

Design of Online Communities Syllabus

Course Information

Course Prefix and Number: 6470

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor: Bruckman, Amy

Course Description

In this course, students will learn about the design of online communities and social media.

Course Learning Outcomes

By enrolling in this course, students will learn about how communities on the internet function, with an emphasis on these key concepts:

- Community
 - What is a “community” and how do people form mutually supportive groups online?
- Identity
 - How do people represent who they are online, and how does that shape patterns of human interaction?
- Knowledge
 - How do groups of people construction knowledge, and what barriers exist to groups forming “true” shared beliefs.
- Business Models
 - How do corporate business models change the way platforms make design decisions?
- Research Ethics
 - How do we study internet users ethically?
- Qualitative Research Methods
 - How can we use participant observation and qualitative interviewing to understand people’s online behavior?

Required Course Materials

Required:

- *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, by Erving Goffman
- *The Great Good Place*, by Ray Oldenburg (paper copies hard to find; available on [Kindle](#))
- *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, by I.E. Seidman
- *Should You Believe Wikipedia?*, by Amy Bruckman (free draft provided on Canvas)

Additional readings are online and on Canvas.

Also required:

- Blue books
 - You will need to bring one or two blue books to each of the three tests.
 - Please do not write your name in your book before class. It must be blank.

Grading Policy

Specified on the course form along with deliverables.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is not tracked for a grade; however, students are responsible for all material taught in class.

Academic and Research Honesty/Integrity Statement

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Student Code of Conduct](#)[Academic Honor Code](#)[Appendix A: Graduate Addendum to the Academic Honor Code](#)

Students are expected to perform research in an ethical and responsible manner. All Doctoral and Master's Thesis students are required to take the, and it is expected that students abide by the principles taught in that training while performing research.[Responsible Conduct of Research training](#)

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Allegations of scientific or scholarly misconduct are handled in accordance with the procedures outlined by the [Policy for Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Scholarly Misconduct](#)

Core IMPACTS

Not applicable

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs. [contact the Office of Disability Services](#)

Student-Faculty Expectations

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. articulates some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. Additional information for research-related work is given in . In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#)[The Expectations of Advisors and Advisees](#)