon and you will have a week to complete it, just like a weekly assignment (see the calendar). It is worth 100 points. This test must be turned in as a PDF document.

Finally, during the course of the semester I expect you to be reading the Thompson text as well. Once completed, you will write a 10-15 page final paper (again, 12-point, double spaced) synthesizing what Thompson proposes with what you have learned from Miller, my lectures etc. More specific directions are given when this paper is assigned later in the semester. It is worth 100 points.

**GRADING:** I will expect the same responsibility from you as you will give your employer and clients after you graduate. That means don't miss meetings, do make deadlines. Treat this like a business, and you'll do great. Grades are calculated like this:

Weekly Writing Assignments: 120 points (12 assignments X 10pts)

Mid-term: 100 points

Final Paper: 100 points

Final Grade = Total Points / 3.2

The Communication Program is committed to bringing the richness of cultural diversity to all students. Through active engagement, the Communication Program endeavors to provide multicultural opportunities, to reduce cultural stereotypes, to embrace cultural differences, and to promote respect for cultural diversity.

All Students are subject to the University of North Dakota Code of Student Life, including, but not limited to, issues of Scholastic Dishonesty.

To request disability accommodations, please make an appointment to see me. For more information and assistance, please call Disability Services at 777-3425.

All Comm majors and pre-majors will be added to the Comm Program Listserv. The purpose of the listserv is to keep students informed of opportunities to enhance their educational experience at UND. Contact the Communication Program office ([und.comm@email.und.edu](mailto:und.comm@email.und.edu)) if you would like to be removed from the listserv or if you are not receiving messages and would like to be added.

**Mission:** The mission of the Communication Program is to provide students with a broad understanding of human communication in various contexts, across diverse cultures, and through multiple systems. The Program engages students in lifelong learning that addresses socially and globally pressing communication challenges through scholarly, creative, critical, and practical curriculum and instruction.

**Goals:** We seek to achieve this mission by designing an interdisciplinary curriculum that respects the liberal arts tradition and exposes students to a variety of theoretical and practical experiences to become informed, engaged, and ethical global citizens. In particular, this course focuses on Goals 1, 2 and 3 of the following:

Goal 1. Students will understand key foundational communication theories and best practices, and will be able to apply these concepts to scholarly and professional scenarios.

Goal 2. Students will become proficient in communicating critically, creatively, and ethically in diverse contexts and through multiple forms of media, including (though not limited to), written, oral, digital, and print-based communication.

Goal 3. Students will learn to conduct and report research in the broader discipline of Communication, including in (depending on courses/emphases taken:) journalism, digital communication, advertising, cultural, organizational, and health communication, public relations, speech communication, broadcasting, and other areas.

Goal 4. Students will demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired in their Communication coursework in an experiential learning environment, providing relevant and meaningful connections between their classroom work and the broader extended community.