

## PROTECTED: SYLLABUS 001 (F17)

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### ADMINISTRATIA

**Instructor:** Christopher Carruth // [Christopher.Carruth@colorado.edu](mailto:Christopher.Carruth@colorado.edu)

**Office Hours // Location:** Tues/Thurs 12:30pm – 1:30pm // ATLS 233 (appt. encouraged)

**Virtual Office Hours:** Happy to chat via phone, Skype, or Google Hangout by appt.

**Meeting Times 001:** Tuesday / Thursday, 11:00am – 12:15pm, ATLAS 100

**Lecture Assistant (LA) 001:** Jonathan Fermin // [Jonathan.Fermin@colorado.edu](mailto:Jonathan.Fermin@colorado.edu)

*Our illustrious LAs are here to help with grading, assignments, and general course assistance.*

**Edmodo URL 001** (Be patient while your join request is approved): <https://edmo.do/ffjsyw> (Join code: 656nfd)

**Grading Sheet 001:** <http://bit.ly/2ijuuON>

### RESOURCES

**Texts:** No textbooks. All readings and resources will be made available via Edmodo.

*Note: Resources may change as necessary, but every effort will be made to avoid this.*

**Equipment:** Students must have access to a computing device as well as the internet. See me if this is problematic. Additional items may be checked through the [ATLAS Institute](#).

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

As an introductory course to the TAM program we will be examining the mutual influence of technology, arts, media, and society through topical lectures, engaging discussions, open-ended assignments, and rigorous exams. While our critical analysis focuses primarily on our increasingly digital lifestyles through a variety of contexts, the heart of the course is very much in the digital humanities. As such, we are playfully inquisitive with all topics at the intersection of technology, art, media and society. While each lecture can stand on its own, there are key themes interwoven throughout the course including the meaning of technology for individuals and society, digital media theory, historical foundations of technology + current trends + future implications championing non-traditional perspectives, and creativity in the digital age. We'll not only explore "how does it work" and "where does this come from" but "why is it here" and, most important, does it impact us as individuals and as a society".

We'll philosophize

We'll analyze.

We'll be creative.

We'll even be controversial.

You will be called upon to relate the topics to your own interests such as they are professionally, academically, and otherwise; the course seeks not only to impart knowledge, but to emphasize relevancy of technology in society and, through this, encourages the student to come to their own understandings of its meaning.

There will be group discussions. There will be end-of-class reflections. There will be various methods of assessment. And, again, there will be polemic discussions. To earn high marks, you are expected to attend and participate. Indeed, whether online or in-class, that's the one thing I ask of you as a student, as a living, breathing body, to be present and contribute.

So, raise your hand.

# ATLS 2000 - THE MEANING OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Equips students with an understanding of technological transformations in interpersonal, organizational, expressive, and mass communications.
- Course places an emphasis on the technical, social, and media changes which underlie the march towards a digital society.
- Student deepens understanding of historical/contemporary issues related to technology usage such as trends, impacts, & modes of expression.
- Student gains knowledge of significant individuals and periods in the rich history of technology and media as well as future possibilities.
- Student learns of foundational theorists and philosophers whose concepts are applicable in analyzing technological and media impacts on society (i.e. Humanities and Philosophy primer context of the TAM program).
- Student will critically analyze technology's impact from multiple vantages: professionally, personally, academically, environmentally, artistically, politically, culturally, etc
- Student develops critical perspectives on course topics as well as the ability to articulate said perspectives verbally, in writing, and via creative expression.
- Student gains a working understanding of topics and vocabulary relevant to information technology (e.g. HTML, CSS, Privacy, Media Theory, etc)
- Student begins/further the transition from passive consumer of technology, arts, and media to active creator.
- Student creates and maintains {free} WordPress Portfolio Site for usage throughout their TAM experience.
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## KEY TOPICS:

- Mutual influence of Technology, Arts, Media and Society
- The History and Future of Technology, Computing, and the Internet
- Privacy and Surveillance
- Critical Media Theory (McLuhan, Plato, Baudrillard, Barthes, Benjamin, Foucault)  
Diversity, Gender, and Representation in STEM fields
- Ethics, Impact, and Philosophy of various trending technologies (AI, Automation, VR/AR, etc)
- Social Media (Virality, Usage, Impacts, Activism, etc)
- The Disruptive impact of technology on various industries and creative endeavors (Microfame, Music, Film, Writing, Photography, Gaming)

Given that our new developments related to our course change before the digital ink dries, new topics may be introduced in favor of others. Additionally, if there are any topics that are left over you feel they are crucial to your understanding, then by all means, make a suggestion.

## COURSE POLICIES:

So you have a traditional reference to anchor yourself, the assessment is **weighted, but not graded** as follows. However, be sure to read the entire assessment section which follows to full understand the grading structure:

Attendance	15%
Contribution	25%
Exams	25%
Assignments	20%
Final Paper/Project	15%

## ASSESSMENT (GRADING)

My grading system deviates a bit from the traditional model in that it is an individualized, contractual system whose central idea is to provide you, the student, with agency in terms of earning grade. The primary advantage of a contract grading is that you decide how much work you wish to do this semester; if you complete that work on time **and** satisfactorily, you will receive the grade which you contracted. This means planning ahead, thinking about all of your obligations and responsibilities this semester, and also determining what grade you want or need in this course.

If you complete the work you contracted for, you get the grade. Done. (#OnMySoapbox I have full respect for the student who is honest with themselves in that they only need a C, contract and then carries out the contract perfectly. Sometimes, life happens and there are other obligations that preclude students from doing all of the requirements to earn an A in the course – no knowing that going in, in fact the opposite)

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than from one that signs up for a “C” (creativity doesn’t mean it’s gallery ready work, rather I want to know you’ve put time and thought into your effort – the aesthetics matter less than the effort in this class).

To earn a “C” Grade:

- Post student profile, MBTI type, and contract grade to Edmodo.
- Up to 3 absences
- 3 missed assignments allowed.
- Minimal participation online and/or in class (~10 posts on Edmodo or in class comments throughout the semester).
- A **basic** understanding of course material on all exams and the final paper/project.

To earn a “B” Grade:

- Post student profile, MBTI type, and contract grade to Edmodo.
- Up to 3 absences
- 2 missed assignments allowed.
- Regular participation online and/or in class (~15 posts on Edmodo or in-class comments throughout the semester).
- Participate in the Social Media Challenge.
- A **thorough** understanding of course material on all exams and the final paper/project.

To earn an “A” Grade:

- Post student profile, MBTI type, and contract grade to Edmodo.
- Up to 3 absences
- No missed assignments.
- Frequent participation online and/or in class (~20 posts on Edmodo or in class comments throughout the semester).
- Participate in the Social Media Challenge.
- An **advanced** understanding of course material on all exams and the final paper/project.

### A NOTE ON READING THE GRADING SHEET:

You may check your standing at any time via the grading sheet (link at top). The colors shown on said sheet provide a visual overview of your current standing, with the following rubric used as rationale (as noted above, your final grade is weighted based off the percentages listed):

- **Green: Satisfactorily completed task.**  
Contract grade maintained.
- **Yellow: Accepted, yet work has some problems (i.e. late submission, lack of depth, missed key criteria, etc)**  
Attendance: Each *class* missed after 3 absences equals 1/3 loss of letter grade (note: there are two sections per day)  
Contribution: Below par contribution online and/or in class, lose 2/3 letter grade  
Assignments: 2 yellows = 1 red (lose of 1/3 letter grade), each subsequent yellow loses 1/3 letter grade  
Social Media: loss of 2/3 letter grade  
Exams: 70-85% performance, loss of 2/3 letter grade
- Final Paper/Project: late submission, lack of depth, missed key criteria, etc. Loss of 2/3 letter grade
- **Red: Failed. (i.e. work not submitted, unacceptable submission)**  
Attendance: Each *class* missed after 3 absences equals 1/3 loss of letter grade (note: there are two sections per day)  
Contribution: Lack of contribution online or in-class, loss of full letter grade  
Assignments: 1 red = lose of 1/3 letter grade  
Social Media: loss of full letter grade  
Exams: Below 70% performance, loss of full letter grade.
- Final Paper/Project: work not submitted, unacceptable submission. Loss of full letter grade.

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### ATTENDANCE AND DAILY REFLECTIONS (15%):

Students are automatically given up to three absences\*. After this, each absence will reduce your final grade by 1/3 of a letter grade. Tardiness (arriving more than 10 minutes late or skipping early) counts as an absence. Attendance is **tallied via end-of-section reflections**. After each section is over, students will have until 11:59pm, same day, to submit an approximately twoe (140 character) reflection to Edmodo. Reflections serve three functions:

1. Allow for us to check your understanding of course content.
2. Engage in further dialogue, as necessary (all reflections are read, if not responded to).
3. Serve as a record of your attendance.

**NOTE: In Edmodo reflections are graded as either 1/1 (received and attendance noted) or 0/1 (not received and attendance not noted).**

Miss a reflection and it's as if you missed class. I advise getting in the habit of scheduling your reflections via a calendar app. Submitting a reflection for a lecture that you did not attend is tantamount to cheating and is unethical. If you find yourself being unethical, hopefully you'll have the wherewithal to check your intentions and, provided your moral compass is working, stop. If you find you being unethical, then you will likely be placed on academic probation within the CU system, expelled, shamed, tarred, feathered, etc, etc, etc. Have integrity in all your actions. Integrity is that's carved in stone somewhere and, if not, it should be.

In terms of content, good reflections are often a summation of the day's topics or a question regarding an area that you don't fully understand; show me the lights are on, people. I find reflections also to be useful as a way into the final paper/project deliverables discussed below (i.e. your initial thoughts and reactions to a conversation on the potential "rights" we should/n't give Artificial Intelligence is a solid foundational for a larger investigation of the topic.)

**\*\*\*If you have to miss class, you don't need to let me know. I certainly don't need proof from a doctor (you're adults, yes?? okay, I trust you)\*\*\*** It's your responsibility to ask a classmate what you missed, to get all the relevant information from a classmate, and to make sure you complete any assignments *on time*. If you ask, "I am going to miss class, is there anything I need to know?" I will know you have not read this section, and I will be appropriately surly with you. Consider yourself warned 😏

*\*All types absences fall under these three absences (e.g. minor illnesses and injuries, oversleeping, vacations, job interviews, ski-days, family obligations and situations, etc.) so it is not wise to make exceptions at the start of the semester. Exceptions may be made for religious holidays, severe illnesses, and prolonged family emergencies.*

### CONTRIBUTION (25%):

I want you to think about the typical University lecture. What comes to mind? Is there a sage on the stage, perhaps?? Is s/he droning on and on? Are the people in front of you consuming a manner of empty calories via shopping and social media? Whatever came to mind, I assure you this course is structured differently than the above description, and contribution factors as prominently as the exams do for your final grade. As the Professor, I provide the source material for discussions with the lecture hall acting as the forum for discussing. To earn high marks, you need to do more than simply listen passively, rather, students quite literally **make the lecture** by raising their voices. You are part of the conversation for each and every topic, both online and in-class.

For assessment purposes, the frequency and insight of your participation determines the level of your contribution. This is important. With insight in mind, the main questions I ask myself when evaluating are "did this student move the conversation along?" and "how much did this student contribute to the learning of his/her classmates?". Frequency is evaluated based upon your class grade and assessed in the following manners:

1. In-class, you are expected to raise your voice and share your thoughts in pair-breakouts, small groups, and class discussions. We're not looking for profundity, rather we're wanting you to contribute a few coherent ideas or questions that advance the conversation as it relates to the day's topic. I'm especially interested in learning how you feel the topic can/does impact your academic/career/personal interests. Again, this may be done in-class or via Edmodo. *Note: Be cognizant of how you interact in class discussions. If you find yourself commenting more frequently than most other people, step back and give others a chance to contribute (even if you have something to say). If you tend to hesitate to join discussions, **challenge yourself to jump in**.*
2. Online (Edmodo), you may contribute via student posts; you're encouraged to link articles, artwork, videos, or other relevant and interesting news item in Edmodo as the semester progresses. Ideally, the subject matter of your posts will align with the topic of the day (e.g. during discussions on Social Media, a relevant link would be to an article examining Facebook's role in privacy and monitoring, fake news).

### EDMODO:

We will be using Edmodo to disseminate resources, share deliverables, host online discussions, submit end-of-class reflections, and distribute online exams. We will not be using D2L; the creation of an Edmodo account is **mandatory**.

Think of Edmodo as a sort of educational Facebook. Post. Comment. Like. Contribute.

### EXAMS (25%)

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\*\*\*\*If additional space/time is needed for either the exam or paper, please notify me in advance of test date.

## ASSIGNMENTS (20%)

During the semester there will be multiple assignments which will explore the topic at hand. The idea behind each assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to apply what you're learn lectures and readings in a reflective way which meshes and advances your understanding of the topic being discussed. Most of the assignments will be of an open-ended format, meaning th have the ability to decide if you want to turn in an essay, photo gallery, painting, drawing, poetry, video, etc.

Nearly all assignments will be due within one week, yet you will have an additional week from the due date to submit late assignments for partial credit. After this point, late submissions will accepted.

*Note: Assignments are marked 0/0 or left unmarked, as if they're pass/fail. If you didn't complete the task to spec, you'll have a brief window to resubmit or clarify.*

The social media challenge, outlined in detail below, is considered the most involved and important assignment. As such it carries more weight than the other assignments.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE:

This challenge is a study into the personal, social, and psychological patterns and behaviors that are associated with dis/connecting from social media (See "ground rules" below for a more c explanation of "dis/connecting").

The challenge will consist of the following deliverables:

- 1) Make a concise statement on what you expect to happen when you dis/connect from Social Media (2-3 sentences). This will serve as your hypothesis and should be included in the introd your submission.
- 2) At the end of the challenge period, each student will write a reflection on her or his experience dis/ connecting from social media. Alternatively a diary format with one longer entry at the er context is acceptable (if "connecting" share the account you created/curated). Touch upon the social, personal, and technological implications of abstaining, or joining, social media. What di experience? How, if at all, will this change your social media habits moving forward?
- 3) Upload your statement and reflection, in one document, to Edmodo.

Exceptions to this challenge will be made if you have familial or employment obligations (e.g. you work in social media), but not if you indulge in personal usage. This is on the honor system everything with intention and integrity.

## GROUND RULES

**DISCONNECTING:** In our challenge, disconnecting from social media limits you to: emailing, SMS texting and content consumption via news sites not named reddit.com. I'm primarily conce interaction with the larger online community – creating, sharing, liking, critiquing, praising any type of content. Actions like writing blog posts, uploading videos, commenting, liking a comment status updates, sharing a post, checking in, playing social games, chatting online, video chatting, or anything related to those actions are verboten.

**CONNECTING:** Connecting to social media should entail the creation and *active* curation of an online profile. For example, create an Instagram account. Find and follow friends and conta once per day. Play the #Hashtag game (Might I suggest downloading and using Gramblr to schedule and "game" your posts?)

## FINAL PAPER/PROJECT (15%):

You will have until the 19th of December, 5 days after the final exam, to submit your final paper of approximately 1500 words (~6pgs, double-spaced). In your paper you will return to address seminal question of the course, "What is the meaning of technology for you?" as answered in your original student profile. Reference it in this paper. I expect your answer to have evolved a updated understanding to draw from our various topics, lectures, discussions, readings, reflections, and assignments. A solid paper will be personal, succinct, and reference key theorists at technologies, comparing and contrasting concepts including, but not limited to, the following:

- Representation
- Aura
- Remix
- Authenticity

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- Artificial Intelligence
- Art
- Presence
- Love (& Sex)
- Truth
- Poverty
- Warfare
- Media (photography, music, film, writing, etc)
- Surveillance

You need not touch on all topics, but a good paper will tie in many of these. My aim is to have you explore the issue(s) you feel are most important in your life now and as your career trajectory spirals outward. Be sure to write on how technology is not only influencing your life but society as well.

**Group Option:** Students may complete as group (max of 5). In this case each participant must still contribute the ~1500 words yet the paper should flow, meaning transitions and bouncing participant's ideas is expected. Grades for a group paper will be based on individual (50%) and group effort (50%).

**Project Option:** As with the assignments, should you like to create an artistic, media-rich project that explores the themes above as opposed to a paper, you have my blessing to do so. This must be significant in-depth and insight on par with those who opt for the paper option (read: this is not necessarily an easier option and in many respects is much more challenging). See me personally if you'd like to go this route.

### EXTRA-CREDIT // MAKE-UPS:

If you're falling behind, I'm not opposed to entertaining extra credit, but *you* have to make the pitch. I don't have a standard assignment that will raise you up.

### FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND COURSE CONTENT

Due to the broad range of topics we will explore, it is inevitable that we will come across content dealing with gender, race, sex, violence, politics, religion, taboo subjects, etc. a broad range of materials will be shown and discussed, some of which assume the audience to be adult in age and demeanor. Should a student feel offended by something they have seen or heard, it would be appreciated, but not required, for said student to stay to be part of the dialogue and offer their perspective. However, if the student feels that they cannot remain in class, they are welcome to leave discretely as possible.

My role during such discussions will be as a facilitator and mediator; I strive to be as impartial as possible. All students are encouraged to participate in open discussion and academic discourse. Indeed, that's raising your voice and sharing a well-founded perspective, is part and parcel of this course.

### ON CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Don't do it. Respect yourself enough not to cheat or submit reflections for lectures you did not attend. If you find yourself being unethical, hopefully you'll have the wherewithal to check your intentions and, provided your moral compass is working, stop. If I find you being unethical, then you will likely be placed on academic probation within the CU system, expelled, shamed, tarred and feathered, etc, etc, etc.

Have integrity in all your actions. I imagine that's carved in stone somewhere and, if not, it should be.

For those inclined, here's a link to the official, if somewhat clinical, CU policy on academic integrity: (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy>).

### ONE MORE THING:

Don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or concerns about the class – that's often the only way I know that need to change something or be more clear. CU strives to be as inclusive as possible and in the spirit of that I have an open door policy – see or email me directly if you require **any** special accommodations due to disabilities, religious practices, physical requirements, medical needs, and/or anything in between.

Full boilerplate descriptions of CU policies can be found below.

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### HONOR CODE

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (in but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

### CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression, age, disability and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at [here](#) and [here](#)

### DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by email at [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu). If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

### RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See full details [here](#).

### DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by an employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

[Edit](#)