

Syllabus Spring Semester 2019-2020

## **JOUR 5303-701 — Fashion & Digital Culture**

**Room:** UL 288

**Day/Time:** T 5-750p

**Instructor:** Dr. Myles Ethan Lascity

**Office:** UL 275

**Office Hours:** 4-5p Tuesdays (in office); 5-6p Wednesday (Fondren Starbucks)

**Email:** [mlascity@smu.edu](mailto:mlascity@smu.edu)

### **About This Course**



### **Required Readings**

Duffy, Brooke Erin (2017). *(not) Getting Paid to Do What You Love: Gender, Social Media, and Aspirational Work*. Yale UP.

Odell, Jenny. (2019). *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*. Melville House.

Wu, Tim. (2016). *The Attention Merchants: The Epic Scramble to Get Inside Our Heads*. Vintage.

## **Course Description**

This is a special topics course intended to explore the internet, digital culture and it's relation to consumption and fashion.

## **Purpose of this Course**

This course is a critical studies course that centered the “attention economy” as it pertains to digital culture and fashion. The goal is to help students understand the internet as a medium and social media platforms and how these trends have transformed media production and consumption, and the processes around fashion.

## **Learning Outcomes**

Students who successfully complete this course will:

- (1) have a thorough understanding digital culture and the attention economy, and the issues surrounding them;
- (2) be able to create media content in a variety of digital platforms;
- (3) be able to engage and debate theories of digital culture;
- (4) understand theoretical discussions and use them to reflect upon lived experience;
- (5) research and write persuasively and with expertise for a popular audience.

## **Methods of Evaluation**

Your grade will be graded out of 700 points.

## **Attendance and Participation – 150 pts**

Attendance and participation are extremely important in this class. This means regular and prompt attendance, coming to class having done the assigned readings, contributing to discussion and respectfully listening to others.

Each class you will be given five (5) points for coming to class. Contributing to the discussion will be worth up to an additional five (5) points. Being late to class, not paying attention to the discussion or actively disrupting class will result in a loss of participation points.

You are allowed **one (1)** unexcused absences from class. **Missing three (3) or more classes without a valid excuse will result in a failure of the course.**

*Note:* The instructor reserves the right to (a) assign and include pop quizzes into your participation grade and (b) give additional points for outstanding attendance and participation.

## Discussions

### Discussion Leader — 20 pts

Students will be assigned to lead class discussion once throughout the term. After which, students are responsible for rearranging discussion leadership responsibility in case of illness or other circumstances.

### Discussion Questions — 130 pts

For each class, students should share two **thoughtful** discussion questions **per reading\*** prior to the start of class. For full credit, questions should be posted by 3p. Questions posted between 3p and 5p will receive partial credit. **No credit will be given for questions posted after the start of class.**

### Assignments — 400 pts

LOOK Now! Email Blast — 100 pts

Twitter Takeover & Reflection Paper — 100 pts

Instagram Takeover & Reflection Paper — 100 pts

Final Op-Ed — 100 pts

**Written assignments are due by the beginning of class on the assigned due date.** All assignments must be submitted via Canvas. No exceptions.

**Late assignments will not be accepted. Deadlines must be made in the professional world and they must be made in the class.**

If you are having an issue or need an extension for any reason, please discuss it with the instructor as soon as possible. Accommodations can be made but they will not be made if you wait until the due date.

**Plagiarism and story fabrication is a serious issue within the journalism field. As such any instances of plagiarism or fabrication will result in a failing grade for the assignment and failing grade in the course.** There are no exceptions to this rule.

## Division of Journalism Policies

### Reporting standards for all media projects

Your story will be graded on content: is it fair, is it newsworthy, is it well sourced? Is the story organized, are all questions answered, and is all relevant information properly attributed? Are direct quotes preceded by strong transitions in print stories? At least 5 points may be taken off for problems like these. For errors of fact, expect 10 or more points off.

You are required in all cases to fully disclose your identity and purpose to sources, and any promises of anonymity or other special arrangements with sources must be discussed with your professor before such agreements are made. Under no circumstances should you grant a source the right to review or approve your story (though you may agree to check quotes for accuracy).

You must always tell all of your sources that the story you are reporting could be published or aired on multiple platforms. Your work could appear on news sites both on and off campus. Your stories, in other words, are for public consumption and your sources must know that.

Friends, colleagues, and family members are not acceptable sources. Unless you have cleared the source with your editor, expect at least 5 points to be taken off for each unacceptable source.

### **Grants of Anonymity\***

Students should avoid using unidentified sources whenever possible. There are times, however, when the only way to get a story is to offer anonymity; such offers should be a last resort after repeated attempts to go on the record have failed and the student has received permission from the instructor.

Information may be on the record, on background, not for attribution or off the record. These are prearranged agreements between a reporter and a source, which govern how specific information can be used. These deals must be agreed to beforehand, never after. A source can't say something then claim it was "off the record." That's too late.

Most sources—and even many journalists—do not understand what these terms mean. If a source requests some degree of anonymity, the journalist should make sure the terms are clear, as follows.

### **On the Record**

Anything the source says can be reported, published, or aired. All conversations are assumed to be on the record unless the source expressly requests -- and the reporter explicitly agrees -- to go off the record beforehand. The reporter should be sure to mark notes clearly so that it's possible to see what's on the record and what is not at a later date. Never rely on memory and always try to get back "on the record" as quickly as possible.

### **On Background**

This means you may use what the source gives you without using the source's name. In effect it confers anonymity on your source, but allows you to work with the information the source has provided.

### **Not for Attribution**

This means that a reporter agrees not to identify a source by name. Identification is provided only by reference to the source's job or position. That identification must be agreed upon by the reporter and the source, and is almost always given in a way that prevents readers from discovering the source's specific identity. The reporter should make sure the attribution is accurate and should press the source to allow the attribution to be as specific as possible. For example, a reporter would want to attribute information to "a high-ranking official in the Justice Department," rather than "a high-ranking law enforcement official," if the source agrees beforehand.

### **Off the Record**

You may not use the information unless you can confirm it with another source who doesn't insist on speaking off the record. The information is offered to explain or further a reporter's understanding of a particular issue or event. In general, it is best to avoid off the record conversations; another option might be to converse off the record and then try to convince the source to agree to waive the agreement.

\*with thanks to the NYU Journalism Handbook for Students

### **Mechanical standards for writing**

- Associated Press style and grammar errors: 2 or more points
- Punctuation errors: 2 or more points
- Spelling: 10 or more points for misspelled names or other proper nouns; 2 or more points for all other spelling errors
- Awkward or unclear phrasing: 2 or more points

### **How to earn an "F" on any media project**

Miss a deadline. Misquote or misrepresent someone. Rewrite or submit a story or package that was produced for any reason other than this class.

### **Plagiarism and Fabrication**

Plagiarism is stealing someone's words or ideas and passing them off as your own. Fabrication is making stuff up. Both strike at the heart of the journalistic process, where proper attribution and fact checking are paramount. We will deal with plagiarism and fabrication in the harshest manner possible, including referral to the honors council.

### **Library resources**

Megan Heuer is the librarian assigned to assist journalism students in their research. You can find help online at [guides.smu.edu/journalism](http://guides.smu.edu/journalism). Email Megan at [mheuer@smu.edu](mailto:mheuer@smu.edu). To set up a one-on-one appointment for help: [libcal.smu.edu/appointment/12037](http://libcal.smu.edu/appointment/12037).

### **Additional grading information**

1. "A"s are rare. They are awarded for truly excellent work. Very good work receives a "B"; average work a "C"; below average a "D." This is in accordance with university regulations.
2. Letter grades are based on a 10-point scale. For example, the "B" range is as follows: 80-82 B-; 83-86 B; 87-89 B+. The same spread applies to all letter grades; however, there is no A+.
3. Your teachers will be happy to discuss the content of your papers. If you wish to protest a grade, a formal process is available.

Grade	Average	Class Points
A	93-100	651-700
A-	90-92	630-644
B+	87-89	609-623
B	83-86	581-602
B-	80-82	560-574
C+	77-79	539-553
C	73-76	511-532
C-	70-72	490-504
D+	67-69	469-483
D	63-66	441-462
D-	60-62	420-434
F	59 and below	Less than 413

## **University Policies**

**Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

**Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See “Religious Holidays” under [University Policy No. 7.22](#))

**Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See [2018-2019 University Undergraduate Catalogue](#))

**Campus Carry:** In accordance with Texas Senate Bill 11, also known as the “campus carry” law, following consultation with entire University community SMU determined to remain a weapons-free campus. Specifically, SMU prohibits possession of weapons (either openly or in a concealed manner) on campus. (See [http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police/Weapons\\_Policy](http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police/Weapons_Policy))

## Class Schedule

**This is a working schedule.** Any changes will be made between the instructor and the class. You are responsible for knowing about any alterations to the syllabus if you are not in class when the changes are discussed.

Week	Date	Class Plans
Wk 1	Jan. 21	<b>Class Introduction</b> <i>Griffin, "Media Ecology"</i> <i>Carr, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?"</i> <i>Tiffany, "The Early Internet ..."</i> <i>Rosenblatt, "Gen Z uses memes ..."</i>
Wk 2	Jan. 28	<b>The Attention Economy</b> Wu, Part I (pp. 1-81) <i>Bernays, "The Engineering of Consent"</i>
Wk 3	Feb. 4	<b>The Attention Economy (con't)</b> Wu, Part II (pp. 83-180) <i>Frank, "Carnival and cola: Hip versus Square in the Cola Wars"</i>
Wk 4	Feb. 11	<b>What is the Internet?</b> Wu, Part III (pp. 181-213) <i>Bolter and Grusin "The Double Logic of Remediation"</i> <i>Poster, "The Culture of Underdetermination"</i>
Wk 5	Feb. 18	<b>Fame Culture</b> Wu, Part IV (pp. 215-250) <i>Church Gibson, "Celebrity and Fashion, Past and Present"</i> <i>Tashjian, "Fashion Designers Are Becoming Personalities"</i> <i>Hobbs, "Journalist as Influencer"</i>
Wk 6	Feb. 25	<b>Media Changes</b> Wu, Chapters 20-22 (pp. 251-288) <i>Duffy, "Inviting Audiences In"</i> <i>Duffy, "Off the Page"</i> <i>Wiedeman, "What's Left of Conde Nast"</i> <i>Willens, "The Lost Generation of Journalists"</i> <i>Schneier, "2009 Killed Fashion As We Knew It"</i>
Wk 7	March 3	<b>Platforms</b> Wu, Chapters 23-28 (pp. 289-340)  <b>Twitter</b> <i>Sisario, "The New Rise of a Summer Hit"</i>



		<p><b>YouTube</b>  <i>Wischhover, "YouTube and Instagram Changed Beauty Forever"</i>  <i>Roman, "YouTube Tries to Get Fashionable"</i>  <i>Montgomery, "YouTube Influencers Are Oversharing Their Surgeries"</i>  <i>Lorenz, "YouTube Reverses Position ..."</i></p> <p><b>TikTok</b>  <i>Lorenz, "High Schools to TikTok"</i>  <i>Longo, "Welcome to Mike Pence's Gay Teen Summer Camp"</i></p>
<b>Wk 8</b>	<b>March 10</b>	<p><b>Aspiration, Gender and Labor</b>  Duffy, Chapters 1 &amp; 2 (pp. 1-44)  <i>Holden, "The Cold, Sterile Art of Instagram Brotophography"</i>  <i>d'Avignon, "Ghost Towns of Instagram"</i>  <i>Jawline</i> (Film, In class)</p>
<b>Wk 9</b>	<b>March 17</b>	<b>Spring Break — No Class</b>
<b>Wk 10</b>	<b>March 24</b>	<p><b>Digital Labor</b>  Duffy, Chapter 3 (pp. 45-97)  <a href="https://slate.com/podcasts/working/2019/10/how-does-a-beauty-influencer-do-her-job">https://slate.com/podcasts/working/2019/10/how-does-a-beauty-influencer-do-her-job</a>  <i>Beach, "I Was Caroline Calloway"</i>  <i>Downs, "Caroline Calloway's Next Act?"</i></p>
<b>Wk 11</b>	<b>March 31</b>	<p><b>Branding the Self</b>  Duffy, Ch. 4 (pp. 98-135)  <i>Jennings, "E-girls and e-boys"</i>  <i>Rosenblatt, "What are 'VSCO girls'?"</i></p>
<b>Wk 12</b>	<b>April 7</b>	<p><b>Advertising and influence</b>  Duffy, Ch. 5 (pp. 136-184)  <i>Marwick, "The Fabulous Lives of Micro-Celebrities"</i>  <i>Luvaas, "The Business of Blogging"</i>  <i>Bauck, "On the Media Value One Influencer"</i></p>
<b>Wk 13</b>	<b>April 14</b>	<p><b>Looking Good</b>  Duffy, Ch. 6 &amp; 7 (pp.185-235)  <i>Peyser, "I'd Rather Die Hot Than Live Ugly"</i>  <i>Hou, "Michelle Phan Was YouTube's Biggest Star ..."</i>  <i>Turner, "Being and Influencer is Harder Than It Looks"</i></p>

**Wk 14** April 21 **Cultural Considerations**

**Algorithms**

*Bernard, "My Algorithm Makeover"*

*Pardes, "The Style-Quantifying Astrophysicists ..."*

*Simonite, "Algorithms Struggle to Recognize Black Faces"*

**Chronology**

*Miller, "The 2010s Broke Out Sense of Time"*

*Matsakis, "On TikTok There is No Time"*

*Mull, "The 2000s Never Ended"*

**Retail**

*Cohen, "Pop-Up Stores Earn a Permanent Place ..."*

*George-Parkin, "How a show that looks like a sock ..."*

**Community**

*Constine, "How Peloton Made Sweat Addictive"*

*Mull, "I Joined a Stationary Biker Gang"*

**Wk 15** April 28 **Resisting Attention**

*Odell, How to do Nothing (All)*