COM 211

Social Communications

Spring 2020

Rev. THOMAS F. DAILEY, O.S.F.S., S.T.D.

The John Cardinal Foley Chair of Homiletics & Social Communications

Class Information
Mondays & Wednesdays
10:15 - 11:30 a.m.
CB #1023

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*This syllabus was last revised on **2/8/20** at 10:54 AM.*

All elements in it are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and/or at the discretion of the instructor.

Description (revised)

This course considers the fundamental principles, theories, and skills of interpersonal communication in the age of new media. The course fosters literacy on two levels: in terms of culture by examining questions pertinent to the digital world, and in terms of technique by learning to use the tools of social communications. Through lectures and activities, students will explore the positive and negative impacts of social media, while also learning strategies for effective evangelization in a digital world.

Goals

Related Department Goals (Dept. of Humanities & Science)

- Demonstrate and draw upon a knowledge and understanding of the foundations of human culture and their variety and historical development, particularly as experienced in the Western tradition.

- Listen and read with accurate understanding and proper interpretation; speak and write clearly, correctly, responsibly, and graciously, in keeping with established principles of effective communication; and develop a familiarity with other cultures and periods through various literary texts

Specific Learning Outcomes

By the conclusion of this course, students will gain …

1. a basic understanding of the historical development of social communications in terms of proclaiming the Word and and its importance to priestly formation and ministry

    o *assessed by class engagement*

2. a deeper appreciation of the benefits and risks of using new media in terms of their personal and social impact

    o *assessed by class engagement and written book reviews*

3. a stronger familiarity with the tools and techniques of contemporary social communications

    o *assessed by active learning tasks and written book reviews*

4. a comprehensive awareness of the function and role of social communication in the work of evangelization

   o *assessed by the final project*

Assessment (to be explained further during class)

Assessment of learning in this course will be based on accumulated knowledge of the "what" and the "why" and the "how to" of social communications. Grades will be distributed as follows:

- **Class Engagement** (10% of final grade) ... based on the student's contributions to the class discussions about the assigned readings, lectures, and activities.

- **Active Learning** (20% of the final grade) ... based on two (2) special assignments in the course:

  o a reflection paper on the papal message for the World Communications Day 2020
  o a mini project using the media of social communications (choice among 4 options)

- **Book Reviews** (40% of the final grade) ... based on reading and writing about the two (2) of the required texts in the course:

  o *Digital Literacy*, by Susan Wiesinger
  o *Indistractable*, by Nir Eyal

- **Final Project** (30% of the final grade) ... based on the application of *Transforming Parish Communications*, by Scot Landry, to the collaborative development of a social communications plan for a local apostolate.

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Academic Resources

Required Readings for this Course (images linked to Amazon.com ... info also posted on Populi)
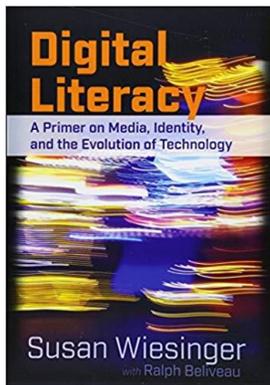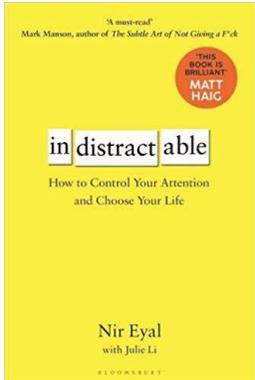

subject of a book review

Digital Literacy:
A Primer on Media, Identity, and the Evolution of Technology

by SUSAN WIESINGER

179 pages - published by Peter Lang, Inc. (January 2016)

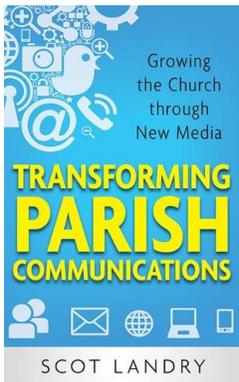ISBN 978-1433128219
cost (Amazon): book = $33.27 / Kindle = $35.49

 subject of a book review	*Indistractable:* *How to Control Your Attention and Choose Your Life* by NIR EYAL 300 pages - published by BenBella Books (September 2019) ISBN 978-1948836531 cost (Amazon): book = $16.19 / Kindle = $11.21
 subject of the final project	*Transforming Parish Communications:* *Growing the Church through New Media* by SCOT LANDRY 196 pages - published by Our Sunday Visitor (August 2014) ISBN 978-1612787244 cost (Amazon): book = $19.95 / Kindle = $11.99

Supplemental Sources (details to be provided in-class and posted on Populi)

- News articles
- Blog posts
- Journal articles
- Papal documents
- Podcasts
- YouTube videos
- TED talks

Online Resources (click HERE for information and links)

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Proposed Course Calendar

Part One - INTRODUCTION			
Jan 13	Welcome to the Course	Jan 15	Life's New Operating System
Jan 20	*no class – MLK service day*	Jan 22	Communicating the Word
Jan 27	*no class –WCD task* / CFC Lecture	Jan 29	Social Comm. in Priestly Formation
Part Two – CULTURE			
Feb 3	The Digital Quest for Being Human	Feb 5	Digital Footprints
Feb 10	Relationality in the Digital World	Feb 12	Alone Together
Feb 17	Cyberspace as Psychological Space	Feb 19	Screen Time
Feb 24	The Promise & Peril of Cyberspace	Feb 26	Digital Examen
Part Three – MEDIA			
Mar 2	*no class – read **Digital Literacy** book*	*Mar 4*	*no class – review **due by Mar 6***
Mar 9	Digital Writing	Mar 11	blogging
Mar 16	Digital Speaking	Mar 18	podcasts
Mar 23	Digital Showing	Mar 25	photos/videos
Mar 30	Digital Sharing	Apr 1	livestreaming
Semester BREAK … read ***Indistractable*** book (review **due on April 20**)			
Apr 6	*no class – Holy Week*	*Apr 8*	*no class – Holy Week*
Apr 13	*no class – Easter Week*	*Apr 15*	*no class – Easter Week*
Part Four – CHURCH			
Apr 20	Ecclesiology	Apr 22	website analysis
Apr 27	Evangelization	Apr 29	mobile review
		Apr 30 (TH)	conclusion to the course!
The **final project** (Communications Plan) is **due** on the date/time of the final exam!			

Seminary Policies

Electronic Devices (source: Faculty Handbook, revised Feb. 2018, p. 46)
Electronic devices may be used for note taking in class; no other documents or digital applications are to be opened during class time. It is a distraction as well a sign of disrespect to fellow students, to the professor, and to oneself to be involved in activities other than class participation and note-taking. Phone use is prohibited in class as well.

Internet Use in the Classroom (source: Syllabus Template, SharePoint)
While the internet is a valuable source of information that can facilitate the learning process, it can often be a distraction within the classroom setting. Therefore, unless explicitly permitted by the instructor, students in the classroom are not permitted to connect to the internet.

Because the digital world is the environment in which people live and work in the twenty-first century, students in this course are not only permitted to connect to the internet and use electronic devices in the classroom, they are required to do so

Attendance (source: Catalog, p. 51)
St. Charles Seminary requires attendance at all classes at the assigned times. Out of respect for others in the class, please be prompt in arriving for class.

As a general rule, the number of absences in a course should not exceed twice the number of weekly class meetings for the course. Students with absences in excess of the limit may be asked to withdraw from the course. In aggravated cases, excessive, unexcused absences may result in dismissal. Out of courtesy, students who absent are asked to communicate this fact – if possible, prior to the class day in question – to the Dean of Men of their respective Seminary, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and to the course instructor. Students are responsible for the timely performance of all class assignments and the gaining/mastery of class notes.

Late Work
Unless approved by the instructor prior to the due date, late work is unacceptable.

Incomplete Work
Failure to fulfill any of the requirements of this course may result in an F for the course. And to reiterate, plagiarism will result in an F for the course.

Exams (source: Catalog, p. 52)
Examinations in all courses are held on the dates and in the places designated on the final examination schedule. No seminarian is excused from an examination unless an exception is granted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Seminary Grading System (source: Catalog, p. 53)
Letter grades are used to indicate the quality of a seminarian's performance in a course. Professors assign grades as the result of class work, reports, research papers, examinations, or a combination of the above.

Intellectual honesty (source: Catalog, p. 54)
As indicated in the Seminary policy, "no instance of plagiarism, cheating or falsification of research work, examinations or academic records will be tolerated and will make the seminarian liable to dismissal". A failing grade will be assigned where there is evidence of academic dishonesty.

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