

# **HNRS 360:** Coping with the Internet

TUESDAYS 4:30–7:10PM



Thomas Stone's [\*Telehead\*](#)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

[CONTACT INFORMATION](#)

[COURSE DESCRIPTION](#)

[LEARNING OUTCOMES](#)

[COURSE TEXTS](#)

[COURSE ASSIGNMENTS](#)

[GRADES](#)

[COURSE SCHEDULE](#)

[WEEK ONE \(08/28\) – INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE](#)

[WEEK TWO \(09/04\) – CLASS ONLINE](#)

[WEEK THREE \(09/11\) – ATTENTION and PRODUCTIVITY](#)

[WEEK FOUR \(09/18\) – ECHO CHAMBERS and FILTER BUBBLES](#)

[WEEK FIVE \(09/25\) – SCREEN ADDICTION and DIGITAL MINIMALISM](#)

[WEEK SIX \(10/02\) – SOCIALIZATION and RELATIONSHIPS](#)

[WEEK SEVEN \(10/09\) – DON'T FEED the TROLLS](#)

[WEEK EIGHT \(10/16\) – DIGITAL PRIVACY](#)

[WEEK NINE \(10/23\) – CLASS ONLINE](#)

[WEEK TEN \(10/30\) – YOUTH and SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

[WEEK ELEVEN \(11/06\) – RECOMMENDATION ENGINES and BINGE-WATCHING](#)

[WEEK TWELVE \(11/13\) – ONLINE DATING](#)

[WEEK THIRTEEN \(11/20\) – DIGITAL PRIVACY](#)

[WEEK FOURTEEN \(11/27\) – NO CLASS \(THANKSGIVING BREAK\)](#)

[WEEK FIFTEEN \(12/04\) – PRESENTATIONS](#)

[COURSE POLICIES](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**INSTRUCTOR** Alexander Monea

**EMAIL ADDRESS** amonea@gmu.edu

**OFFICE ADDRESS** Robinson B 432

**OFFICE HOURS** Via [Calendly Appointment](#)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the effects of internet technologies on our everyday lives and look to develop coping strategies so that we can become more intentional about how we use the internet. Students will engage humanities and social science research on internet platforms, social media, smartphones, Internet of Things, logistics, web services and data storage. They will learn about issues ranging from screen addiction to trolling to surveillance to advertising to globalization to the environmental impacts of internet technologies. Along the way, students will learn critical strategies for obfuscating their data, managing their privacy settings, controlling their attention, and reducing their carbon footprint.

Students will engage in ongoing experiments throughout the semester with internet technologies. It is preferable that all students have access to a smartphone as well as a desktop or laptop computer.

For some assignments, students will be asked to create login credentials and use various internet technologies, like apps and social media sites. Students will also be asked to alter and sometimes cease their current usage of internet technologies for periods of times as part of ongoing experiments.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have achieved the following learning outcomes:

1. Students will gain critical insight into how internet technologies are impacting our culture, particularly their impacts on everyday life.
2. Students will be able to articulate the impact that internet technologies are having on relationships, conversation, productivity, privacy, and other key components of everyday life.
3. Students will gain experience in conducting autoethnography, practicing analytical introspection as they examine their own experiences with internet technologies through a

## HNRS 360 – Coping with the Internet

series of ongoing experiments they will conduct and field notes they will take throughout the semester.

4. Students will learn key skills for managing their attention, being productive, building social relationships, and managing their privacy in the wake of the internet. In short, they will learn how to better cope with the internet.

## COURSE TEXTS

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Bailey, C. (2018) *Hyperfocus: How to Be More Productive in a World of Distraction*. New York, NY: Viking. ISBN: 978-0525522232 Price: \$13.54

boyd, d. (2015) *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. ISBN: 978-0300199000 Price: \$15.00

Pariser, E. (2012) *The Filter Bubble: How the New Personalized Web is Changing What We Read and How We Think*. New York, NY: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0143121237 Price: \$13.36

Schneier, B. (2016) *Data & Goliath: The Hidden Battles to Collect Your Data and Control Your World*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co. ISBN: 978-0393352177 Price: \$7.59

### RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Alter, A. (2018) *Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping us Hooked*. New York, NY: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0735222847 Price: \$13.98

Newport, C. (2019) *Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World*. New York, NY: Portfolio. ISBN: 978-0525536512 Price: \$18.61

Turkle, S. (2016) *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. New York, NY: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0143109792 Price: \$12.41

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

### FIELD NOTES AND EXPERIMENTS

Throughout the semester, students will be asked to select a number of experiments to perform with internet technologies, their analogs and abstaining from internet technology use. These

## HNRS 360 – Coping with the Internet

experiments will be performed weekly and students will be asked to maintain ongoing autoethnographic field notes on their experiences. These notes can take whatever form students choose and can include any multimedia components that students deem to be practical and/or beneficial.

Once a week students will be asked to post a version of their field notes to the course Blackboard and to respond to one another's experiences. We will also regularly set aside class time to discuss the results collectively. All of this will be factored into your participation grade.

Twice during the semester students will be asked to turn their collected field notes and supplement them with a written summary of their contents and the student's findings as well as a list of all the experiments and their point values to demonstrate you have conducted the minimum number of experiments to be eligible to submit the assignment.

The format for field notes and summaries is very open ended and negotiable on a student-to-student basis as long as students contact me in advance to make sure what they are doing will work. I'm happy to look over any materials in advance and give feedback as to whether students are on the right track or not.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

At the end of the semester, students will be asked to make an in-class presentation of their findings throughout the semester. These presentations should be a trial run for what will be the final project. You should plan to speak for 5-10 minutes about the experiments you've conducted, what you learned from them, and how this connects to the course texts and course theme.

### **FINAL PROJECTS**

The final product for the class will be a piece of autoethnography. The format is open-ended and I'd be as happy to accept a traditional academic argument about internet technologies that incorporates the autoethnographic data you've collected across the semester as I would be to accept a more narrative-driven self-reflection piece about the role that internet technologies have played, now play, and in the future ought to play in your everyday life.

We will hammer out the details collectively in class to make the assignment fit your needs as best as possible, but expect to produce around 2,000-2,500 words of writing on the topic.

## PARTICIPATION

Participation is crucial in this class because we will rely on in-class discussion to facilitate our analyses of the course texts and our autoethnographic experiments. It is my hope that you will learn as much (or more) from each other as you will from me. It is for this reason that participation will account for ten percent of your final grade.

Class participation means more than how much you say in class; it's your effort to be present—both in mind and in body—in our discussions. Your grade will reflect your attendance, preparation, and the quality of your contributions to our class work. Accordingly, participation grades will be awarded as follows:

In order to earn an average participation grade (in the C range), you must fulfill four basic requirements: arrive on time; be ready to discuss readings when called on; be prepared with the book or reading in class; listen respectfully.

To earn a B, you must consistently fulfill the above requirements and: volunteer questions or points of interest from readings to generate discussion; willingly offer ideas in class; make sure your contributions are topical and thoughtful.

To earn an A, you must consistently fulfill the above criteria and: show leadership in class discussion (i.e. respond to open-ended questions, challenge received opinion, ask difficult questions); respond to other students' ideas (not just mine) by asking questions or building on their points.

You will receive a failing participation grade if you are excessively and/or frequently tardy; unprepared for class; disruptive during class; and/or occupied with activities other than those related to our class.

## GRADES

### DUE DATES / DISTRIBUTION

10/20	Field Notes Pt. 1	20%
12/01	Field Notes Pt. 2	20%
12/01	Presentations	10%
12/14	Final Projects	20%
–	Discussion Forums	30%

### GRADING SCALE

<b>A–</b>	90–93	<b>A</b>	94–96	<b>A+</b>	97–100
<b>B–</b>	80–83	<b>B</b>	84–86	<b>B+</b>	87–89
<b>C–</b>	70–73	<b>C</b>	74–76	<b>C+</b>	77–79
<b>F</b>	>64	<b>D</b>	64–66	<b>D+</b>	67–69

## COURSE SCHEDULE

This course will examine the effects of internet technologies on our everyday lives and look to develop coping strategies so that we can become more intentional about how we use the internet. Students will engage humanities and social science research on internet platforms, social media, smartphones, Internet of Things, logistics, web services and data storage. They will learn about issues ranging from screen addiction to trolling to surveillance to advertising to globalization to the environmental impacts of internet technologies. Along the way, students will learn critical strategies for obfuscating their data, managing their privacy settings, controlling their attention, and reducing their carbon footprint.

### WEEK ONE (08/25) – INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

### WEEK TWO (09/01) – AUTOETHNOGRAPHY and ATTENTION and PRODUCTIVITY

Chris Bailey, *Hyperfocus* (First Half)

Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams & Arthur Bochner, “Autoethnography: An Overview” ([WEB](#))

Wikipedia, “Autoethnography” ([WEB](#))

- + Sarah Wall, “Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* ([PDF](#))
- + Béatrice Boufoy-Bastick, “Auto-Interviewing, Auto-Ethnography and Critical Incident Methodology for Eliciting Self-Conceptualised Worldview,” *Qualitative Social Research* ([PDF](#))
- + Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (Second Edition)*
- + Sandra L. Pensoneau-Conway, Tony E. Adams, and Derek M. Bolen, *Doing Autoethnography* (Full text available online through GMU Library Website - it includes examples)
- + Tony E. Adams, Stacy Holman Jones, and Carolyn Ellis, *Autoethnography (Understanding Qualitative Research)*
- + Robin M. Boylan and Mark P. Orbe, *Critical Autoethnography: Intersecting Cultural Identities in Everyday Life*
- + Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (Example of very creative, solid book-length autoethnography)
- + Nash, “Gender on the Ropes” (Example of very solid article-length autoethnography) ([PDF](#))

**WEEK THREE (09/08) – ATTENTION and PRODUCTIVITY**

Chris Bailey, *Hyperfocus* (Second Half)

**WEEK FOUR (09/15) – ECHO CHAMBERS and FILTER BUBBLES**

Eli Pariser, *The Filter Bubble*

John Kelly and Camille François, “This is what filter bubbles actually look like,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

Adam Piore, “Technologists are trying to fix the “filter bubble” problem that tech helped create,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

Zeynep Tufekci, “How social media took us from Tahrir Square to Donald Trump,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

- + Above the Noise and Data & Society, “YouTube Algorithms: How To Avoid the Rabbit Hole,” *YouTube* ([WEB](#))
- + Tim Mullaney, “Everything is a Recommendation,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Michael Schrage, “Recommendation Nation,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Will Knight, “Fake News 2.0: Personalized, Optimized, and Even Harder to Stop,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Renee Diresta, “Up Next: A Better Recommendation System,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Zeynep Tufekci, “How Recommendation Algorithms Run the World,” ([WEB](#))
- + Guillaume Chaslot, “The Toxic Potential of YouTube’s Feedback Loop” ([WEB](#))
- + Klint Finley, “Out in the Open: Build Your Own Netflix-Style Suggestion Machine for Free,” ([WEB](#))
- + Preetam Kaushik, “Tomorrow’s Internet: A World of Hyper-Personalized Tribes?” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Shayna Hookin, “The Internet of Me: Creating a Personalized Web Experience,” ([WEB](#))
- + John Cheney-Lippold, *We Are Data*

**WEEK FIVE (09/22) – SCREEN ADDICTION and DIGITAL MINIMALISM**

Adam Alter, *Irresistible*, Selection ([PDF](#))

Cal Newport, “Digital Minimalism,” The Ezra Klein Podcast ([WEB](#))

Robbie Gonzalez, “We Need a Radical New Way to Understand Screen Use,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))



## HNRS 360 – Coping with the Internet

Ted Greenwald, “Compulsive Behavior Sells,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

Thomas Henricks, “Screen addiction: What are we looking for?” *Psychology Today* ([WEB](#))

Allen Kim, “How tech companies are addressing screen addiction,” *CNN* ([WEB](#))

Heather West, “The Attention Economy to the Addiction Economy,” *Mozilla: Internet Citizen* ([WEB](#))

- + Robbie Gonzalez, “We’ve got the screen time debate all wrong. Let’s fix it,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Erica Naone, “AMA considers a new addiction: Video games,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Kurt Wagner, “What happens when you get off Facebook for four weeks? Stanford researchers found out,” *Recode* ([WEB](#))
- + Kevin Roose, “Do not disturb: How I ditched my phone and unbroke my brain,” *The New York Times* ([WEB](#))
- + Eric Ducker, “How to Quit Your Phone and Change Your Life By ... Doing Nothing,” *The Ringer* ([WEB](#))
- + Virginia Heffernan, “Breaking My Phone Addiction—Via My Phone,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Robbie Gonzalez, “The Subtle Nudges That Could Unhook Us From Our Phones,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Anya Kamenetz, “Screen addiction among teens: Is there such a thing?” *NPR* ([WEB](#))

### **WEEK SIX (09/29) – SOCIALIZATION and RELATIONSHIPS**

Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation* (Selection) ([PDF](#))

Blanca Myers, “A Brief History of Screen Panic” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Charley Locke, “The Man Who Calls His Trolls to Talk It Out,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Listen to an episode of your choice of *Conversations with People Who Hate Me* ([WEB](#))

Hanna Rosin, “The End of Empathy,” *NPR* ([WEB](#))

Caroline Kelly, “Keeping it Civil: How to Talk Politics without Letting Things Turn Ugly,” ([WEB](#))

## HNRS 360 – Coping with the Internet

Jasmine Garsd, “In an Increasingly Polarized America, is it Possible to Be Civil on Social Media,” *NPR* ([WEB](#))

- + Dwane Brown, “How One Man Convinced 200 Ku Klux Klan Members To Give Up Their Robes” ([WEB](#))
- + Daryl Davis, “Why I, as a black man, attend KKK rallies” ([WEB](#))
- + Daryl Davis, “What do you do when someone just doesn't like you?” ([WEB](#))
- + Robert Wright, “Empathy is Tearing Us Apart,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

### **WEEK SEVEN (10/06) – RECOMMENDATION ENGINES and BINGE-WATCHING**

Above the Noise and Data & Society, “YouTube Algorithms: How To Avoid the Rabbit Hole,” *YouTube* ([WEB](#))

Michael Schrage, “Recommendation Nation,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

Renee Diresta, “Up Next: A Better Recommendation System,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Zeynep Tufekci, “How Recommendation Algorithms Run the World,” ([WEB](#))

Guillaume Chaslot, “The Toxic Potential of YouTube’s Feedback Loop,” ([WEB](#))

Paris Martineau, “Maybe It’s Not YouTube’s Algorithm That Radicalizes People,” ([WEB](#))

Grant McCracken, “From Arrested Development to Dr. Who, Binge Watching Is Changing Our Culture,” ([WEB](#))

Karen Hao, “YouTube is experimenting with ways to make its algorithm even more addictive,” ([WEB](#))

- + Klint Finley, “Out in the Open: Build Your Own Netflix-Style Suggestion Machine for Free,” ([WEB](#))
- + Klint Finley, “Your Binge-Watching Is Making the Planet Warmer,” ([WEB](#))
- + Tim Mullaney, “Everything is a Recommendation,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Guillaume Chaslot, “‘Fiction is outperforming reality’: how YouTube's algorithm distorts truth” ([WEB](#))

### **WEEK EIGHT (10/13) – NO CLASS**

**WEEK NINE (10/20) – DIGITAL PRIVACY and SURVEILLANCE**

*Field Notes Pt. 1 Due*

Bruce Schneier, *Data & Goliath* (First Part)

John Perry Barlow, “A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace,” *EFF* ([WEB](#))

Andy Greenberg, “It’s Been 20 Years Since this Man Declared Cyberspace Independence,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Andy Greenberg, “After 6 Years in Exile, Edward Snowden Explains Himself,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

“‘State of Surveillance’ with Edward Snowden and Shane Smith,” *VICE* ([WEB](#))

+ Edward Snowden, *Permanent Record*

**WEEK TEN (10/27) – DIGITAL PRIVACY and SURVEILLANCE**

Bruce Schneier, *Data & Goliath* (Second Part)

David O’Brien, “Half-Measures on Encryption Since Snowden,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))

Edward Snowden, “Edward Snowden on Protecting Activists Against Surveillance,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Jake Laperruque, “It’s Time to End the NSA’s Metadata Collection Program,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

- + Brian Bergstein, “Head of British Intelligence Agency on Apple, Snowden, and Regrets,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Brian Barrett, “Despite Trump Fears, Snowden Sees a Hopeful Future,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

**WEEK ELEVEN (11/03) – OBFUSCATION and RESISTING SURVEILLANCE**

Arielle Pardes, “Welcome to the Wikipedia for Terms of Service Agreements,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

Todd Haselton, “How to force Google to automatically delete the information it saves about what you do online,” *CNN* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

David Nield, “All the ways Google tracks you – and how to stop it,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

## HNRS 360 – Coping with the Internet

David Neal, “How to Lock Down What Websites Can Access on Your Computer,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

Sarah Morrison, “How to make sure Google automatically deletes your data on a regular basis,” *Recode* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

David Nield, “All the Ways Facebook Tracks You—and How to Limit It,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

Matt Burgess, “How to Stop Instagram from Tracking Everything You Do,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

David Nield, “How to Opt Out of the Sites That Sell Your Personal Data,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

Will Nicol, “A Beginner’s Guide to Tor: How to Navigate the Underground Internet,” *DigitalTrends* ([WEB](#))

Techlore, “Become Anonymous: The Ultimate Guide to Privacy, Security & Anonymity 2020,” *YouTube* ([WEB](#))

- + Andy Greenberg, “Snowden Designs a Device to Warn if Your iPhone’s Radios are Snitching,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

### **WEEK TWELVE (11/10) – YOUTH and SOCIAL MEDIA**

dana boyd, *It’s Complicated*

Clive Thompson, “You know who’s really addicted to their phones? The olds,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Ed Cara, “Social media is corrupting the youth slightly less than we feared,” *Gizmodo* ([WEB](#))

Jean Twenge, “Have smartphones destroyed a generation?” *The Atlantic* ([WEB](#))

Kate Eichhorn, “Social Media Could Make It Impossible to Grow Up,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

- + Sarah Fallon, “How much screen time should by kids get?” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

### WEEK THIRTEEN (11/17) – ONLINE DATING

Courtney Blackwell, Jeremy Birnholtz, and Charles Abbott, “Seeing and being seen: Co-situation and impression formation using Grindr, a location-aware gay dating app,” *New Media & Society* ([PDF](#))

Brenda K. Wiederhold, “Twenty Years of Online Dating: Current Psychology and Future Prospects,” ([PDF](#))

“How Tinder “Feedback Loop” Forces Men and Women into Extreme Strategies,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

“First Evidence That Online Dating Is Changing the Nature of Society,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

“The counterintuitive evolution of online courtship behavior,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#) / [PDF](#))

- + Jed R Brubaker, Mike Ananny, and Kate Crawford, “Departing glances: A sociotechnical account of ‘leaving’ Grindr,” *New Media & Society* ([PDF](#))
- + “12 Tales of Getting It On in the Digital Age,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Andy Greenberg, “Gay Dating Apps Promise Privacy, But Leak Your Exact Location,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Alex Baker-Whitcomb, “Is It Possible to Find Love Without Dating Apps?,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Tanya Basu, “AI could be your wingman—er, wingbot—on your next first date,” *MIT Technology Review* ([WEB](#))
- + Karoline Gatter and Kathleen Hodkinson, “On the Differences Between Tinder Versus Online Dating Agencies: Questioning a Myth” ([PDF](#))
- + Rory McGloin and Amanda Denes, “Too hot to trust: Examining the relationship between attractiveness, trustworthiness, and desire to date in online dating,” ([PDF](#))
- + Annisa M. P. Rochadiat, Stephanie Tom Tong and Julie M. Novak, “Online dating and courtship among Muslim American women: Negotiating technology, religious identity, and culture,” ([PDF](#))
- + Dawn Shepherd, *Building Relationships: Online Dating and the New Logics of Internet Culture*
- + Jon Birger, *Date-onomics: How Dating Became a Lopsided Numbers Game*

### WEEK FOURTEEN (11/24) – DON'T FEED the TROLLS

Read the section “Enter the Manosphere” from a book chapter I’m writing ([PDF](#))

Emma Grey Ellis, “Nobody Knows What ‘Troll’ Means Anymore - Least of All Mueller,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

“Trolls Across America,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Issie Lapowsky, “2017 Was a Terrible Year for Internet Freedom,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Robert Peck, “The Punishing Ecstasy of Being a Reddit Moderator,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))

Contrapoints, “Decrypting the Alt-Right: How to Recognize a F@scist” ([WEB](#))

- + Garrett M. Graff, “Russian Trolls are Still Playing Both Sides - Even with the Mueller Probe,” ([WEB](#))
- + Issie Lapowsky, “Iran's New Facebook Trolls Are Using Russia's Playbook,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Nicholas Thompson, “How Russian Trolls Used Meme Warfare to Divide America,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Issie Lapowsky, “Inside the Research Lab Teaching Facebook About its Trolls,” *WIRED* ([WEB](#))
- + Ginger Gorman, *Troll Hunting: Inside the World of Online Hate and its Human Fallout*

### WEEK FIFTEEN (12/01) – PRESENTATIONS

*Field Notes Pt. 2 Due*

*In-Class Presentations*

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **DIGITAL SYLLABUS**

I will be maintaining the syllabus and daily schedule via Google Docs for the course of the semester. The daily schedule is subject to change. Any changes I make to the assigned readings will be announced at least a week in advance. I will also try to keep the amount of work the same (e.g. if I add a reading, I will also cut a reading of a similar length from the same week). No other parts of the syllabus or schedule will be changed during the semester.

### **ATTENDANCE**

As per GMU Academic Policies: “Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole.” Attendance is particularly crucial in a discussion-based course.

Unexcused absences will be negatively factored into participation grades. Any student with more than two unexcused absences will receive a failing participation grade for the course.

Students may arrange for excused absences which will not be factored into participation grades as per GMU Academic Policies on Registration, Attendance and Grading. In these instances, it will be the responsibility of the student to provide as early advance notice as possible and to arrange to make up any missed work.

### **TARDINESS**

If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be counted as absent. If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to catch up with the rest of the class. I will not repeat the instructions delivered at the beginning of classes for the benefit of tardy students. Furthermore, students leaving class early will also be counted as tardy.

### **LATE WORK**

All assignments must be submitted to me by the provided deadlines. I reserve the right to refuse to accept, grade, and comment on any assignments submitted late. That being said, if you contact me in advance about any problems you are having getting a particular assignment in on time *before the deadline*, I can usually work out an extension for you. I do, however, reserve the right to refuse any given extension on a case by case basis.

### **EMAIL POLICY**

My response to your emails will not be immediate. Please budget at least one business day for a response to any given email. This means you need to plan in advance if you are going to contact me with time sensitive questions or concerns.

Additionally, students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, pregnancy status or genetic information is a violation of state and federal law, as well as George Mason University's Non-Discrimination policy, and *will not be tolerated*. Harassment of any person (either in the form of quid pro quo or creation of a hostile environment) similarly *will not be tolerated*. Retaliation against any person who complains about discrimination is prohibited.

We will be dealing with complicated and often disconcerting aspects of race, color, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, pregnancy status and genetic information in this course. Students will not be punished for engaging in these themes openly and honestly, so long as they demonstrate a good faith effort towards inclusivity and sensitivity to otherness.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean for this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you do rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.



## DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Services (<http://ods.gmu.edu>, SUB 1, Room 4205, (703)993-2474) to determine the accommodations that you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog (<http://catalog.gmu.edu>) is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

## OTHER RESOURCES

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall, (703) 993-1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES’ “Ask a Librarian”:  
<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380,  
<http://caps.gmu.edu>