



Syllabus (Spring, 2026)

Course Title	Communication & Society [English]	Course No.	36029-01
Department/Major	Communication & Media	Credit/Hours	3/3
Class Time/ Classroom	Tuesday 3:30 ~ 4:45 PM, Thursday 12:30 ~ 13:45 PM / POSCO Building B153 *The course will be conducted primarily online, with in-person sessions held on Tuesdays unless otherwise noted.*		
Instructor	Sungbin Youk		
Office Hours/ Office Location			

I. Course Overview

1. Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the Division of Communication and Media, providing foundational knowledge for subsequent classes within the division. The course not only delves into central theories in communication and media studies but also covers how students can read and understand empirical research. It explores how we can use theories and empirical evidence to explain and interpret social phenomena. The curriculum encompasses the history of communication and foundational studies in the fields of mass media, social media, and interpersonal communication. Additionally, we will learn how to interpret and make predictions about the impact of media technology, including artificial intelligence and virtual reality, on our society.

2. Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

3. Course Format

Online Lecture	Offline Activities
70%	30%

Most lecture materials will be delivered through online videos. The course will include both mandatory and optional in-person sessions. Mandatory in-person sessions will consist of in-class lectures, activities, and exams. Optional in-person sessions may include exam preparation and meetings related to the final project.

4. Course Objectives

This course aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) students will learn to interpret and explain social phenomena using theories and empirical evidence, and (2) students will be prepared to delve deeper into subsequent courses offered within the division.

5. Evaluation System

■Absolute evaluation:

The final grade is calculated out of a total of 100 points, based on a weighted combination of minor assignments, exams, and either a midterm exam or a final project. Students may choose one of the following two evaluation options before the final exam. Once selected, the option cannot be changed.

Option 1	Minor assignments	Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Extra Credit
Option 2		Final Project		
Weights	5%	45%	50%	A maximum of 3 additional points to the final grade



Minor assignments: There will be five minor assignments throughout the semester. If a minor assignment is related to an in-person session, the details will be announced only during class and will not be repeated online unless there is an error in the original announcement. All assignments must be submitted via CyberCampus. Each assignment is graded on a submission basis, with 1 point awarded for satisfactory completion. Submissions that reflect minimal effort will receive 0 points. These assignments are designed to assess students' diligence and engagement with the course. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Exams: The course includes two exams—a midterm and a final—designed to assess your understanding of the course material. The midterm consists of 45 multiple-choice questions, and the final consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. The final exam is cumulative, covering content from both the second half of the course and material previously tested in the midterm (though not the same questions). Both exams will be administered on paper. Students may not bring any materials except for a vocabulary list provided by the instructor, on which they may write word translations in advance. During the exam, students may request word translations from the instructor; translations will be provided unless the term is directly related to a key concept discussed in the course. The use of paper-based or electronic dictionaries, or any other tools and devices, is strictly prohibited.

Final Project: The final project requires students to logically explain a communicative social phenomenon related to communication and media. Students may work individually or in groups. If working in groups, all group members will receive the same grade, making it the student's responsibility to negotiate and balance the workload effectively. The project format is flexible; students may choose to create a video, deliver a presentation, write a report, or use any other format that best conveys their ideas. Projects will be evaluated according to the criteria below. For additional guidance, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of the syllabus.

1. The project clearly identifies and explains a communicative social phenomenon, highlighting its significance and the need for investigation. (10 points)
2. The project provides a detailed and logical explanation of the phenomenon using a theory or concepts discussed in class. (10 points)
3. The project provides strong empirical evidence to support the explanation, using at least one scientific method discussed in class. (10 points)
4. The project offers meaningful and well-developed implications or actionable practical solutions, demonstrating how understanding the phenomenon can contribute to societal improvement. (10 points)
5. The chosen format effectively conveys the ideas and is appropriate for presenting the content and argument. (5 points)

Extra Credit: Students may earn up to 3 extra credit points through activities such as participating in pilot research studies, attending special lectures, or engaging with peers' final projects. Opportunities will be announced via Cybercampus.

A+	Above 97 points (inclusive)
A	Below 97 and above 92 points (inclusive)
A-	Below 92 and above 87 points (inclusive)
B+	Below 87 and above 82 points (inclusive)
B	Below 82 and above 77 points (inclusive)
B-	Below 77 and above 72 points (inclusive)
C	Below 72 and above 60 points (inclusive)
D	Below 60 and above 50 points (inclusive)
F	Below 50 points

*Final Grade Adjustment: To ensure fairness, grades will be adjusted if necessary to meet the following conditions: The median score will be at least 82, or at least 20% of students will score 92 or above. Adjustments will not be applied if the average course grade already meets these expectations. The final grade will **NOT** be adjusted for individual students.

II. Course Materials and Additional Readings

There are no required course materials.



III. Course Policies

Academic dishonesty (i.e., collaborating on exams and using unauthorized materials and technological tools during exams) will result in a failing grade for this course.

IV. Course Schedule

Week	Topics	In-Person Session
1	Course Introduction; History of Communication and Media Studies	Mandatory
2	Communication and Memes; Technological Advancements	
3	News Media and Mass Communication	
4	Entertainment and Narratives; Entertainment and Relationships	
5	Empirical Studies and Communication	Mandatory
6	Empirical Studies and Communication	
7	Economic Perspective on Interpersonal Relationships; Exam Preparation	Optional
8	Midterm Exam	Mandatory
9	Biases in Interpersonal Relationships; Intercultural Communication	Mandatory
10	Conflicts in Interpersonal Relationships; Persuasion	
11	Persuasion; Social Media	
12	Media and Morality; Communication as Networks	
13	Media Technologies; Deception	
14	Group Communication and Leadership; Exam Preparation	Optional
15	Final Exam Due Date for Final Project (Sunday 11:59 PM)	Mandatory

V. Special Accommodations

* According to the University regulation section #57-3, students with disabilities can request special accommodations related to attendance, lectures, assignments, or tests by contacting the course professor at the beginning of the semester. Based on the nature of the student's request, students can receive support for such accommodations from the course professor or from the Support Center for Students with Disabilities (SCSD). Please refer to the below examples of the types of support available in the lectures, assignments, and evaluations.

Lecture	Assignments	Evaluation
. Visual impairment: braille, enlarged reading materials . Hearing impairment: note-taking assistant . Physical impairment: access to classroom, note-taking assistant	Extra days for submission, alternative assignments	. Visual impairment: braille examination paper, examination with voice support, longer examination hours, note-taking assistant . Hearing impairment: written examination instead of oral . Physical impairment: longer examination hours, note-taking assistant



VI. Frequently Asked Questions about the Final Project

1. What exactly is a “communicative social phenomenon”?

A communicative social phenomenon refers to a *specific, real-world issue or trend that clearly involves communication*. This includes platform-based behaviors, interpersonal dynamics, media use, symbolic language, or mediated interaction. Vague topics like “technology is growing” or “mental health is important” are not acceptable. Your project must show how communication plays a central, not peripheral, role in shaping or addressing the issue.

2. What does it mean to “logically explain a communicative social phenomenon using empirical evidence”?

You must clearly structure your argument using communication theories or frameworks we’ve discussed in class and support your claims with empirical evidence. This includes (a) primary data you gather (e.g., surveys, interviews, observation), and/or (b) secondary data from academic articles, news, or reports. Avoid opinion-based arguments. Logic, structure, and data matter.

3. Do I need to include theory? What if I just mention “symbolic communication” or “media effects”?

Including theory, especially what we discussed in class, is highly preferred for you to “logically explain” the selected communicative social phenomenon. Simply listing or name-dropping theories without explaining how they apply is not sufficient. You must show how theory helps explain your phenomenon. Listing many concepts without analytical depth will result in point deductions.

4. Can I use bullet points in my analysis or implications section?

No. Bullet points signal a lack of depth. Use complete paragraphs that synthesize your ideas.

5. Do I need to suggest practical solutions or implications?

Yes. Strong projects don’t just analyze; they ask “so what?” and propose specific interventions, solutions, or societal contributions. Vague or speculative ideas like “this needs further research” are not enough. You must connect your analysis to real-world action or insight.

6. What if I use AI tools like ChatGPT?

You are expected to submit original, analytical work. If your project shows signs of being heavily AI-generated (e.g., overly generic transitions, shallow generalizations, or hallucinated concepts), this will most likely result in point deductions.

7. Can I write about something I personally experienced or observed?

Only as a starting point. Strong papers connect personal observations to academic literature and theoretical analysis. A fully anecdotal paper will receive a lower score.

8. How long should the final project be?

There is no fixed length. A rumor has circulated that it must be around 20 minutes or 10 pages long. This is not true. Your task is to choose the best format and length to communicate your argument clearly and persuasively. Whether it’s a one-minute video, one-page report, or 30-page paper, what matters is quality and clarity, not quantity.

9. What citation style should I use?

You may use any citation style, as long as it’s consistent and complete. If you’re unsure, use APA style, which is what I personally prefer.

10. How will the final project be graded?

Grading is deductive. Everyone starts with full points, and deductions are made for specific areas that need improvement (e.g., unclear focus, weak theory use, lack of evidence, or poor formatting).

11. Can I work in groups?

Yes. You may work individually or in a group. All group members receive the same grade, so the responsibility of team management and collaboration is entirely on the students.

12. Can I submit the project in Korean or English?

Yes. You may submit your final project in either language, depending on your comfort and what best suits your topic and audience.