# COMM 3420 Communication and New Technology

## Instructor Contact

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**Office Hours:** Wednesday 3:20-4:20pm at 309E GAB,

Monday 3:30-4:30pm https://unt.zoom.us/j/84126130289 or by appointment

**Communication Expectations:** You can use [Conversations](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10573-4212710324) (a.k.a. Inbox) in Canvas to write messages with your instructor, by default the messages in Canvas are set to forward to UNT email accounts. So, you should be able to see these messages in both Canvas and your UNT email account. During the week I will try to respond to messages within 24 hours. If you email Friday evening or over the weekend please look for a response on Monday.

Grades will typically be posted typically within one week of an assignment due date.

Click on this link to read about some [general tips for communication in this course](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips).

## Course Description

This course examines online communication through principles derived from cognitive and social psychology. The focus is on how psychological processes (impression formation and management, deception and trust, attraction and relationship formation, community-building) occur in technologically-mediated environments (email, instant messaging, blogs, online dating websites, social networking websites, video games). Emphasis will be placed on how psychological principles can help us better understand online communication, but also on how online communication and its novel features can shed light on traditional psychological principles.

## Course Structure

This is an online course composed of nine lesson modules and three exam modules. You will work through each lesson consecutively throughout the semester. Use the course summary in Canvas to view the pace of our work and due dates for each assignment.

## Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

We have no official prerequisites for this course.

## Course Objectives

The overall goal for the course is to connect current thinking in psychology with human behavior on the Internet.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify current theories and models of human behavior that explain and anticipate social dynamics over the Internet.
2. Critically evaluate theories with an emphasis on how humans adapt to technology and use it for social purposes
3. Describe research methods that are used to study social behavior on the Internet.

## Materials

Each week's required reading will usually consist of a chapter from the course textbook or a related journal article.

* Textbook: Kevin B. Wright & Lynne M. Webb (eds). (2011). Computer-mediated communication in personal relationships. Peter Lang Publishing.
* Individual articles or Internet postings are available through the course Canvas website or will be provided by the instructor via email.

## Technical Requirements & Skills

### Minimum Technology Requirements

The minimum technology requirements for students include:

* Computer
* Reliable internet access
* Speakers
* Microphone
* Microsoft Office Suite
* [Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

### Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course include using Canvas to

* Communicate
* Access materials and assignments
* Post to discussion boards
* Submit assignments
* Complete exams

If you don’t know how to perform one or all of these skills, please consult the [Canvas guide for students](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701).

### Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Here are some general guidelines:

* Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in email or any other communication.
* Always use your professors’ proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
* Unless specifically invited, don’t refer to your instructor by first name.
* Use clear and concise language.
* Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
* Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you.”
* Use standard fonts such as Ariel, Calibri or Times new Roman and use a size 10 or 12 point font
* Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.
* Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☺.
* Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.
* Be careful with personal information (both yours and other’s).
* Do not send confidential information via e-mail

See these [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) for more information.

### Success in an Online Course

While the online classroom shares many similarities with the face-to-face classroom, success in online education requires certain skills and expectations that students may not be aware of. Use this link to find out more about “How to Succeed as an Online Student” (https://clear.unt.edu/teaching-resources/online-teaching/succeed-online).

## Getting Help

### Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

**UIT Help Desk**: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

**Email**: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

**Phone**: 940-565-2324

**In Person**: Sage Hall, Room 130

**Walk-In Availability**: 8am-9pm

**Telephone Availability**:

* Sunday: noon-midnight
* Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
* Friday: 8am-8pm
* Saturday: 9am-5pm

**Laptop Checkout**: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

### Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

* [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
* [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
* [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
* [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
* [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Other [UNT student resources](https://success.unt.edu/resources) include:

* [Registrar](file:///C:\Users\jdl0126\AppData\Local\Temp\OneNote\16.0\NT\0\Registrar) (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
* [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
* [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
* [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
* [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
* [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
* [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
* [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

### Academic Support Services

* [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
* [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
* [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (https://library.unt.edu/)
* [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)
* [MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (https://math.unt.edu/mathlab)

## Course Requirements

| ***Assignment*** | ***Percentage of Final Grade*** |
| --- | --- |
| ***Discussion Boards (10 total)*** | *30%* |
| ***Tangram Game*** | *5%* |
| ***Allocating Funds Activity*** | *5%* |
| ***Exams (3 total)*** | *60%* |
| ***Total*** | *100%* |

## Grading

Include the grading scale (A-F) along with the point totals/percentages you will use to calculate the final grade. For example:

A: 90-100% (excellent, clearly outstanding)

B: 80-89% (very good, impressive)

C: 70-79% (average college level)

D: 60-69% (below average, barely passing)

F: < 59%(failing)

Include a list that details the point/percentage values for each assignment/type of assignment. You might also include descriptive grading criteria that describes the quality of work that constitutes and A, B, C, etc. Lastly, it is best practice to provide your policy on late work here as well as details regarding the presence or lack of extra credit opportunities.

Online Discussions

The course consists of 9 discussions. You are encouraged to share your experiences, provide thoughtful insights, and comment constructively on your classmates’ posts.

• Posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. Keep in mind that fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.

• Posts should be within a range of 250-280 words.

• Posts should draw on the ideas/concepts/theories from the text and/or from the lessons.

• Make certain that all posts and responses address the question, problem, or situation as presented for discussion. While you can extend upon assigned the topic, do not stray from the topic with extraneous tangents.

• Discussions occur when there is dialogue; therefore, you need to build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure to revisit the discussion forum and respond meaningfully to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.

• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, experiences, references, websites, resources, etc. (giving credit where appropriate).

• Contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

Exams

The three exams each consist of 40 multiple-choice, and true or false questions. Each question is worth one point and grades are delivered as percentages in the gradebook. Each exam covers three lessons’ materials and the exams are non-cumulative. You are responsible for all material covered in the text and all material covered in the lesson. Exams are open book, open note.

Tangram Game

You will play with two different people you know (e.g., family member, friend) in order to complete the game. After you follow all the instructions you will submit the screen shot of your conversation script as well as your answers to the reflection questions in order to get full credit.

Allocating Funds Activity

Again, you will be paired with a partner to complete this activity. After you complete the activity you will submit the screen shot of your Zoom meeting and the work you completed together in Canvas in order to get full credit.

## **Course Evaluation**

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course.

## Course Policies

### Assignment Policy

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu) or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Students are expected to produce written work that conforms to APA style and the “Writing Guidelines” that appear on the department website in the “Important Documents” section of both the Undergraduate Program and Graduate Program tabs.

### Examination Policy

The exams for this course are open book with multiple-choice, multiple-answer, and true or false questions. Each exam is set with a 90 minute timer and each exam is set to allow students 2 attempts. Canvas will keep and record the highest score of those two attempts. If you experience technical difficulties while taking the exam, contact the student help desk.

### AI Usage

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy

Additionally, tools like Grammarly, spellcheck, predictive text, speech-to-text, and translation tools are not allowed as they blur authorship and misrepresent your independent work. All work must be your own.

Instructor Responsibilities and FeedbackDuring the week I will try to respond to messages within 24 hours. If you email Friday evening or over the weekend, please look for a response on Monday.

Grades will typically be posted typically within one week of an assignment due date.

If you have a question about the assignment or resources to complete the assignments, if you have questions about grades, or if you have a concern or question regarding the course content, please contact me.

Late WorkExcept under the most extreme circumstances (and documentation of those circumstances is required), late work will be penalized. If you encounter an emergency situation of some kind, it is best to communicate with me about it earlier rather than later.

Late Assignments & Papers turned in 24 hours after the deadline will be graded starting one grade lower (that is, the highest grade for one-day late work is B); work turned in 48 hours after the deadline will be graded starting C. Works turned in more than 48 hours after the deadline will not be accepted for grading. It is not fair to others who met the deadlines if I accept yours late. Also, no longer are printer troubles and computer problems reasonable excuses for late papers. I suggest knowing the equipment well enough and allowing ample time in case of problems.

Class Attendance / ParticipationBeing an online course, your active participation in class is required. The course involves discussion and/or communication activities. You are encouraged to share your experiences, provide thoughtful insights, and may comment on your classmates’ posts. Commit yourself to a responsible online participation policy that will ensure the grade you desire.

### Extra Credit

There is no planned extra credit for this course. On occasion, however, graduate students or faculty may provide the opportunity for students to participate in research. IF such opportunities are offered this semester, students are encouraged to take advantage of any extra credit offered. IF offered, each opportunity will count up to 1 point of a student's final grade. You can earn up to 5 extra credit points in total.

### Incompletes

We will award grades of “Incomplete” only in cases where a student has completed 75% of the coursework AND the grade is warranted by a medical or military excuse. Inability to complete coursework in a timely fashion does not constitute an acceptable reason for requesting or receiving an incomplete.

Syllabus Change PolicyThis syllabus should not be construed as a binding contract on the part of the instructor or teaching assistants. We reserve the right to change any aspect of the course without notice.

## UNT Policies

### Academic Integrity Policy

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Cheating: The willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, using someone else’s work or written assignments as if they were your own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill a requirement of this course.

Plagiarism: The use of an author’s words or ideas as if they were your own without giving proper credit to the source, including but not limited to failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

The minimum sanction for a violation of the code is a grade of zero for the assignment; a second act of plagiarism warrants a failing grade in the course. The code is available in the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities.

### Course Accessibility

### The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Students needing a reasonable academic accommodations must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the student will request their letter of accommodation. ODA will provide faculty with a reasonable accommodation letter via email to begin a private discussion regarding a student’s specific needs in a course. Students may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding their accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website

### Emergency Notification & Procedures

### UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

### Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student’s records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

### Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT’s [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

### Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students’ access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu](https://my.unt.edu/). All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student’s Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

### Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available between Jan 6 and Jan 7 to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](file:///C:\Users\jdl0126\AppData\Local\Temp\OneNote\16.0\NT\0\no-reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email [spot@unt.edu](file:///C:\Users\jdl0126\AppData\Local\Temp\OneNote\16.0\NT\0\spot@unt.edu).

### Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT’s Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim’s compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](file:///C:\Users\jdl0126\AppData\Local\Temp\OneNote\16.0\NT\0\SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [oeo@unt.edu](file:///C:\Users\jdl0126\AppData\Local\Temp\OneNote\16.0\NT\0\oeo@unt.edu) or at (940) 565 2759.

### Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

**Federal Regulation**

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](http://www.ecfr.gov/) (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

**University of North Texas Compliance**

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student’s responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email [internationaladvising@unt.edu](mailto:internationaladvising@unt.edu)) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

### Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002).

### Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student’s permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

* The work is used only once.
* The work is not used in its entirety.
* Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
* The student is not identified.
* The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student’s written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

**Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses**

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.