Section Information: COMSTU 210 CE1 01 Using Internet Comm

Course Name : Spring2011 OL

Section Instructor: Eileen McMahon

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Course Introduction

Welcome to Using Internet Communication! I hope that this course will enhance your understanding of the communication technologies available on the Internet, and that it will help you become an effective communicator using internet tools -- effective in your personal and professional lives.

The major purpose of this course is to enhance your abilities to find information, organize it and to communicate effectively using information technologies. You will review basic principles about effective communication generically, and participate in the translation of these principles into using digital communication tools in interpersonal, small group, and public presentational settings. You will have opportunities to develop your skills in technological modes befitting these respective settings, document sharing, internet publishing, discussion forums, blogging, electronic meetings, and social networks. Basic web-design principles will be presented, and students will create and publish a personal blog, and work in a virtual team to create a group project. You will create a final research paper that will explore some of the issues raised in the course.

This course does not introduce you to the basics of browsing, emailing, downloading files, etc. It assumes you have these skills already, and builds on them.

Course Methodology

This class will start each Monday at 9:00 AM. At this time the weekly assignments will become available in the "Course Sessions" folder on the course home page.

Plan on logging on to the course web site at the start of each week to read the plan for the week and organize your schedule accordingly. Plan on logging onto this course site 3-4 times each week and spending 6 - 8 hours on course work each week.

Course Objectives

Students taking this course should achieve the following: a renewed understanding of effective communication in general; the ability to facilitate communication and constrain it, to bring people together and drive them apart; a greater understanding of the tools available for research and communication using the internet; a greater facility at using those tools, knowing when and under what circumstances respective tools work best, and employing them to solve problems at work. By the end of this course you should:
1) Have an enhanced understanding of how the internet works.
2) Know how to search, find and evaluate information on the internet
3) Have enhanced skills in using internet communication tools, including: - Threaded discussions - Tools for e-meetings, Collaboration Web publishing tools, Web searching tools, Library searching techniques and Research tools
4) Have made new colleagues using tools of the internet.
5) Have enhanced your ability to communicate in general.
Course Overview

The course overview is published on: http://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?key=pjcacEFx7I2qnMNcumZwmZQ&output=html (Note: If you are unable to see this document try selecting Web Links from the course tool bar and looking for it in the Syllabus links section or copying the url and pasting it into a new window.)

Also note that this overview is subject to change and is only intended to give you a general overview of the course activities. Check the current week plan in the course sessions folder on the home page each week for the most up-to-date description of activities and assignments.

Instructor Contact info

Instructor: Eileen McMahon
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Fax Number: 617.287.3999
e-mail: eileen.mcmahon@umb.edu

Office Hours: I'm on campus Monday through Friday 9:00 - 5:00 PM and my schedule pretty flexible. My office is currently located in the Digital Learning Studio on the third floor of the Healey Library.

If you'd like to meet with me over the semester, call me at 617-287-3998 and let me know a couple of dates and times that would be good for you to meet. We could meet in my office in campus or in on Horizon Wimba it it's

not convenient for you to come to campus. Please feel free to call me directly with any urgent issues or private issues.

BLS/WebCT Vista Mail

I have disabled the e-mail tool in this course. If you want to e-mail another student in this course or me you can find our e-mail addresses posted in the course roster. This is the same place where you post your photo and add some info about yourself. Just make sure you opt to make this info public or no one will be able to see it!

Communicating with Me

Instead of sending me e-mail with course related questions, please post them in the Q & A folder found on the course home page and in the Discussions section instead. I will respond to any questions posted here. This is the best place to post all non-private questions that pertain to the course since like a classroom other students will benefit from the exchange.

Please call me with any private issues. You can reach me during the day time at 617-287-3998.

If you're local, I'm also available to meet with you on campus in my office. Just call me with a couple of times that would be conveient for use to meet.

If you can't come to campus and can't reach me by phone we could meet in WIMBA. Let me know you'd like to do his by sending me an e-mail to eileen.mcmahon@umb.edu
Course Hash Tags
If you want to share course info on Twitter, Delicious, or the UMass Boston BlogNetwork just use this hashtag: #COMSTU210
Important Dates

Add/Change deadline is Thursday, Feb. 15th

Pass/fail and withdrawal deadline is Thursday, April 7th

Spring Break

There will be no activities or new assignments released the week of March 14th. If you're caught up with all your assignments you should relax; if you owe me some assignments please use this week to catch up!

Required and Recommended Texts

There is no required text for this course. However if you want to explore some of the topics we will explore in this course in greater depth I recommend these texts:

Recommended Texts:

Benkler, Yochai. The Wealth of Networks, How Social Production Tansforms Markets and Freedom, Yale University Press, 2006 ISBN: 978-0-300-300-11056-2

Calishain, Tara and Rael Dornfest. Google Hacks. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly 2003. ISBN: 0-596-00447-8 (Paper)

Rheingold, Howard. Smart Mobs. Boulder, CO: Basic Books, 2002. ISBN 0-7382-0861-2 (Paper)

Lessing, Lawrence Free Culture: The Nature and Future of Creativity, Penguin Press, 2004. ISBN 1594200068 Get it/Buy it from http://www.free-culture.cc/get-it/

Dan Gillmor, Mediactive, online (CC license): http://mediactive.com/ and in print: Lulu 2010 ISDN: 978-0-9846336-0-9 (hardcover)

Lessing, Lawrence. Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy, 2008. Penguin Press, ISBN-10: 1594201722 (Hardcover)

Many of these texts can be purchased on line through Amazon.com (http://www.amazon.com) or Barnes and Noble (http://www.barnesandnoble.com).

Horizon Wimba and Live Classroom Dates

Introduction :

Horizon Wimba is synchronous online tool available within BLS/WebCT Vista. Wimba allows the instructor and students to meet in a virtual classroom where you can share applications and talk to each other in real time. An Open Wimba Session can be accessed from the home page for online class sessions and small group meetings. We will be meeting synchronously four times over the semester in a Horizon-Wimba Live classrooom that you will access from this course. We will never meet as a class in an actual location. Please arrange your schedule so you can

participate in at least two of these meetings.

If you are unable to participate you will be able to access an archived recording of the session but will not get credit for attending.

The dates and times of these meetings are as follows:

Tuesday, Feb. 15th 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Wednesday, March 2nd 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tuesday, March 29th 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Wednesday, April 27th, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Course Grades and Grading Scale

There will be a least one assignment each week and each assignment has a point value. You should plan to spend somewhere between 4- 5 hours each week on assignments for this course. Unless noted otherwise weekly assignments are due by Monday at 9:00 AM. The following grading scale will be use to determine your final grade:
Points Letter
93 - 100, A;
90 - 92, A-;
87 - 89, B+;
83 - 86, B;
80 - 82, B-;
77 - 79, C+;
73 - 76, C;
70 - 72, C-;
67 - 69, D+;
63 - 66, D;
60 - 62, D-;
0 - 59, F;

Assignment Points :

This spreadsheet displays the individual point value for all course assignments. I suggest that you refer to this spreadsheet throughout the course so that you can guage your progress and if necessary take advantage of some bonus assignments.
Click here to see:http://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?
key=pjcacEFx7I2pUmgQ7ILrmfg
If you are unable to see this document try viewing it in the Web Links tool.
It is listed under Syllabus links.

Bonus Assignments : There will be opportunities to do assignments for extra credit that will start to appear after July 13th on the home page.
Late Assignments

I will accept some late assignments but will deduct at least one point each time. If you are late with more than 3 assignments I would suggest that you take advantage of the bonus projects if you want to get a good grade. Note: Some assignmets can not be done after the due date. These include:
the Wiki project
your bio
editing your roster
Participation in Team Project is Required
For 4 weeks of this week course you will be part of a virtual team. The grade you receive on this group project will be heavily dependent on your ability to successfully communicate with your team. You will be required to coordinate your schedule with your team members and participate in at least two synchronous online meetings with them.
Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center
The Reading, Writing, and Study Strategies Center will be open during Spring Semester. If you can arrange to come to the campus, you can sign up for individual tutoring focused on reading, writing, and study strategies in the Academic Support Programs office on the first floor of the Campus Center.

To arrange a time to meet just call the Academic Support Programs at (617) 287-6550 and ask for Megan Turilli or Jesse Priest

Getting Technical Help with Blackboard Vista

Help for Blackboard Vista and Horizon Wimba is available 24/7 via e-mail or phone. Send e-mail to: bostonsupport@umassonline.net or call 1-888-300-6920. For live text chat, see the link on the User Login Page http://boston.umassonline.net/.

Technical Requirements

BLS/WebCT Vista Browser Check : After logging into BLS/WebCT Vista, run Check Browser from the My UMassOnline Boston web page. The results of this check will let you know if your browser is configured properly to use BLS/WebCT Vista. It will also provide instructions for correcting any deficiencies. Note especially that Popup blockers must be disabled in order to run BLS/WebCT Vista.
Hardware Requirements : The only additional hardware necessary for participation in the Wimba sessions is a computer headset, a combination

of headphones and a microphone. These can be purchased at stores such as Best Buy for between $20 and $30. You should not use computer speakers during a Wimba session.

Computer Configuration for Horizon Wimba : Prior to participation in your first Wimba Session be sure to run the Setup Wizard. Do not wait until the session itself to run this. The setup Wizard performs a series of test to determine if your computer is properly configured for use with Wimba. If the tests indicate a problem with your configuration, you will be instructed how to remedy this.

Learning about BLS/WEBCT Vista : Helpful resources including a Student Quick Start Guide, BLS/WebCT Vista Student FAQ, Technical Specs, and other helpful information can be found at http://www.lms.umb.edu.

PDF Files/Adobe Acrobat Reader:This course contains PDF files. To view them, you need Adobe Acrobat Reader. You can download this software free from http://www.adobe.com. Click the Download button under "Solutions and Products" and follow the directions on your screen for downloading and installing the software. Depending on the speed of your Internet connection (dial-up modem, cable modem, DSL/broadband), downloading the software could take several minutes.

Library
Using eReserves: :Required Readings and Suggested Readings for this course are located online at http://docutek.lib.umb.edu/courseindex.asp. You must have a student id in order to use the EReserves. Access the EReserves web site at http://ereserves.library.umass.edu. The EReserves password for this course is: web (all lower-case). You need this password to access the EReserve reading material for this course.

Accessing the UMB Library Virtually : Students enrolled in a UMB online course are eligible to receive a barcode for access to Healey Library resources located at http://www.lib.umb.edu. The UMB library is a rich and valuable academic online resource which allows you to do most of your research work off-campus. To access these resources off campus, you will need the barcode number found on the reverse of your Student ID Card.
If you don't have a student ID card : or are unable to read the bar code number you can send an e-mail request to: library.circulation@umb.edu.

Your request should include your first and last name, Student ID number, course name, course number, and semester. You will receive the address of the library website. Barcode access terminates at the end of the

semester. (Note: This service is available Monday – Friday, 9 - 5 PM)

Academic Integrity

Students should be aware that, at the discretion of the instructor, assignments may be submitted to plagiarism detection software programs for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Students in this course must be prepared to submit an electronic version of any written assignment upon request of the instructor.

Best Practice for Composing Text

When composing any text based information (answering essay questions, posting discussion replies, etc.) compose your text with your word processor, spell check it and save it on your computer. Then copy and paste your text by toggling to BLS Vista. This way you'll have a copy of what you composed if you need one.

No Distribution 2 Gen Ed Credit for this Course

Please note that you will not be awarded an "S" credit in general education for this course. Although the campus course catalog states that this course (COMSTU 210) satisfies a distribution 2 Gen Ed credit it's unfortunately is a typo. This course does satisfy a Distribution 1 Gen Ed credit however so students who were enrolled at UMB on or before the fall of '03 will get this credit but students who were enrolled after the spring '03 will not receive any Gen Ed credit for this course. You can contact the CCDE Registrar office about this problem by phoning 617-287-7916.

Students with Documented Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offers guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from UMass Boston's Ross Center for Disability Services http://www.rosscenter.umb.edu (617-287-7430). The student must present and discuss these recommendations with each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Drop/Add period.

How to View Your Grade for This Course

Currently students taking courses at UMass Boston use the campus WISER system to access secure information on their grades. To enter the WISER system go to http://wiser.umb.edu and enter your UMS number and your PIN number.
If you do not have a PIN number, contact the Registrar's Office at registrar@umb.edu giving your name, course, semester, student ID (UMS#), and current mailing address. The information will be mailed to you. Note that for security reasons your browser may not be able to print your grades. For other WISER questions including having your password

reset please email the helpdesk at helpdesk@umb.edu.

UMB Communications Studies Program Resources

This course is being offered through the Communication Studies Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston is located in the American Studies Program. For more information about the program visit the web site at http://www.commstudies.umb.edu/

The Communication Studies web site has numerous links to useful resources helpful for researching papers. You can find this resource at http://www.commstudies.umb.edu/researchnotes.htm

Online Learning Tips

How can I be an effective online learner?

Manage your time wisely.

Online courses are similar to face-to-face courses in that there are fixed work requirements and deadlines. However, because there are few live classes to attend, some participants find that due dates fall off their radar screens. The best way to avoid this pitfall is to read the course requirements carefully. At the beginning of the course, record deadlines on your calendar, even deadlines for informal assignments like posting discussion comments. Budget how much time you can afford to spend on each assignment, and then schedule exactly when that time will be spent. Schedule a regular time for your coursework.

Decide what time of day and which days of the week are optimal times for doing your coursework. Keep your time slots realistic—don't plan to start your coursework at midnight if you have to get up at five a.m., and don't pick two p.m. if sitting at the computer after lunch makes you sleepy. Once you've decided on a time slot in which you generally have energy, schedule it into your calendar and stick to it! Consider it a weekly investment in your future.

Expect the unexpected, and reward yourself

Even the most organized students encounter events they haven't planned for, so it's healthy to expect the unexpected and not get frustrated by technical or scheduling problems. However, it's also important to stick to your work schedule as much as you can. One way to stay motivated is to offer yourself small rewards for finishing projects on time. Whether it's time spent shooting hoops, playing scrabble, or reading for pleasure, small incentives can make finishing your work a little more inspiring.

How much technology knowledge do I need to feel at ease in an online course?

You do not have to be a technological wizard to excel in an online learning

environment! Even novices in the field of computer technology can be star students as long as they understand a few core concepts, including how to use plug-ins, how to access streaming video, how to participate in synchronous and asynchronous discussions, and how to send email attachments. Also, don't be intimidated by the jargon. These concepts sound more complicated than they really are.