



**East China Normal University
GEC International Summer School**

COM12: Communication and Media Studies

Term: June 16th to July 18th, 2025

Class Hours: Monday through Friday, 110 minutes each day (2,750 minutes in total)

Instructor: Anya Schiffrin

Home Institution: TBD

Office hours: TBD

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Course Description

This is an introductory course that surveys the theory and application of technology for communication and self-presentation online. A major emphasis is placed on **Computer-mediated Communication (CMC)** – the study of the social effects of communication and information technology.

Areas covered include factors that distinguish mediated from face-to-face interaction, theories of mediated interpersonal communication, self-presentation online, Internet-based relationships, and online communities.

Upon completion of this course, the student should have knowledge of how the Internet influences communication and a better understanding of how to use CMC for self-presentation.

Prerequisite: None

Course Overview

The course is divided into four units:

- 1) *Learn Basic Theory* will present basic concepts, arguments, and theories in CMC;
- 2) *Critique Central Issues* will consider some of the major issues in CMC more general - especially in terms of identity, relationships, and communities online.
- 3) *Apply in Fieldwork* encourages students to actually do some CMC



4) *Explore Focus Areas* provides a series of topics for students' independent research.

Learning Objective

A student who satisfactorily completes this course should:

- 1) Learn the basic principles of effective communication;
- 2) Learn and practice basic communication skills in a variety of computer mediated contexts;
- 3) Appreciate the role of civility, ethics, and diversity in communication contexts;
- 4) Build a framework for effective online communication.

Required Text

Computer mediated communication: Social interaction and the internet, by Thurlow, C., Lengel, L., & Tomic, A. (2004)

ISBN: 978-0761949541

Course Hours

The course has 25 class sessions in total. Each class session is 110 minutes in length, for a total of 2750 minutes of in-class time. The course meets from Monday to Friday. ECNU awards 3 credits for this course. Different universities may count course credits differently. Consult officials at your own home institution.

Attendance

Summer school is very intense and to be successful, students need to attend every class. Occasionally, due to illness or other unavoidable circumstance, a student may need to miss a class. ECNU policy requires a medical certificate to be excused. Any absence may impact on the student's grade. Moreover,



ECNU policy is that a student who has more than 3 absences will fail the course. Arriving late or leaving early will count as a partial absence.

Grading Policy

ECNU awards grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, and F. Most colleges and universities do not award transfer credit for grades of D or F.

In this course, grading will be based on the following:

10%	Attendance and Participation
20%	Talking points and in-class quizzes
20%	Group research and discussions based on assigned readings
50%	Theme-based research reports

Talking points and in-class quizzes:

You are required to make notes on our readings for each meeting. These should be meaningful notes to you, so they do not need to be especially formal. Notes can include questions, extensions, rebuttals, or the beginnings of writing ideas. Bring these notes to class with you, and be prepared to use these notes to talk from during class. In the same page of your talking points, you will also answer questions based on the readings asked by the instructor in the beginning of each class. Your talking points and in-class quizzes will be collected at the end of each class meeting.

Group research and discussions based on the assigned readings:

Working in groups, you will be assigned a question to explore for each reading before class. In class, you will first share your research on that question within your group. Then you present what your group has agreed upon to the class. Finally, you sum up your points in a one page report and turn it in in the next class.

Theme-based research reports:

As a group or an individual, you will need to complete a research paper by the end of the semester. You will pick one of the focus areas in the textbook or develop a new area by yourself. Through several classes of fieldwork, you will identify five scholarly sources, identify a specific topic or research questions in the focus area for study, and conduct a study examining the topic by using data from the Internet and social media. In your research paper (about 2000



words), you will need to have the following sections: introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, and references. You will turn in the first draft of your paper by the end of Week four, and a final paper in Week 5. As part of this research process, you will select one scholarly article on your topic for classroom discussion and present your study in class for peer critique.

General Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Attend all classes and be responsible for all material covered in class and otherwise assigned. Any unexcused absence may impact a student's grade.
- Arrive to class on-time: Late arrivals are disruptive to your fellow students and to the conduct of the class.
- Complete the day's required reading and assignments before class
- Review the previous day's notes before class; make notes about questions you have about the previous class or the day's reading
- Refrain from texting, phoning or engaging in computer activities unrelated to class during class (不要用手机) It is highly disrespectful to the professor and to the class.
- Participate in class discussions and complete required written work on time.

Course Schedule

The planned schedule sketched out below may be modified to suit the interests or abilities of the enrolled students or to take advantage of special opportunities or events that may arise during the term.

Week 1

- *Day 1*
 - *Course outline*
 - *An introduction to CMC*
- *Day 2*
 - *Technologies for communication*
- *Day 3*
 - *Technology and social interaction*



- Day 4
 - o *Interpersonal dynamics*
- Day 5
 - o *Fieldwork*

Week 2

- Day 1
 - o *Group dynamics*
- Day 2
 - o *“Flaming” and embedded media*
- Day 3
 - o *Online ethics and international inequalities*
- Day 4
 - o *Online identities*
- Day 5
 - o *Fieldwork*

Week 3

- Day 1
 - o *Language and the internet*
- Day 2
 - o *Women and the internet*
- Day 3
 - o *Interpersonal attraction, cybersex and cyberporn*
- Day 4
 - o *Antisocial behavior, online compulsion and addiction*
- Day 5
 - o *Fieldwork*

Week 4

- Day 1
 - o *Political communication in CMC*
- Day 2
 - o *Legal communication in CMC*
- Day 3
 - o *Organizational communication in CMC*
- Day 4
 - o *Health communication in CMC*



- *Day 5*
 - o *Fieldwork*

Week 5

- *Day 1*
 - o *Lifespan communication in CMC (I)*
- *Day 2*
 - o *Lifespan communication in CMC (II)*
- *Day 3*
 - o *Instructional communication in CMC*
- *Day 4*
 - o *Visual communication in CMC*
- *Day 5*
 - o *New media communication in CMC*

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty. Specifically, unless otherwise directed by the professor, students may not consult other students, books, notes, electronic devices or any other source, on examinations. Failure to abide by this may result in a zero on the examination, or even failure in the course.