

Syllabus (2022-Summer)

Course Title	Virtual Reality (VR) in Communication	Course No.	
Credit	3 credits	Hours	45 Hours
Class Time Classroom	Mon to Thr Classroom TBA		
Instructor	Name Sun Joo (Grace) Ahn	Department ADPR	
	E-mail sjahn@uga.edu	Phone	
Office Hours Office Location	By appointment		

I. Course Overview

1. Course Description

With the arrival of stand-alone, wireless headsets, virtual reality (VR) technology is no longer too expensive or too complicated for everyday consumers. With large companies such as Facebook and Google jumping into develop their own VR systems, the technology has a high chance of becoming massively adopted. What does the rise of VR technology mean for communication scholarship and how do virtual experiences impact users in and outside of virtual worlds? How will ubiquitous adoption of VR impact our understanding of communication and social interactions? This course will offer students a comprehensive overview of the history of VR, critical developments in theory and the scientific literature, and VR in the context of persuasion and related social science studies.

2. Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for the course.

3. Course Format

Lecture	Discussion/Presentation	Experiment/Practicum	Field Study	Other
50%	20%	30%	0%	0%

4. Course Objectives

(1) Understand the history and development of immersive virtual environments, (2) learn concepts, theories, and models that advance our understanding of virtual experiences, (3) apply this knowledge to solve real-world problems. At the end of this course, students should be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of how immersive virtual experiences do or do not differ from traditional media experiences and how they can shift our understanding of communication processes and outcomes.

5. Evaluation Systems

Relative evaluation Absolute evaluation (for Ewha International Summer College students only) Others

Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Quizzes	Presentation	Projects	Assignments	Participation	Others
30%	40%	0%	20%	0%	0%	10%	0%

II. Course Materials and Additional Readings

1. Required Materials

All assigned texts will be available as PDF files in the class webpage.

2. Supplementary Materials

Jeremy Bailenson (2018). *Experience on Demand: What Virtual Reality Is, How It Works, and What It Can Do*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Nick Yee (2014). *The Proteus Paradox: How Online Games and Virtual Worlds Change Us – And How They Don't*. Yale University Press.

3. Optional Additional Readings

III. Course Schedule

Day	Date	Topics & Class Materials, Assignments
Day 1	(6/30)	Meet & Greet: Overview of the Course • Syllabus review • Decide news clippings order, decide groups
Day 2	(7/4)	The Old is New in Virtual Reality • Sutherland, I. (1965). The ultimate display. • NYT article • Lanier, J. (2001). Virtually there.
Day 3	(7/5)	Virtual Reality in Social Science • Blascovich, J. et al. (2002). Immersive virtual environment technology as a methodological tool for social psychology. • Bailenson, J. et al. (2008). Transformed social interaction in mediated interpersonal communication.
Day 4	(7/6)	Presence: Are You There? • Minsky, M. (1980). Telepresence. • Lombard, M. & Ditton, T. (1997). At the heart of it all: The concept of presence. • Steuer, J. (1992). Defining virtual reality
Day 5	(7/7)	Avatars: People in Virtual Worlds • Ahn, S., Fox, J., & Bailenson, J. (2011). Avatars. • Nowak, K., & Fox, J. (2018). Avatars and computer-mediated communication
Day 6	(7/11)	Embodiment: Owning Your Virtual Body • Slater, M. et al. (2010). First person experience of body transfer in virtual reality. • Yee, N., & Bailenson, J. (2007). The proteus effect.

Day	Date	Topics & Class Materials, Assignments
Day 7	(7/12)	Midterm Project Review • Individual meetings
Day 8	(7/13)	Midterm Project • Peer reviews for midterm explication paper
Day 9	(7/14)	VR, the Empathy Machine? • Ahn, Le, & Bailenson (2013). The effect of embodied experiences. • Ahn et al. (2016). Experiencing nature. • Herrera et al. (2018). Building long-term empathy.
Day 10	(7/18)	New Strategies for Persuasion • Ahn & Fox (2016). Persuasive avatars. • Ahn & Bailenson (2011). Self-endorsing vs. other-endorsing. • McCain, Ahn, & Campbell (2018). Is desirability a boundary condition of the Proteus effect?
Day 11	(7/19)	Virtual Experiences that Impact Physical Behaviors • Ahn & Fox (2017). VEs, avatars, for health. • Ahn, Park, & Bailenson (2014). Short- and long-term effect of embodied experiences. • Hershfield et al. (2011). Increasing saving behavior through age-progressed renderings of the future self.
Day 12	(7/20)	Being There, Together: Social VR • Snowdon, D., Churchill, E., & Munro, A. (2000). Collaborative Virtual Environments: An Introduction. • Schroeder, R. (2002). Social interaction in VEs
Day 13	(7/21)	What about AR and MR? • Ahn et al. (2015). Virtual pets to promote physical activity in children.
Day 14	(7/25)	Poster final review • Individual meetings with instructor
Day 15	(7/26)	Poster Session in Hubs • Present your poster to the class
Makeup Classes 1	(mm/dd)	
Makeup Classes 2	(mm/dd)	

IV. Special Accommodations

* According to the University regulation section #57-3, students with disabilities can request for special accommodations related to attendance, lectures, assignments, or tests by contacting the course professor at the beginning of semester. Based on the nature of the students' 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Visual impairment: braille examination paper, examination with voice support, longer examination hours, note-taking assistant . Hearing impairment: written examination instead of oral examination . Physical impairment: longer examination hours, note-taking assistant

-Actual support may vary depending on the course.

* The contents of this syllabus are not final—they may be updated.