

**University of Kentucky**  
**School of Journalism and Telecommunications**

MAS 555-001: The Internet and Social Change  
Spring 2013 115 Grehan Building  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Professor: John F. Clark  
Office: 217 Grehan Building  
Office hours: MW 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an upper-division major elective for Media Arts and Studies majors. In the scheme of things, regarding fulfilling the requirements of your major program, it is designated as a "Social-Cultural Media" course. In the MAS program, Social-Cultural courses are mainly theoretical and based on peer-reviewed academic research, but they may include content that pertains to technical and human factors as they relate to the management of telecommunications systems and devices in business, academics and entertainment. This course is one of them.

According to the University bulletin, the major focus of this course will be “a critical examination of the political, cultural, technological, social, and behavioral aspects of Internet-mediated communication.” That’s a more or less accurate description, though the gist of it was written about 15 years ago. Things have changed a LOT since then. At that time, the World Wide Web had been in existence only a few years and online commerce was in its infancy. People simply didn’t have the bandwidth to make it possible. Nobody’s identity had been stolen via the Internet at that time, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and iTunes didn’t exist, the record industry was still booming, and the notion of a participatory base of knowledge and information about practically everything (like Wikipedia) was fantastic. Yet the last is the only purpose for which the WWW was originally envisioned. In other words, we have a lot more to talk about now.

The phrase “The Internet and Social Change” is one that encompasses a broad and varied array of issues and topics. The convergence of formerly incompatible types of transmission media, such as phone networks, the Internet, and cable systems, has transformed society into what many refer to as the “Digital Age.” In general, these new forms of media are referred to as “New Media.” This transformation is not solely the result of developments in technology, and this is not a highly technical course. However, we will navigate an overview of a wide range of new media technologies, examining their capabilities and limitations, in order to more fully understand their impact on individuals and society. But our focus will be the examination of these new media from cultural, historical, sociological, psychological, and legal perspectives. One of my primary goals for this class is to enable you to place yourself firmly in context as a denizen of this Digital Age, and to understand its implications for the future.

## REQUIRED READING

Adams, A. & McCrindle, R. (2008). Pandora's Box. Chichester, England: John Wiley and Sons.

Lessig, L. (2006). Code Version 2.0. New York: Basic Books.

Tapscott, D. (2009). Grown Up Digital. New York: McGraw-Hill.

## EVALUATION EXPECTATIONS

Your grade for this course will be based on your weighted and averaged scores for a mid-term examination, a final examination, three reaction papers, a research paper, and your attendance in class.

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Midterm Exam    | 20% |
| Final Exam      | 20% |
| Research Paper  | 20% |
| Reaction Papers | 30% |
| Attendance      | 10% |

**Examinations:** The midterm exam will consist of an evaluation of appropriate media choices for specific tasks and short essays on another three topics. The final exam will be an essay on the concept of "translation," as described by Lawrence Lessig in his book *Code Version 2.0*. Both exams will be take-home exams, and I'll give you about a week to work on them.

**Research Paper:** You will be writing a formal research paper on a topic of your choosing within the very broad field of electronic interactive media. Part of your grade will be based on a number of preliminary steps you take – at intervals throughout the semester you will be expected to submit a topic paragraph for my approval, an annotated bibliography, and a two-page outline of the paper. The completed paper will be 10-12 pages in length and will conform to APA style. The length requirement for graduate students is 20-24 pages. I will provide you with further guidelines and a list of possible topics via the MAS 555 website later in the semester.

**Reaction Papers:** These assignments require you to write three five-six page papers based on an explanation and analysis of, and personal reaction to, three specific components of the curriculum of this course.

**Attendance:** Attendance for each class is strictly voluntary. It's not my responsibility to make sure you come to class. After all, each of you is old enough to drive, vote, serve in the military, think for yourself, and bear the consequences of your actions. With that said, the consequences of your actions if you miss class will be the loss of five percent of your attendance grade for every absence, unless you notify me of your absence beforehand or have a verifiable excuse after the fact.

### Grading Policy:

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| A | Excellent work, 90 – 100          |
| B | Good work, 80 – 89                |
| C | Barely satisfactory work, 70 – 79 |
| D | Inferior work, 60 – 69            |
| E | Unacceptable work, below 60       |

## THE USUAL WARNINGS

Make-up exams and late papers will not be allowed without a valid and verifiable reason. The definition of valid and verifiable is left totally to my discretion. It is required that all work submitted for a grade is the original work of the student whose name appears on it, and that the work was prepared expressly for this course. Any use of a cell phone or digital assistant or even the appearance of these devices during an exam will be construed as cheating. Any student caught cheating or copying from another's exam or in any way plagiarizing from any source, whether published or not, will be sanctioned according to University rules. At the very least, he or she will receive a failing grade for the course.

## RESPECT FOR DIVERSE VIEWPOINTS

As a member of the most commonly discriminated-against group throughout human history (I'm left-handed), I consider the diversity that students bring to this class a highly valuable resource and one of the benefits of your college experience. During the semester, we will discuss topics related to communication technology and social change that touch upon aspects of social and cultural diversity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, politics, and religion. I encourage you to express your thoughts on those aspects relevant to your background, listen respectfully to your fellow students, and be open to learning from people who hold views different than yours.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

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|------------|---|
| January 10 | Introductions to the course and to each other   |
| January 15 | Emergence and Convergence of Technologies<br>Adams and McCrindle, Chapter Two             |
| January 17 | Emergence and Convergence of Technologies (continued)<br>Adams and McCrindle, Chapter Two |
| January 22 | Digital Entertainment<br>Adams and McCrindle, Chapter Three                               |
| January 24 | You have the day off  |
| January 29 | Sex and Technology<br>Adams and McCrindle, Chapter Five<br><b>Topic Paragraph Due</b>     |
| January 31 | You have the day off  |
| February 5 | The Net Generation Comes of Age<br>Tapscott, Chapter One                                  |

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| February 7                    | A Generation Bathed in Bits<br>Tapscott, Chapter Two  |
| February 12                   | Eight Net Generation Norms<br>Tapscott, Chapter Three<br><b>Annotated Bibliography Due</b>  |
| February 14                   | The Net Generation Brain<br>Tapscott, Chapter Four  |
| February 19                   | The Net Generation as Learners: Rethinking Education<br>Tapscott, Chapter Five  |
| February 21                   | The Net Generation in the Workforce: Rethinking Talent and Management<br>Tapscott, Chapter Six<br><b>First Reaction Paper Due</b> |
| February 26                   | The Net Generation as Consumers: N-Fluence Networks and the Prosumer Revolution Tapscott, Chapter Seven                           |
| February 28                   | The Net Generation and the Family: No Place Like the New Home<br>Tapscott, Chapter Eight  |
| March 5                       | <b>Midterm Exam – Due in my office by 5:00 PM</b>   |
| March 7                       | Reflection on the Midterm Exam and other soul-searching activities  |
| March 11-16<br>(Spring Break) | Academic holidays – show up only if you are completely clueless   |
| March 19                      | Four Puzzles From Cyberspace<br>Lessig, Chapter Two   |
| March 21                      | Cyberspaces<br>Lessig, Chapter Six<br><b>Second Reaction Paper Due</b>  |
| March 26                      | Translation<br>Lessig, Chapter Nine   |
| March 28                      | Translation<br>Lessig, Chapter Nine   |
| April 2                       | Intellectual Property<br>Lessig, Chapter Ten  |

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| April 4               | Intellectual Property<br>Lessig, Chapter Ten<br><b>Third Reaction Paper Due</b>                         |
| April 9               | Privacy<br>Lessig, Chapter Eleven   |
| April 11              | Privacy<br>Lessig, Chapter Eleven<br><b>Detailed Outline Due</b>  |
| April 16              | Free Speech<br>Lessig, Chapter Twelve   |
| April 18              | Making the World a Better Place – at Ground Level<br>Tapscott, Chapter Ten<br><b>Research Paper Due</b> |
| April 23              | In Defense of the Future<br>Tapscott, Chapter Eleven  |
| April 25              | The Matrix Revisited  |
| April 30<br>(Tuesday) | <b>Final Exam – Due in my office by 5:00 PM</b>   |