

PSY 414, CSCI 497 COURSE SYLLABUS (DRAFT)

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What will you learn?

In this course, we will examine a variety of technology-based media and their setups, the psychological principles behind how people interact with these media, the present and future applications, and the impact of human-computer interactions. You will be encouraged to appreciate and apply the knowledge that is discussed.

Readings

1. Basic Textbook: Blascovich, J., & Bailenson, J. (2011). *Infinite reality: the hidden blueprint of our virtual life*. HarperCollins: New York
2. Supplementary reading materials: TBA

Grade Evaluation

Posting answers to the questions posed by instructor: Reading the textbook is essential to your successful completion of these assignments. Except the last week, answers should be posted no later than 11pm Thursday evening. Your postings should be substantive and civil. Please observe the following criteria when posting answers:

- 1) Does the posting demonstrate the understanding of the materials being discussed? Please make an explicit mention of the theory and viewpoints you use for your arguments by using at least one direct quotation from the textbook chapter.
- 2) Does the argument in the posting hold together and move forward?
- 3) Are there grammatical and spelling errors?

The closing chapter due date will announced later.

Lateness Policy: Five points will be deducted for each day.

Answering Questions Total: 15x5 = 75

Discussion Responsibilities: For answers to discussion questions, every student is required to make responses to the work by at least two students. The discussion responses must address whether and how the posting centered around the theories and viewpoints presented in the textbook. Discussion should end by 11pm Friday evening.

Lateness for discussions is not acceptable.

Discussion Total: 5 X 5 = 25

To be on the safe side, assume that I grade on a numerical scale: **A = 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; D = 69-60; F = below 60**. However, I reserve the right to reward exemplary attendance and participation.

Attendance:

If you are "absent"/not participating for an excused reason (see student handbook or instructor for detailed explanation of excused absences), you will be able to make up your work. You will have to produce documentation for your excused absence, and make arrangements to make up the work within a week from your absence.

It is each student's responsibility to communicate honestly and frequently with the instructor about any circumstances that prevent the student from participating, and result in a temporary period of inactivity. Do NOT simply stop participating or drop out of the course. If you are not actively involved weekly, it needs to be for reasons that are serious and cannot be avoided, and when that occurs, communicate immediately with your instructor by email, or if you cannot access email, then call and speak with either Ms. Aletha Poe or Mrs. Dana Sutherland in the psychology office (903.886.5940).

Withdrawing From/Dropping the Course:

Students are responsible for following University procedures to drop a class. If you stop participating in the class for any reason, you must initiate the process of dropping, or you will receive a failing grade. DO NOT wait until the last minute to drop the class. Plan to take care of this several days ahead of time, so that you will have the time required to get the forms signed, submitted, etc.

Other Important Basics:

Keep in mind that a syllabus sometimes shifts a little as the course gets underway. I say that by way of noting the importance of class attendance, as you will be held responsible for any change in plans announced in class.

The other basic admonition every syllabus must include is that dishonesty (broadly defined) is not allowed. This means that neither cheating nor plagiarism will be tolerated and students who engage in either will be subject to the disciplinary processes described in the Code of Student Conduct. There is a brochure on plagiarism at course website. If you have further questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please see me. Or, as the university likes me to say: **“All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See Student's Guide Handbook).**

Also, note that “Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee.” Their phone is (903)886-5150.

Disclaimer:

While I make every effort to abide by the information presented here, I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any time.

Tentative Schedule of Topics

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading |
|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| 1 | June 2 | Introduction to the course Defining reality | Introduction (1-8) Ch 1: Dream machines |
| 2 | June 9 | Hardware setup of virtual media | Ch3: Mirror, mirror on the wall |
| 3 | June 16 | Social interactions in virtual media Do people treat virtual environments real? | Ch4: Winning virtual friends and influencing virtual people |
| 4 | June 23 | Understanding others via their digital footprints | Ch10: Digital footprints |
| 5 | June 30 | Applications of virtual reality in commercial product, medicine, psychotherapy, physical therapy, and business. | Ch 7: Re-creating yourself Ch13: Virtual yin and yang |