

TECM 3500: Digital Media

Professor Information

Professor: Dr. Jordan Frith

E-mail address: Jordan.frith@unt.edu

Class time: T-TH 2:00-3:20

Office number: 305 Auditorium Building

Office Hours 1:30-2, 3:20-4:30 T-TH, 5:00-6 M; (and other days if you make an appointment. Also, email me to let me know you're stopping by. I could be called away to another meeting during office hours)

This class is in Canvas not Blackboard! Make sure to login to Canvas. The entire university is switching to Canvas, so you'll have to learn regardless.

Description

The goal of this class is to combine readings with hands-on experience to learn about the impacts of digital media. The class will cover everything from the current structure of major internet companies to using tools like augmented reality and Madcap Flair in technical settings. We will read one book on writing white papers and one book on the current state of social media.

The main thrust of this class will be focusing on how digital media of various types are impacting social and professional organizations. You will be required to read sociological books and learn software.

By the end of this class, you will be able to

- Understand how augmented reality will potentially impact technical communication and create augmented texts
- Explain how social media is impacting social and professional communication
- Write white papers following best industry practices
- Analyze best practices of social media usage in professional and social settings
- Create interactive maps for displaying information
- Understand basic uses of XML
- Learn about the tenets of big data

Important University-Wide Dates

Beginning this date, a student who wishes to drop a course must complete the drop process by submitting an online drop form to the Office of the Registrar (student receives W).	Sept 11
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Last day for change in pass/no pass status	Oct 5
Mid-semester	Oct 19
Last day for a student to drop a course (student receives W).	Nov 5
Beginning this date, a student who qualifies (75% complete and passing) may request an Incomplete, with a grade of I.	Nov 12
Last day to withdraw (drop all classes – student receives W).	Nov 21

Textbooks

You have two required books for this course. The two books will be supplemented by hands-on readings. They're both fairly cheap!

Tarleton Gillespie: [*Custodians of the Internet.*](#)

Michael Stelzner: [*Writing White Papers: How to Capture Readers and Keep Them Engaged*](#)

[Purchase these NFC tags \(\\$12.99\)](#)

Note: You will also have to pay a relatively small amount (<\$15) to publish interactive pages

Course Evaluation

Your grade in this course will be determined as follows:

A = 90 – 100. To receive an A in this course, you will have created documents that are easy to read, informative, and visually appealing. The documents will be free of errors and have excellent content, grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. You will also show that you understand the research method you chose and can explain why you chose it.

B =80 - 89.9. To receive a B, you will have submitted documents that are readable and understandable. They will be usable documents, but they will feature a few errors and problems with sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. The documents you submit will not require heavy revision, but they also will not be perfect and may not be ready for final display.

C =70 - 79.9. To receive a C, you will have submitted documents that would disappoint a manager in the workplace. These documents may be clear, but they also may require heavy revisions in certain sections and significant work on grammar, structure, method, and logic.

D = 60 - 69.9. To receive a D, you will have submitted documents that are unclear, difficult to read, filled with distracting errors, and incomplete. These documents are not easy to follow or understand and would not be appropriate to submit to a manager in a workplace setting.

F = Below 60. If you submitted these documents in an actual workplace, you'd probably be looking for a new job.

ADA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will work with the Office of Disability Accommodation to help reasonably qualified students with disabilities. If you have such a disability, please advise me in writing of your needs no later than the second week of class.

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of 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 accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at [940.565.4323](tel:940.565.4323).

Academic Dishonesty & Integrity

It is your responsibility to become familiar with UNT's Policy of Academic Dishonesty. This policy defines the following forms of academic dishonesty:

Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.

Plagiarism: the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.

Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Facilitating: academic dishonesty intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity.

If any course material is submitted that violates this policy of academic dishonesty, the assignment will receive a grade of "F" and appropriate judicial action will be filed. This action includes a report of academic misconduct to your college Dean and possible dismissal from The University of North Texas. There are no first-offense warnings regarding plagiarism. In addition, **if I catch you plagiarizing, you will fail this course.** As this is a senior-level course it is expected that plagiarism and the correct use (citation) of other's ideas (including print, digital, images, and other media) are fully understood. Contact me if you're ever confused about what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Misunderstandings, miscommunication, oversights, or lack of comprehension as to what constitutes academic dishonesty are not accepted in this course.

Attendance

Your presence in this course is mandatory not optional. You have 3 unexcused absences. Every absence past 3 will lower your final grade one letter. I'm not joking. Most people who fail my class fail because of absences. If you are between 3-10 minutes late, I count it as a tardy, which counts for ½ an absence. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be counted fully absent.

Look...class is like a job. You need to show up to your job.

Assignment Submission

Unless otherwise noted, you must submit your assignments in electronic format through Canvas. I don't want you to turn in print versions of assignments. The two exceptions are the NFC tags and augmented texts. It's better for everyone involved if I grade and comment on your work electronically.

When you submit an assignment, you **must** use the following file naming convention: LASTNAME__ASSIGNMENTNAME. So if I submitted a personal reflection assignment, the file name would be Frith_PersonalReflection. File names are important. It's difficult to keep track of files when I end up with 28 "writingassignment.docx" files.

All assignments should be single spaced and use a 12 pt. font. It wasn't very long ago when I was an undergraduate, so I know all the tricks to make a document look longer than it really is. Don't do any of them. Oh, and obviously...use headings. Remember what you learned in 2700!

Assignments are due by the time noted on Canvas, which will almost always be a class day by 11:59pm (except for NFC tags and augmented texts, which are due in class). For each 24 hour period the assignment is late, you will lose 10% off the final grade. After 7 days, I will not accept late assignments. If you have a genuine reason to turn an assignment in late (an athletic event, family emergency, etc.), you must let me know beforehand.

Emergency notification and procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to notify you quickly 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). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly.

Grade breakdown

- 20%: Augmented instructional texts

- 10%: Mapping project
- 10%: XML project
- 5%: Near-Field Communication tags
- 15%: White paper outline
- 30%: White paper on social media related topic
- 10%: In-class participation/professionalism

Assignments (/100 points)

Augmented texts (20 points)

You will use Layar to create three augmented pages:

1. An instructional text of some type. The text can be a picture of an instructional manual or a picture of an object or procedure. The augmentations must give instructional guidance.
2. A promotional text of some sort.
3. Your choice.

I will grade you on how well you design the augmented texts and how relevant the information is. Make sure to follow the advice from readings and from the lecture when designing the texts, and remember that more information is not always better. Don't do too little, but do not put everything on the texts just because you can. You will also be rewarded for going above-and-beyond and creating some of the augmented content yourself. You don't have to, but it's an option.

Mapping project (10 points)

You are going to create a map of volunteer opportunities in Denton county. You must map at least 7 locations based on the information on [this list \(some of the info is old\)](#). Your mapped entries must include the name of the organization, the telephone number, the website (also the Facebook page if they have one), and a short paragraph description of the organization and the type of volunteer opportunity (get this from researching the websites). You need to write your own description!

You can also be creative in how you display the information. You need to figure out if you want to create your own legend (I'll show you in class how), use an automated legend, or anything like that. It's up to you, but you need to figure out how best to display the information. One way would be to divide types of volunteer opportunities, but you can choose how fancy you would like to make your map.

I will be grading you on how accurate the information is, the display, and the content in your descriptions attached to each site.

XML project (10 points)

I will upload a more detailed discussion of this assignment as we get closer to this section. The assignment will involve you taking a few white papers I give you and then developing an XML schema to identify various pieces of the white paper. The assignment is only worth 10 points, so this

is not meant to be a huge database of white paper elements. But you will have to use the Steltzner reading to categorize the content. This will all make more sense after the two XML classes.

NFC Project (5 points)

I'm leaving this intentionally open-ended. You have the tags you purchased. Program **at least** three of them and attach them to print documents. Figure out relevant uses for the tags. They could include websites, contact info, videos, etc.

Don't overthink this assignment!

White paper outline (15 points)

You have to submit an outline of the white paper you are writing on your final paper. Your outline should include the following:

- An explanation of your topic and your audience.
- An explanation of the type of white paper you plan to write. You have to justify that choice based on your readings. The justification should be about a paragraph
- A list of headings and subheadings you will be using in your paper. Each heading and subheading should have a paragraph (it can be as short as 1-2 sentences) description of what it will contain.
- A section discussing at least three of the sources you are using. You don't need full citation format for each source. Links are fine. The description of why the source is useful for your white paper should be about a paragraph per source.

The outline needs to explain why your topic matters and how you'll be writing your white paper. The more of an idea you have of what your paper will be the more useful my feedback will be.

White paper (30 points)

I will upload a more detailed explanation of the white paper later in the semester. For now, the white paper must be designed well and must be written following the best practices of the texts we read in class. The white paper topic is up to you, but it must relate to an issue having to do with emerging media. The topics need to be relevant to a business of some sort and must be well-researched.

We will talk more about topics as the semester progresses. A few possible topics include

- Incorporating Usability in the development process
- How to adapt project management techniques (e.g. Agile) into the development process
- How emerging media has impacted various forms of publishing

Like I said, those are only some options. We'll talk more throughout the semester about other opportunities.

In-class participation/possible quizzes (10 points)

This class will involve some pretty extensive discussion. I expect you to have read before class and at least attempt to understand the material. We will discuss the readings in class, but I want you to participate in the discussion. Think of examples outside the readings that you can use to participate in the discussion. To get a 10/10, you're going to have to participate.

Oh, and I also am including this section in the overall grade to give myself some leeway. If I don't think many people are reading, I may start giving reading quizzes.

Schedule

Date	Readings	Lecture topics/assignments
8/28		Introductions
8/30	Introduction, Marvin, <i>When Old Technologies Were New</i> (pp. 1-8)	Face-to-face communication What is "new" media? Understanding technology
9/4	Is Augmented Reality the future of technical communication? Design Principles for Augmented Reality Learning (Blackboard)	Augmented reality/mobile media
9/6	AR and QR codes The Death of QR codes	Interactive texts QR Codes In-class work
9/11	Stelzner 1-3	Intro to white papers
9/13	Stelzner 4-6	White paper research Intro sections

9/18	No readings	InDesign Whitepaper orientation
9/20	What is GIS? GIS Lynda module (1-2) (note that a few interface things have changed in Google Maps and Google Drive. The changes aren't hard to figure out)	The growth of locative media GIS AR Projects due (in class)
9/25	OPTIONAL (it's not the same software, but is interesting if you want more GIS): GIS Lynda module (3-4)	In-class mapping exercise Workday for your mapping project
9/27	Stelzner 7-9	Giving good advice in white papers Targeting strategies
10/2	Stelzner 10-11	Design methods Marketing
10/4	Structured authoring Nesting content XML and creativity	Component Content Management Systems Mapping assignment due
10/9	Managing tech writers in an XML environment W3C XML tutorials (use as a reference)	XML
10/11	No class	
10/16	Gillespie, chapter 1	What is moderation? Why is moderation key to UX?
10/18	Gillespie, chapter 2	Early history of the Internet
10/23	No readings Madcap Flare tutorial (optional...don't have to use it, but it's a resource)	Madcap Flare workshop

10/25	Gillespie, chapter 3	Community guidelines XML assignment due Social forms of technical communication
10/30	Gillespie, chapter 4	Scale, problems, and too big to fail
11/1	What is Near-Field Communication? NFC and Mobile Marketing NFC and museums	Near-Field Communication
11/6	Gillespie, chapter 5 Human cost of moderation	Human moderation and some myths of AI Understanding the role of moderation in design
11/8	Gillespie, chapter 6	Community norms, culture, and moderation as UX decisions
11/13	Gillespie, chapter 7 Alex Jones and questions of moderation Alex Jones and Sandy Hook	Understanding users on a deeper level through moderation choices NFC assignment due
11/15	Gillespie, chapter 8	Potential futures International legislation (e.g. the GDPR)
11/20	Beginner's guide to big data What happened to big data?	Big Data White paper outline due

	Thanksgiving break	
11/27	Frith, 2017 (Blackboard)	Technical communication and Big Data
11/29	What is the Internet of Things? Internet of Things and technical communication	Internet of Things
12/4	boyd, 2008	Social media privacy Social media presence workshop
12/6	University-wide reading day (not allowed to teach new content)	Wrapping things up
12/13	Final exam period Optional. No attendance.	3:30pm Final Paper due