




Communication Studies (CMNS) 421

Being Online (Revision 5)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode: [Individualized study online](#)  with [eText](#) 

Credits: 3

Areas of study: Arts or Social Science

Prerequisites: None. **CMNS 301** and **CMNS 302** are recommended.

Precluded: HSRV 422 (CMNS 421 may not be taken for credit by students who have obtained credit for HSRV 422).

Challenge: CMNS 421 has a challenge for credit option.

Faculty: [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

Welcome to Communication Studies 421: Being Online, a three-credit senior-level course that focuses on an inquiry into the psychological experience of being online. After an overview of Internet history and use, the course considers how the self is experienced online, how Internet use affects children, parents, and the elderly, as well as our relationships with others. Then two of the major psychological experiences of being online are taken up: video game play and social media use. These topics are followed by a discussion of the problems associated with Internet use and an exploration of some therapeutic and health solutions. The final unit considers the future of life online by examining how the experience of being on the Internet has implications for individual consciousness, as well as various applied and practical considerations for the future of the Internet. The course relies on recent research to explore issues and concerns about this relatively new medium of technology.

Outline

CMNS 421 is divided into nine units:


- Unit 1: Internet Overview—Implications for “Being Online”
- Unit 2: The Self Online—From Avatars to Selfies
- Unit 3: Developmental Perspectives—Children, Parents, and the Elderly
- Unit 4: Relationships Online—From Friends to Lovers
- Unit 5: Video Game Play—Empowerment or Violence?
- Unit 6: Social Media—Community or Narcissism?
- Unit 7: Deviance and Pathology—From Addiction to Bullying
- Unit 8: Therapy and Health—Psychotherapy, Rehabilitation, and Self-Diagnosis
- Unit 9: Theoretical and Future Speculations


Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for CMNS 421, you must complete all of the assignments, achieve a minimum mark of 50 percent for the final examination, and obtain a

course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)** .

Activity	Weight
Assignment 1: Units 1 & 2 Discussion Question	10%
Assignment 2: Units 3 & 4 Discussion Question	10%
Assignment 3: Social Media or Video Game Activity Report	20%
Assignment 4: Units 7 & 8 Discussion Question	10%
Assignment 5: Essay	20%
Final Examination	30%
Total	100%

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#)  section of the Calendar.


To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#) .

Materials

Gackenbach, J. I., & Bown, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Boundaries of self and reality online: Implications of digitally constructed realities*. Elsevier/Academic Press.

 (eText)

eText

Registration in this course includes an electronic textbook. For more information on [electronic textbooks](#) , please refer to our [eText Initiative site](#)



Other Materials

All other materials, including a Course Information, Study Guide, and additional readings are available online through the course site.



Challenge for credit

Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit**  can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Evaluation



To **receive credit**  for the CMNS 421 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least **D (50 percent)**  on the examination and on the take-home questions.

Activity	Weight
Take-Home Questions	63%
Exam	37%
Total	100%



[Challenge for credit course registration form](#)

Important links

- > [Academic advising](#) 
- > [Program planning](#) 

> [Request assistance](#) 

> [Support services](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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View [previous revision](#) 
