# PSYC506

## Course Summary

**Course :** PSYC506 **Title :** Cyberpsychology: Where Psychology and Technology Meet
**Length of Course :** 8 **Faculty :**
**Prerequisites :** N/A **Credit Hours :** 3

## Description

**Course Description:**

This is an introductory course in Cyberpsychology studying the methods that social media (SM) uses to influence consumer decisions and drive effective marketing techniques. The primary topic covered includes the role of social media platforms in social interaction. Students will become familiar with what SM was intended to do, as well as what it has evolved into and why it poses a risk to normal behavior and decision-making. Additional topics covered include an examination of factors that influence election outcomes, factors that guide thought processes and awareness through targeted messaging, and the use of blacklisting or shadow-banning content. The implications of these processes on consumer behavior will also be discussed.

**Course Scope:**

This course provides students with a foundational understanding of cyberpsychology and the implications of passive manipulation of information on consumers' thought processes through targeted exposure. The scope ranges from person to person to as far as platform building that can disrupt elections and possibly national and international relations.

## Objectives

While completing this course, students will be able to:

CO-1: Examine the role and importance of Cyberpsychology.

CO-2: Examine social media and artificial intelligence, including examples and influences.

CO-3: Analyze Cyberpsychology's societal impact.

CO-4: Contrast different modalities of cyberpsychology including their influences and capabilities.

CO-5: Make research-based predictions regarding the future of cyberpsychology.

## Outline

## Week 1: Introduction to Cyberpsychology

Learning Outcomes

- Definition
- Evolution
- Impact

Required Readings

Lesson 1: Introduction to Cyberpsychology

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

Whitty and Young Cyberpsychology text. Chapter 2, pp. 9-21.

> Allen, S. (2019, September 20). *Social Media's growing impact on our lives.*
> Https://Www.Apa.Org/Members/Content/Social-Media-Research. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from
> https://www.apa.org/members/content/social-media-research

Assignments

> *Week 1 Discussion*

Recommended Media

> **Video**:

> Common Knowledge. (2020, November 3). *How Social Media is Destroying Society* [Video].
> YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJ9oEi3Yyg0&ab_channel=CommonKnowledge

## Week 2: Social Media Usage

Learning Outcomes

- Types/ Modalities/Uses
- Pervasiveness/ Popularity
- Emerging Trends

Required Readings

Lesson 2: – Social Media Usage

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

Whitty and Young Cyberpsychology text. Chapter 7, pp. 73-85.

> Kakkar, G. (2022, January 14). *What Are The Different Types Of Social Media?* Digital Vidya.
> Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://www.digitalvidya.com/blog/types-of-social-media/

Assignments

> *Week 2 Discussion*

Recommended Media

> **Video**:

> Absolute Motivation. (2018, April 20). *You Will Wish You Watched This Before You Started Using*

*Social Media | The Twisted Truth* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmEDAzqswh8&ab_channel=AbsoluteMotivation

## Week 3: Facebook (FB) and Social Connection

Learning Outcomes

- Definition
- Changes in person-to-person interaction
- Recent Examples
- Trends in communication moving forward

Required Readings

Reading(s)/ Materials:

Lesson 2: – Social Media Usage

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

Whitty and Young Cyberpsychology text. Chapter 2, pp. 8-20 and Ch. 9.7, PP. 110-112.

Assignments

> *Week 3 Assignment*

Recommended Media

**Video**:

- TechLead Show. (2020, September 26). *"The Social Dilemma": Ex-Facebook/ex-Google tech lead reacts.* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVBQgx4_x34

## Week 4: Internet Marketing

Learning Outcomes

- SM landscape: types of influence and reasons for success
- AI and the use of "bots"
- Examples

Required Readings

Lesson 4: – Internet Marketing

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

Assignments

> *Week 4 Discussion*

Recommended Media

**Video**:

- Marinele. (2021, November 3). *HowDo Social Media Bots Work?* A Little Bit Human. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from https://www.alittlebithuman.com/how-do-social-media-bots-work/

# Week 5: Agenda Setting and Crowd Manipulation

Learning Outcomes

- Data types collected
- Integration with smart devices
- Recommendations by algorithms
- Implications

Required Readings

Lesson 5: – Agenda setting and crowd manipulation

- *(DISCUSS "HALO EFFECT")*

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

- Lua, A. (2020, July 24). *Social Proof: What It Is and 18 Ways to Use It in Your Marketing*. Buffer Library. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://buffer.com/library/social-proof/
- Zafar, S. (2022, February 20). *Data Collected by Social Media Platforms and how they Use it (Ultimate List)*. Data Fifty. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://datafifty.com/data-collected-on-social-media/

Assignments

   *Week 5 Assignment*

Recommended Media

- **Video**:
    - Slavin, K. (2011, July 21). *How algorithms shape our world* [Video]. TED Talks. https://www.ted.com/talks/kevin_slavin_how_algorithms_shape_our_world?referrer=playlist-the_influence_of_algorithms&autoplay=true
    - Tufekci, Z. (2017, October 27). *We're building a dystopia just to make people click on ads* [Video]. TED Talks. https://www.ted.com/talks/zeynep_tufekci_we_re_building_a_dystopia_just_to_make_people_click referrer=playlist-the_influence_of_algorithms&autoplay

# Week 6: SM Companies and Current Law

Learning Outcomes

- SM as "public square" vs private company
- How companies are treated by lawmakers
- Current Legislation and Ethical Considerations

Required Readings

Lesson 6: – SM companies and current law

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

- Gelinas, L., PhD, & Gelinas, L., PhD. (2022, June 14). *Differentiating "Public" and "Private" Internet Spaces in IRB Review*. Advarra. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://www.advarra.com/blog/public-v-private/
- Iovino, N. (2021, January 14). *Twitter's Trump Ban Sets Dangerous Precedent for Free Speech, Legal Scholar Warns*. Courthouse News. Retrieved August 29, 2022,

https://www.courthousenews.com/twitters-trump-ban-sets-dangerous-precedent-for-free-speech-legal-scholar-warns/

- Livni, E. (2022, July 20). *The US Supreme Court just decided access to Facebook, Twitter or Snapchat is fundamental to free speech*. Quartz. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://qz.com/1009546/the-us-supreme-court-just-decided-access-to-facebook-twitter-or-snapchat-is-fundamental-to-free-speech/
- Nunziato, Dawn Carla, From Town Square to Twittersphere: The Public Forum Doctrine Goes Digital (September 14, 2018). 25 B.U. J. Sci. & Tech. L. (2019), Forthcoming; GWU Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2018-40; GWU Law School Public Law Research Paper No. 2018-40. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3249489

Assignments

*Week 6 Discussion*

## Week 7: Power SM Companies Wield

Learning Outcomes

- Monetary value/ net worth of owners
- Influence on national and international level
- Instigation of public opinion campaigns to achieve social change
- Implication

Required Readings

Lesson 7: – Social Media Companies' Power

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

- Cote, J. (2022, June 14). *Does TikTok pose 'data espionage' concerns for the US? The answer is complicated*. News @ Northeastern. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from https://news.northeastern.edu/2022/06/14/tiktok-data-collection-concerns/

Assignments

*Week 7 Assignment*

## Week 8: Reflection and the Future of Cyberpsychology

Learning Outcomes

- Prospective Issues
- Thoughts on needed change
- Where are we headed? (Decentralization readdressed)

Required Readings

Lesson 8: – Reflection and the Future of Cyberpsychology

Topics and Weekly Learning Outcomes

Assignments

*Week 8 Discussion*

*Week 8 Final Essay Exam*

# Evaluation

- **DISCUSSIONS:** Discussions scheduled during Weeks 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 of the course**.** Instructions are located on the classroom Discussion link.
- **ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS:** Assignments and projects are due during weeks 3, 5, and 7 of the course. Instructions are in the Assignments link.

**Grading:**

| Name | Grade % |
|---|---|
| Discussions | 40.00 % |
| Week 1: Introduction | 8.00 % |
| Week 2: Social Media | 8.00 % |
| Week 4: AI Bots | 8.00 % |
| Week 6: Free Speech & Online Spaces | 8.00 % |
| Week 8: Reflection | 8.00 % |
| Assignments | 60.00 % |
| Week 3: Assignment 1 App Advertisement | 20.00 % |
| Week 5: Assignment 2 App Investor Presentation | 20.00 % |
| Week 7: Assignment 3 App Final Paper | 20.00 % |

# Materials

**Book Title:** Cyberpsychology : The Study of Individuals, Society and Digital Technologies (Ebook available in the APUS Online Library)

**Author:** Whitty, Monica

**Publication Info:** Wiley Lib

**ISBN:** 9780470975626

**Book Title:** Various resources from the APUS Library & the Open Web are used. Please visit http://apus.libguides.com/er.php to locate the course eReserve.

**Author:** No Author Specified

**Publication Info:**

**ISBN:** N/A

**Book Title:** Various resources from the APUS Library & the Open Web are used. Please visit http://apus.libguides.com/er.php to locate the course eReserve.

**Publication Info:**

Whitty, M. T. (2016). Cyberpsychology: The study of individuals, society and digital technologies.

**ISBN:** ERESERVE NOTE

**Required Readings and Resources**

*Required resources for your course are provided in a course eReserve. Please click here (https://apus.libguides.com/er.php), enter your course number in the 'Search for course eReserves' box, click Go, and then select the course when it appears below the search box. Information included in LibAnswers (https://apus.libanswers.com/) provides download and print options for offline reading of Library ebooks.*

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# Course Guidelines

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**Citation and Reference Style**

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It is expected that graduate students will exhibit advanced level critical thinking; the ability to synthesize multiple sources of information, writing skills and academic integrity in all course activities. With the exception of discussion forum posts, assignment submissions completed in a narrative essay or composition format may not be written in first or second person ("I" or "you"). All writing must follow the citation and reference style established by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition (2019), in size 12 Times New Roman or Sans Serif font, double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides of the page and include a cover page with the following centered vertically and horizontally: Assignment Title, Student Name, University Affiliation, Course Name and Number, Date of Submission, Instructor's Name, Assignment Due Date. Each page must have a header with the respective page number. A running head with the title of the paper is no longer required. The following websites are extremely informative regarding the recent 2019 manual:

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**https://apastyle.apa.org/**

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**https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/apa-seventh-edition-changes/**

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**https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/g \**

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With the rare exception of briefly quoting specific statistical research findings, in which case the publication's author and year date of publication must be properly cited with quoted material placed inside quotation marks, all paper content based on published material must be paraphrased (i.e., summarized in the student's own words) with correct source citations properly formatted in APA style. Copying of any kind and/or failure to source credit will result in an assignment score of zero with any repeat instances causing a failing course grade without option for revision and resubmission. Unless otherwise instructed for individual assignments, students may not use encyclopedias, such as Wikipedia or Encarta, dictionaries, blogs, opinion slanted news media outlets, Ask.com, About.com, WebMD or other commercial websites, and only scholarly, peer reviewed journals, vetted government reports, or other reliable, scholarly sources must be used for assignment completion.

**Tutoring**

Tutor.com offers online homework help and learning resources by connecting students to certified tutors for one-on-one help. AMU and APU students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutors are available 24/7 unless otherwise noted. Tutor.com also has a SkillCenter Resource Library offering educational resources, worksheets, videos, websites and career help. Accessing these resources does not count against tutoring hours and is also available 24/7. Please visit the APUS Library and search for 'Tutor' to create an account.

**Late Assignments – APUS Late Policy**

Students are expected to submit assignments by the due dates listed in the classroom. Late assignments, including but not limited to Assignments, Discussions, posts and responses, quizzes, and exams, may or may not be accepted after the course end date. Submitting an assignment after the due date may result in a penalty of up to 10% of the grade per day late, not to exceed a maximum 50% of the grade. The amount of the penalty is at the faculty member's discretion. Faculty recognize that students have limited time and may be more flexible if potential delays are communicated ahead of time.*

*Doctoral and Programs with specialty accreditation may have different late policies.

**Students with DSA accommodations may have different late policies applied. For more information regarding our DSA services, please contact DSA@apus.edu.

**Turn It In**

Assignments are automatically submitted to Turnitin.com within the course. Turnitin.com will analyze an assignment submission and report a similarity score. Your assignment submission is automatically processed through the assignments area of the course when you submit your work. **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic Dishonesty incorporates more than plagiarism, which is using the work of others without citation.

Academic dishonesty includes any use of content purchased or retrieved from web services such as CourseHero.com or Scribd. Additionally, allowing your work to be placed on such web services is academic dishonesty, as it is enabling the dishonesty of others. The copy and pasting of content from any web page, without citation as a direct quote, is academic dishonesty. When in doubt, do not copy/paste, and always cite.

**Submission Guidelines**

**Some assignments may have very specific requirements for formatting (such as font, margins, etc.) and submission file type (such as .docx, .pdf, etc.). See the assignment instructions for details. In general, standard file types such as those associated with Microsoft Office are preferred, unless otherwise specified.**

**It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all submitted work can be accessed and opened by the instructor.**

**Disclaimer Statement**

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of a particular group or class.

**Communicating on the Forum**

**Forums are the heart of the interaction in this course. The more engaged and lively the exchanges, the more interesting and fun the course will be. Only substantive comments will receive credit. Although there is a final posting day/time after which the instructor will grade and provide feedback, you are strongly discouraged from waiting until the due date to contribute your comments/questions on the forum. The purpose of the forums is to actively participate in an on-going discussion about the assigned content.**

**"Substantive"** means comments that contribute something new and important to the discussion. Thus, a message that simply says, "I agree", even if wordy and thus, meets the length requirement, is not substantive. A substantive comment contributes a new idea or perspective, a good follow-up question to a point made, offers a response to a question, provides an example or illustration of a key point, points out an inconsistency in an argument, etc.

As a class, if we run into conflicting view points, we must respect each other as colleagues. Hateful, aggressive, or hurtful comments towards other individuals, students, groups, peoples, and/or societies will not be tolerated.

Students must post a response to the weekly forums prompt and post the required number of replies to other students – refer to the grading rubric and/or forum instructions for specific expectations on number of replies and word count requirements.

# Communications

### Student Communication

To reach the instructor, please communicate through the MyClassroom email function accessible from the Classlist of the Course Tools menu, where the instructor and students email addresses are listed, or via the Office 365 tool on the Course homepage.

- In emails to instructors, it's important to note the specific course in which you are enrolled. The name of the course is at the top center of all pages.
- Students and instructors communicate in Discussion posts and other learning activities.
- All interactions should follow APUS guidelines, as noted in the Student Handbook, and maintain a professional, courteous tone.
- Students should review writing for spelling and grammar.
- Tips on Using the Office 365 Email Tool

### Instructor Communication

The instructor will post announcements on communications preferences involving email and Instant Messaging and any changes in the class schedule or activities.

- Instructors will periodically post information on the expectations of students and will provide feedback on assignments, Discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.
- Instructors will generally acknowledge student communications within 24 hours and respond within 48 hours, except in unusual circumstances (e.g., illness).
- The APUS standard for grading of all assessments (assignments, Discussions, quizzes, exams) is five days or fewer from the due date.
- Final course grades are submitted by faculty no later than seven days after the end date of the course or the end of the extension period.

# University Policies

Consult the Student Handbook for processes and policies at APUS. Notable policies:

- Drop/Withdrawal Policy

- Extension Requests

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Academic Dishonesty / Plagiarism](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)
- [Student Deadlines](#)
- [Video Conference Policy](#)

## Mission

The [mission of American Public University System](#) is to provide high quality higher education with emphasis on educating the nation's military and public service communities by offering respected, relevant, accessible, affordable, and student-focused online programs that prepare students for service and leadership in a diverse, global society.

## Minimum Technology Requirements

- Please consult the catalog for the minimum hardware and software required for [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) courses.
- Although students are encouraged to use the [Pulse mobile app](#) with any course, please note that not all course work can be completed via a mobile device.

## Disclaimers

- Please note that course content – and, thus, the syllabus – may change between when a student registers for a course and when the course starts.
- Course content may vary from the syllabus' schedule to meet the needs of a particular group.