GAM / UXD 208-701
Virtual Worlds & Online Communities
AQ 2022-2023 Ver. 1.0

INSTRUCTOR

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Virtual Office Hours: M-F 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
https://calendly.com/rosshersemann/gam-208-701-office-hours

COURSE INFORMATION

GAM 208 – 701
Time: Thurs 5:45pm – 9:00pm
Physical Classroom: Lewis Center Room 1510

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environments such as social networking sites, multiplayer online games and other online communities are becoming an increasingly large part of how we work, play, and learn. This course introduces the fundamentals for the interdisciplinary study of cyberculture and online social behavior. By examining core scholarship in this area, together with analyzing an existing virtual world, game, or online community, students will learn to research and understand new technologically -enabled social forms as they are emerging.

Students will obtain from this course a set of conceptual tools, vocabulary, and an analytical framework with which to recognize, understand, and more effectively manage new social practices online, together with a familiarity with the literature regarding social media and identity, community, public sphere, and social capital.

At the completion of this course, students will be able to: a) Understand important features of online interactions, b) Analyze online interactions critically, and
c) Understand how to ethically conduct research in online environments.

PREREQUISITE(S): WRD 104

LEARNING DOMAIN DESCRIPTION

GAM / UXD 208 is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Social, Cultural, and Behavioral Inquiry domain. Courses in the Social, Cultural and Behavioral Inquiry domain focus on the mutual impact of society and culture on individuals, and of individuals on society and culture. Particular attention is given to human relationships and behavior as they are influenced by social, economic and political institutions, spatial and geographical factors, and the events and social and cultural forces at play in the contemporary world. The domain emphasizes the pursuit of knowledge through the development of theory and empirical investigation of the contemporary world. Courses in the domain explore such particular issues as poverty and economic opportunity, the environment, nationalism, racism, individual alienation, gender differences, and the bases of conflict and consensus in complex, urban societies and in global relations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

(NOTE: The numbers in parentheses after presentations, readings, activities, and assignments correspond to the following descriptions):

Students will be able to:
1. analyze and reflect upon arguments about the contemporary world using relevant theory, methods, and/or empirical evidence.

2. analyze interdependent relationships between contemporary society and individuals.

MEETING LEARNING OUTCOMES

(NOTE: The letters in parentheses after presentations, readings, activities, and assignments correspond to the following descriptions):

The first of the domain learning outcomes will be accomplished via:

a) online modules and discussion of relevant issues (Deviance, Governance, Privacy, Children, and Transformative Culture),

b) observation (written assignments using checklists and structured questionnaires),

c) research methods (each student conducts at least 1 interview using the methodology in the Seidman text (about qualitative research),

d) examination (combination of objective terms and essay responses with regard to theories and characteristics of community, third places, and personal identity),

e) response essays (debating issues of privacy such as Snowden vs. NSA, submitted online), and

f) the final paper (Each person or group [3 maximum] observes and analyzes an existing site and its members under pseudonyms for site and unique pseudonyms to protect identities of interviewees.).

The second of the domain learning outcomes will be descriptive analysis of the site. You (or group) will be describing the behavior discovered in their personal observations of interaction (posting, trolling, governance, online and offline activities and accomplishments, etc.)

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Complementary reading and other supportive materials will be posted on D2L under contents. This includes the PDF 3rd edition of: Seidman, Irving, Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences, Teachers College Press, 2006.

Useful books and other resources will be also suggested throughout the course.

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

I will hold virtual office hours by appointment. You can schedule a time to connect with me using the Calendly link at the top of this page.

D2L

We are using D2L http://d2l.depaul.edu as the learning platform for this course. All course materials including weekly lecture slides and class info (syllabus, slides, assignments, etc) are available through D2L under "contents". Assignments are submitted to its dedicated folder on Dropbox on D2L. This is also where you will get written feedback to your assignments from me.

EVALUATION & GRADING

Final Paper	20%
Quizzes • 3 @ 10% each	30%
Assignments • Facial Recognition 5% • Faciloscope 5% • 5 KIM Charts @ 5% each • MMORPG Survey 5%	40%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Detailed descriptions of all assignments will be posted week by week in D2L

GRADING SCALE

Letter grades will be based on the minimum percentages of total points earned

A	91+%
A-	90%
B+	89%
B	88-81%
B-	80%
C+	79%
C	78-71%
C-	70%
D+	69%
D	68-61%
D-	60%
F	50% or lower

COURSE POLICIES

In addition to CDM Academic Policies and DePaul University Policies, the following policies will apply to this course:

Email: Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Students should verify that their email listed under "demographics information" at http://campusconnect.depaul.edu is correct.

Some guidelines for your emails:
- Be clear and concise in your subject line; ex: "GAM-208 – question about X"
- DO NOT reply to class-wide email unless it pertains specifically to the subject of that email
- Begin a new email thread for ANY NEW question, notification, etc.
- Expect a reply within 48 hours during the week. Expect a delayed (or no) response on weekends. If you do not get a response within 2 business days, please resend as there may be an email issue, or it was immediately buried under the crushing weight of all my other emails, and consequently overlooked.

Course Lectures / Reading Assignments: The assigned and recommended readings offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class.

Late Assignments: In order to receive any credit for an assignment, you must communicate with me at least 24 hours before the due date/time regarding it being late. Unexcused late assignments will have points reduced. No assignment will be accepted more than 7 days late without proof of a medical excuse.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes and participate in class activities as scheduled. Do not underestimate the importance of attendance and participation in this class. Showing up, after all, is a core ingredient of communicating and presenting effectively.

An absence is defined as not showing up for class, arriving 30 minutes late or leaving 30 minutes early. All absences will result in a reduction of the attendance / participation grade. 3 absences, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

Should dire circumstances render you physically unable to be present in class, you must make every effort to contact me and explain your circumstances prior to the class. Examples of circumstances that would make you physically unable to present include a highly contagious illness, accidents, or deaths in the family.

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office.

Remote Learning: Select classes throughout the term may be offered remotely through pre-recorded lecture videos.

COVID-19 Policy: We are forging ahead with in-person learning during a worldwide pandemic. Conduct yourselves accordingly in compliance with DePaul, City, State, & Federal Law.

DePaul's Health & Safety Practices can be found at: https://bit.ly/3Eej2uH

COVID-19 Attendance Policy:
Notwithstanding the general principles regarding attendance described above, COVID-19 necessitates some leeway in our attendance policy. There will be times when absences will be necessary for public health, and excusable.
- DO NOT come to class if you are exhibiting symptoms of the COVID-19 virus.
- DO NOT come to class if you have recently been exposed to, or been in close contact with, someone who has COVID.
- Notify me of your absence BEFORE class, and schedule makeups for any in class work or activity.
- I promise to be fair in my application of our attendance policy and make reasonable accommodations for the foreseeable increase in absences.
- Students are still required to complete all coursework, absent or no.
- If a student's absence becomes a routine issue, they may be held to a higher standard of attendance which will be reflected in their grade.

Mask Policy: Students are not required to wear masks in class but may choose to do so. Students must provide their own masks. A limited number of masks may be available at the first-floor desk.

The policy may be amended at the instructor's discretion and in conformity with DePaul, City, State, & Federal Law.

Class Participation: Student participation is crucial to this class. Students are encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the class topics. Students are encouraged to offer answers, insights, and best guesses to questions posed in class. Being prepared, making the most of class time, and being fully present and engaged add towards the class experience and your participation points. Productive critiques of your own and everyone else's work is critical.

Civil Discourse & Professionalism: DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course.

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Preferred Name and Gender Pronouns:
Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will respect your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun if you advise me of this preference. Students who choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and update their gender. For more info and

instructions on how to do so, please see the [Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy.](#)

Writing: All written work submitted in this class is expected to be clear, spell-checked, and demonstrate a high proficiency in written English. The Writing Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from published writers about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing and oral presentations. Go to http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/ for more information and to set up appointments.

Plagiarism: It is your professional responsibility to ensure that all submitted work is your own. Please read DePaul's policy on plagiarism and other academic integrity violations at: [http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Contribution Folder/Resources/Students/ViolationDefinitions.html#aiPlagarism](#)

Student Rights: To learn about student rights please read DePaul's policies for students regarding student rights, located [http://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/current/undergraduate%20student%20handbook/pg51.html](#)

In-Class Note Taking: It is in your best interest to take comprehensive notes during class.

Incomplete: An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final and approved by the Dean of the School of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

Important Dates AQ 2022:

Sep. 7th	Begin AQ 2022
Sep. 20th	Last day to drop AQ 2022 classes with no penalty
Oct. 25th	Last day to withdraw from AQ 2022 classes
Nov. 15th	End AQ 2022 Day & Evening Classes
Dec. 15th	Grades Due

SCHEDULE

WEEK	MODULE
9/8 **Week 1**	**Introduction**
Reading	• Read excerpt from Jason Ohler, Digital Community, Digital Citizen (1, a, b) • Read article by Robert D. Putnam (1, a, b)
Activity	• Course Introduction
9/15 **Week 2**	**Research Ethics and Methods** Ethics in Human Research (2, a, b, c), Research Methodologies (2, b, c)
Reading	• Read Seidman's (Chapter 5) on "Institutional Review Board and Informed Consent" • Read Bruckman article about research (2, a, b, c) • Read Seidman (Usually Chapters 4, 6, 7) on Access, Technique, and Interviewing and "Strategies for Participant Participation" (2, b, c)
Activity	• Take a quiz on Research Ethics and Methodologies • Examine www.comicbookplus.com and www.hitrecord.org and complete the K.I.M. sheets on these two sites. You may use the Excel, Word, PDF or plain text versions of the K.I.M. Template.
9/22 **Week 3**	**Third Places and Identity** The Great Good Place (1), Identity (1, 2, a)
Reading	• Read Oldenburg Chapter (1, a, b, c, d) • Read Crick, "Rethinking Oldenburg" (1, a, b, d) • Listen to Psychology Podcast • Read Magdoff, Psychology article • Read Turkle, Aspects of Self article • Re-read (Usually Chapter 7) on Interviewing in Seidman (1, 2, a, b)
Activity	• Participate in the discussion on lessons to be learned from and lessons to be revised on third places • Join the Hollywood Stock Exchange, purchase (with the play money provided on the site) securities to attempt highest money net worth by quarter's end, find types of interaction and evidence of community. • Fill-in the Hollywood Stock Exchange K.I.M. Template and upload that to D2L • Fill out survey for Psychology Podcast • Take a survey about persons/avatars and sign-identifiers • Submit your (self or up to 3 people) project's preliminary protocol in the Submission folder • Take the Facial Emotion Test and upload a .jpg or .png of your results to the Submission Folder (1, a, b --You are not graded on your score on this activity).
9/29 **Week 4**	**Participation, Deviance, and Lurking** Participation and Lurking (1, 2, a, b, c), Deviant Behavior (1, 2, a, b)
Reading	• Read Nonnecke and Preece (1, 2, a, b, c) • Read Wellman and Giulia (1, 2, a, b, c) • Read Dibbels, "A Rape in Cyberspace" • Read Quite-Oh article on Copybot use in Second Life https://quiteoh.wordpress.com/2008/10/24/how-to-steal-anything-in-second-life/ (1, a, b) • Read Telford, Taylor. "Councilwoman pushes back at anonymous…" Chicago Tribune, August 29, 2018. (1, 2, a, b)

	• Read Van Gelder, "The Strange Case of the Electronic Lover" (1, 2, a, b)
Activity	• Take a quiz on Seidman chapters, Bruckman, Crick, Magdoff, Oldenburg and Goffman (1, 2, a, b, c) • Complete and submit the Observation Sheet on a Virtual Community of Your Choice (2, a, b, c) • Complete an experiment using Faciloscope and a page from one of your research papers. Submit a screenshot of your result to the Submission Folder—Faciloscope.You. • In preparation for the next module, find a site which contains lively debate. Copy one of the longer responses and use Faciloscope to rate it. Submit a screenshot of your result. • Complete the Reading Assistant for Deviant Behavior Sheet (2, b)
10/6 **Week 5**	Laws and Privacy (1, 2, a, b)
Reading	• Read EFF Report (1, 2, a, b) • Read Video Privacy article from 2015 Chicago Tribune (1, 2, a, b)
Activity	• View three short videos on privacy and contribute to the discussion. • View two (2) TedTalks (Snowden and NSA) • Complete the K.I.M. Template for the Snowden-Leggett videos Complete and K.I.M. Template for wikileaks.org
10/13 **Week 6**	**Design Factors and Governance** Design Considerations (1, 2, a, b), Media People (1, 2, a, b)
Reading	• Read Chapman, • Newbie Induction • Morningstar and Farmer (1, 2, a, b, c) • Listen to a [Podcast](#) about Disney Imagineering and Design
Activity	• Take a survey
10/20 **Week 7**	**Social Roles** Where Do We Fit In? (2, a, b), What Do We Do About the Children? (1, 2, a, b, c)
Reading	• Read Duchenaut article (1, a, b) • Feenberg Article (1, a, b) • Read Kim Article (1, 2, a, b) • Read Banschick article (1, 2, a, b, c) • Read Children addiction (Tribune article) (1, 2, a, b, c) • Read Light/Web / Dark/Web (1, 2, a, b, c)
Activity	• First move in the "Public Good" game (1, a)
10/27 **Week 8**	**Interview Analysis and Online Cooperation** Improving Interview Techniques and Content (2, b), Making it Better (1, 2, a, b)
Reading	• View a [filmed interview](#) • Listen to an [episode of NPR's Fresh Air](#) where Reese Witherspoon doesn't really answer the interviewer's questions. • Read Kollock and Raymond (1, 2, a, b) • Read MacKechnie on Belbin Roles (1, a, b)
Activity	• Submit an essay of at least one-page suggesting what you might do.
11/3 **Week 9**	**Social, Technical and Political Considerations** What's Political About Websites? (1, 2, a, b), Trans-Ludic Migration (1, a, b)
Reading	• Read Lee and Light, Law and Regulation (1, 2, a, b) • Read Winner, Do Artifacts Have Politics? (1, 2, a, b) • Read Pearce (1, a, b)

Activity	---
11/10 **Week 10**	**Summary Film and Summary Presentation** What I HOPE You Have Learned
Reading	• View Second Skin film (1, 2, a, b)
Activity	---

IMPORTANT DUE DATES (Subject to Change)

9/22	**Faciloscope**
9/22	**KIM Chart 1**
9/29	**Facial Recognition**
9/29	**Quiz on Crick Seidman**
10/6	**KIM Chart 2**
10/6	**KIM Chart 3**
10/6	**Quiz on Deviant Behavior**
10/13	**KIM Chart 4**
10/13	**Final Paper Virtual World Choice**
10/27	**Final Paper Progress Report**
10/27	**KIM Chart 5**
11/3	**MMORPG Survey**
11/10	**Final Quiz**
11/10	***Final Paper Optional Draft***
11/17	**Final Paper**

MISC VIDEO REFERENCES

- Society (Wonderful 1) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNQ76UyurLA
- Society (Wonderful 2) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u56OqFjs1dg
- Virtue (Hard Boiled) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNP45KnEwdk
- Virtue https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=RDZ9EjOCyyCWg&v=Z9EjOCyyCWg&feature=emb_rel_end
- Societal Bonds / Aragorn https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=52&v=EXGUNvIFTQw&feature=emb_logo
- Faith (Inherit) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtNdYsoool8
- Faith (Doubt 1) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuJ2soRp1VI
- Faith (Doubt 2) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAOUtgdcjik
- Social Contract/jus naturale (Logan's Run) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4M2vx_RCwSs
- NOT Utilitarianism (Zorg) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PW9suGUySvQ
- Little Mis Sunshine Proust clip https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VbYokM9dY4
- Being There clip https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bow1ZJTV4L4

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

Online Course Evaluations: Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies: All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found under Enrollment Policies.

Students with Disabilities: Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

csd@depaul.edu. Lewis Center 1420,
25 East Jackson Blvd.
Phone number: (312)362-8002
Fax: (312)362-6544
TTY: (773)325.7296

The University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL): The UCWbL works with everyone in the DePaul University community to support writers and to promote the use of writing in teaching and learning. You can schedule an appointment to improve your writing and learn more about the craft at https://condor.depaul.edu/writing/