

Journalism 175: Media Fluency in the Digital Age

Consume, Critique & Create Digital Media

Offered online during Summer School for 4 weeks

Instructors: Bio & Contact

Debra Pierce, Faculty Associate, School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Email: debra.pierce@wisc.edu

Office: 5170 Vilas Hall, UW Madison

Office Hours: By Appointment

Deb has spent the past 10 years teaching undergraduate students about strategic communication; stuff like digital media, public relations, and communication strategy. Before that she worked in the marketing, media and advertising industry for 20 years. Deb and her husband have two daughters; one is a college student (who happens to be taking her first online course this summer!), and one is a teenager. Pet lovers, they have two cats, Maui and Smokey, and a golden retriever named Sadie. On summer weekends, you'll find Deb sailing, water skiing, and swimming.

Deb's digital world revolves around binging on Netflix, reading swimming blogs, and over-analyzing online advertising. Instagram brings out her "inner photographer," and she's becoming a "Snapchatter" as more of her friends migrate there. Connecting with friends and family across the country on Facebook helps her stay connected.

Deb hopes you enjoy creating, critiquing, and consuming digital media this summer!

Josephine Lukito, Teaching Assistant, School of Journalism & Mass Communication

Email: jlukito@wisc.edu

Office: 5115 Vilas Hall, UW Madison

Office Hours: By Appointment

Jo is a Ph.D. student in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at UW-Madison, but don't let the title "TA" fool you! Jo has been overseeing courses in political science and communication for the past five years, working closely with students in both online and live courses. In her own research, Jo is interested in journalism's transition to digital media and how social networks like Twitter talk about news stories.

Although she remembers a time before the digital age, the majority of Jo's life intimately combines digital communication and the real world, whether it has been programming online video games, going to Reddit meet-ups, blogging about politics, or designing websites. Her favorite hobbies include following the Harry Potter fandom, watching Netflix, and posting pictures of food on Instagram! She can't wait to connect with each of you digitally!

Course Description

Digital media is very much a part of our day-to-day lives. For some of us, it's hard to remember there not being a computer or a cell phone somewhere around, whether at home or school. The media landscape has changed vastly over the last 20 years; this has major ramifications for us as both producers and consumers of digital media.

Being "digitally fluent" is considered a key 21st Century skill. So what does it mean to be fluent in digital media? It goes way beyond putting a "snap" on your Story or posting to Facebook. It's a matter of knowing which medium is best given what you want to say—and who you want to converse with!

Through this course, students will critically examine and engage with this media landscape. Students will analyze how digital media content is created and digested by various audiences across social, political, and economic environments.

Prerequisites

None. This course is open to all majors and students, including first-year Freshmen. All majors are encouraged to take this course, and being 'digitally fluent' is a key 21st Century skill! Our only requirement: be ready to engage with your instructors and classmates as you explore what it means to be digitally fluent!

Degree Requirements

This is a general education elective, and helps students prepare for a Communication A course. J175 is also one of five required "core" area courses that students may select from for the Digital Studies Certificate (DSC) at UW-Madison.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Understand what it means to be digitally fluent.
- Understand key media fluency terms and know WHY they are important.
- Critically examine how digital media forms are both consumed and produced in society across political, economic and social environments.
- Apply their media fluency knowledge and skills to produce fun and interesting, yet critical and thought-provoking, digital media.

Methods of Instruction

This course uses Desire2Learn (D2L) for the facilitation of communications between faculty and students, submission of assignments, and posting of grades. D2L is part of the Learn@UW suite of tools at UW-Madison and can be accessed at <https://learnuw.wisc.edu/>.

Instructional content includes:

- Learn@UW course web content & hyperlinked information
- Facebook, Twitter, and WordPress (a blogging service)
- Readings
- Videos: this course uses only short, action-packed videos
- Podcasts
- Websites and other digital platforms

As with any other university course, students are encouraged to take notes as they read through the material in order to prepare for assignments and quizzes.

Textbook & Readings

Textbook

There is no assigned textbook for this course.

Required Readings

Required readings are provided within Learn@UW.

Student Assignments & Quizzes

In keeping with the theme of the course, student assignments will focus on consuming, critiquing, and creating digital media. Four quizzes will be given. Detailed information is as follows:

- **Digital media "consume, critique and create" assignments.** Students will "consume" digital content, such as course materials, online readings and websites. Then they will critically analyze that content and write a corresponding entry in their personal "Digital Reflections Journal," a Facebook post, or tweet about it. (Note: these assignments may vary summer to summer, and are dependent in part on the digital topics covered in the course.)
- **Media "production" (blog posts, tweets, and Facebook posts).** Students will write for our [Campus Survival Guide](#) blog, tweet via our course Twitter feed, and post to our Facebook page. By the end of our four-week course, students will be able to feature our blog in their portfolios!
- **Discussion via social media platforms.** Students will actively "discuss" key assigned topics by engaging with each other on our course Twitter feed and Facebook page.
- **Four quizzes.** There will be a total of four weekly, multiple-choice quizzes. The quizzes are taken within the D2L Learn@UW system. The quiz content contains only information from the corresponding week; the quizzes are not cumulative week to week. Because of the fast, four-week pace, there will not be a mid-term or final exam. Quizzes should be taken after all homework is completed. These are timed, open-book quizzes that will draw from all the content within that week's unit, including: Learn@UW information, hyperlinked text/information, readings, videos, audiotapes, and assignments. Quiz questions are randomized; therefore, students will NOT receive the same quiz as their classmates. All quizzes are written with the same level of difficulty.

Grading

The following methods of evaluation will be used – sample only; subject to change:

<u>Assignment/Quizzes</u>	<u>Number of Assignments/Quizzes</u>	<u>Points per Assignment</u>	<u>Evaluation Method</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
Reflections Journal: 250-word max	3	10	Pass/Fail	3
Blog posts: 250-word max	3	10	Pass/Fail	30
Facebook posts: 80-word max	14	2	Pass/Fail	28
Tweets: 140-character max	14	1	Pass/Fail	14
Quizzes: 25 questions each	4	50	Graded	200

Grand Total Points Possible: 302

Grading Scale:

The following scale will be used to determine the final grade:

93 - 100 = **A** 88 - 92 = **AB** 83 - 87 = **B** 78 - 82 = **BC** 70 - 77 = **C** 60 - 69 = **D**

Permission for a student to receive an incomplete grade (I) is at the discretion of the instructor and must be accompanied by a written contract for completion of course requirements. Failure to take exams, complete assignments are not acceptable reasons for an incomplete.

Course Flow & Pace

This is an accelerated, four-week, 100%-online, summer-school course. The course consists of:

- Four units, with one unit being completed each week. Students get to work at their own pace within each week, but there are assignments and quizzes that are due at the end of each week.
- Each unit (or week) has a unit overview, three or four modules, and a unit wrap-up in them. Across the four-week course, there are a total of 13 modules; each module is roughly equivalent to one week of the regular academic semester.
- There is one quiz given at the end of each of the four units, for a total of four quizzes.
- **Units will “open early” at 12:01 AM CST the Friday before each week;** those students that want additional time may start early.
- Assignments and the quiz for each of the units must be completed no later than the end of the week, which will be **Sundays at 11:59 pm CST.**

As a four-week accelerated course, students are being given the freedom to complete the readings, assignments and quizzes whenever they can, within the span of one week. In addition, by opening up the modules early, students have more flexibility to determine when they can, or want, to complete their work within a 10-day window. However, with this flexibility comes responsibility; students are expected to pace themselves over the course of the week. Don't wait until Sunday to start a unit! Pace yourself over the course of the week. Students waiting until Sunday may have issues completing assignments and finishing the quiz.

Course Topics and Schedule

Due to the fast-pace, ever-changing digital nature of the course, topics within the course will vary summer to summer. The class will always be ‘up to date’ with what’s new in digital. Key topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Media fluency concepts and constructs
- The ‘biggest’ topics in digital: social media, blogs and micro blogs, online advertising, search, etc.
- Hot, late breaking, or interesting topics: privacy, ethics, revenue generation, etc.

The schedule will vary based on topic. Contact the instructor closer to the start of the semester for more information.