



PSY 495

Contemporary Issues in Cyberpsychology

Dr. Theresa Hunt

SPRING 2025

T & F 11:30 and by arrangement

Office: CULM 115

Hours: M 9:30-10:30 & W by appt

Course Description

This advanced seminar explores the rapidly changing field of cyberpsychology with a particular focus on how digital technologies shape human behavior, social interactions, public policy, and professional practice. The course culminates in a **professional capstone project** that can be enacted several ways; we'll discuss possibilities during our first few course meetings.

The first quarter of the semester includes a research methods refresher and survey of current issues making headlines in both popular and scholarly contexts. In the second quarter of the semester, you will narrow a field of interest for the professional capstone project. The final half of the semester includes working with your advisor to organize and develop the project.

How This Course Will Run

For the first 8 weeks of the semester, you will complete **one** reading and assignment through Canvas. These assignments ask for both reflective and analytical responses and will account for 25% of the grade. During this half of the semester, you will also identify an area of interest for your professional capstone project and, working with your advisory team, produce and publish a "pitch" to share with the class. While the basis of this work is asynchronous, you will be expected to meet with your advisory team on a bi-monthly basis in face-to-face meetings in person or via Zoom.

After the approval and modification of your mid-semester project pitch, the final 8 weeks of the semester will consist of independent work on your project. Deadlines and additional outcomes for the project objectives will be determined no later than **February 24**.

Learning Outcomes

- Explore in greater depth emergent issues related to the field of cyberpsychology, both in research and applied contexts
- Practice advanced bibliographic research skills
- Develop strategies for developing appropriate, scalable and realistic questions for human subject research
- Strengthen writing and oral presentation skills
- Demonstrate ability to provide constructive feedback to peers when reviewing research plans and written summaries of outcomes
- Demonstrate ability to alter and revise research plans, written summaries, and outcomes reports after applying instructor and peer feedback

Required Texts

Readings, videos and links to websites will be posted to Canvas.

Other Course Policies

Attendance Policies: Each student is expected to meet with the instructor and/or advisor bi-monthly, and to be consistently engaged in required Canvas activities. Accumulating more than 2 absences from advisory or class meetings will result in a 10 point participation grade deduction.

Late Submission Policy: Canvas assignments posted late will lose 5 points per day, starting immediately after the assigned **time** and **date**. Project components submitted late to the instructor receive a 10 point grade deduction per day and will receive a failing grade **72 hours** after the deadline.

Plagiarism, presenting someone else's words, thoughts, or ideas (in whole or in part) as your own, is cheating and will not be tolerated. This includes the use of AI such as Chat GPT. The NJIT Honor Code will be upheld, and any violations will be brought to the immediate attention of the Dean of Students. NJIT enforces strict academic integrity policies, and any plagiarized material **will** result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly for the course. Academic probation and possible suspension or expulsion from the university may also be pursued by NJIT administration in cases of plagiarism. **Three very important things to remember:**

- 1) Various plagiarism-detection tools are employed in this course.
- 2) There have been numerous cases of students attempting to submit papers written by students enrolled in earlier versions of this class. These students have received failing grades and academic probation – and the students supplying the papers have also been punished.
- 3) If you're struggling with the final project or concerned about these policies, I'm happy to work with you! Plagiarism is not worth the risk to your future.

Canvas Assignments	25%
Midsemester Pitch Presentation	10%
Participation and advisory attendance	10%
Project	55%

Project Components

Literature Review	10
Peer Feedback	10
Initial Draft	10
Final Draft	25

Final Grade Scale:

A =89.6-100; B+=87-89.5; B =80-86.5; C+=77-79.5; C =69.5-76.5; D+ =66.5-69.5; D = 59.5-64.5; F =59.4 or below

Week 1-2	Initial survey and individual meetings; Survey due 1/27 by 5 PM
Week 3 2/3-2/9	Review of topics ; read Shadijanova, “The Rise of the De-influencer” and Tumin, “Tired of Influencers”; Complete Canvas Activity 1 by 2/7
Week 4 2/10-2/16	Review of topics ; read Buolamwini, <i>Unmasking AI</i> excerpt; Complete Canvas Activity 2 by 2/14 Advisor-advisee meeting to be scheduled
Week 5 2/17-2/23	Review of Topics ; read Minerva and Giubilni, “Is AI the Future of Mental Healthcare?”; Complete Canvas Activity 3 by 2/21
Week 6 2/24-3/2	Review of Topics ; read Haidt, <i>The Anxious Generation</i> excerpt; Complete Canvas Activity 4 by 2/28 Advisor-advisee meeting to be scheduled ; Draft Pitch Ideas due to advisor
Week 7 3/3-3/9	Review of Topics ; read Juneja et al., “Assessing Enactment of Content Regulation Policies”; Complete Canvas Activity 4 by 3/7
Week 8 3/10-3/16	Pitch proposal due and posted to Canvas no later than 3/11 at midnight; peer feedback assignment due no later than 3/14 at midnight
Week 9	Spring Break
Weeks 10-11 3/24-4/6	Advisor-advisee meeting to be scheduled Introduction/Executive Summary and Literature Review Draft Due no later than 4/1 at midnight
Weeks 12-13 4/7-4/20	Advisor-advisee meeting to be scheduled Revisions deadline TBA
Weeks 14-15	Presentation to STS students and faculty (10 minutes with approximately eight PowerPoint slides); Final Project due no later than May 11 th