



# CAPILANO UNIVERSITY

COURSE OUTLINE		
<b>TERM: Fall 2023</b>	<b>COURSE NO: CMNS 415</b>	
<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	<b>COURSE TITLE: Disinformation and Media</b>	
<b>OFFICE: LOCAL:</b> <b>E-MAIL:</b>	<b>SECTION NO(S):</b>	<b>CREDITS: 3.0</b>
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>		
<b>COURSE WEBSITE:</b>		

Capilano University acknowledges with respect the Lilwat7úl (Lil'wat), x<sup>w</sup>mə ǀ 0k<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) people on whose territories our campuses are located.

## COURSE FORMAT

Three hours of class time, plus an additional hour delivered through other activities for a 15-week semester, which includes two weeks for final exams. May be delivered in mixed mode or online format.

## COURSE PREREQUISITES

45 credits of 100-level or higher coursework

## CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to help students develop disinformation and media literacy through exploring the spread of disruptive information, whether it be disinformation or misinformation, in mass and social media. Students will learn how to use fact checking tools, such as Snopes, create codebooks to conduct primary research on disinformation, be introduced to the principles of topic modelling to study disinformation, and practice discourse and content analysis in this field. Students will study the effects of disruptive information on their personal lives as well as local, national, and international communities to develop a filter for truth and safely navigate information on mass or social media, unlearn or correct existing biases, avoid being passively influenced by the rumours and conspiracy theories in the media, and learn how to stop and report disinformation.

## COURSE NOTE

CMNS 415 is an approved Self and Society course for Cap Core requirements.  
CMNS 415 is an approved Science and Technology course for Cap Core requirements.

## REQUIRED TEXTS AND/OR RESOURCES

There is no required textbook for this course. A selection of relevant articles, disinformation fact checking tools, and reliable resources are posted on eLearn.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**On successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:**

1. Assess the cultural, economic, and political impact of technology on our lives and how algorithms and deepfakes construct and spread disinformation.
2. Conduct and explain a scientific inquiry based on investigation of evidence and source-tracing of real-life disinformation or misinformation cases, using snopes.com, politifact.com, or other tracing, to showcase the chain effects the disruptive information produces.
3. Compare the ways content and data can be harvested from social media and analyzed through topic modelling software versus codebooks to perform an analysis and test hypotheses.
4. Demonstrate how a problem, concept, or process can be modelled numerically and graphically through a codebook with an achieved <66% inter-coder reliability and a disinformation impact case study investigation board.
5. Participate in scientific inquiry through observations, surveys, developing and testing hypotheses, analyzing evidence, data narration with emphasis on N size, and interpreting results.
6. Evaluate scientific information to study and present on the impact of disinformation on society, culture, or international relations through relevant, recent, and reliable secondary sources, disinformation theory published in academic, peer-reviewed journals, mass media, and government websites.
7. Construct a deeper understanding of how their personal lives are impacted by disinformation through developing digital and critical literacy skills to support their everyday communication.

**Students who complete this Self and Society course will be able to do the following:**

- Identify potential root causes of local/global problems and how they affect local/global cultures, economies, politics, and policies.
- Assess and evaluate individual and collective responsibilities within a diverse and interconnected global society.
- Apply concepts of sustainable development to address sustainability challenges in a global context.
- Analyze the impact of colonialism and racism on Indigenous peoples.

**Students who complete this Science and Technology course will be able to do the following:**

- Assess the cultural, economic, and political effects of technology.
- Evaluate scientific information (e.g., distinguish primary and secondary sources, assess credibility and validity of information).
- Demonstrate how a problem, concept, or process can be modelled numerically, graphically, or algorithmically.
- Explain how scientific inquiry is based on investigation of evidence and evolves based on new findings.
- Participate in scientific inquiry and communicate the elements of the process, including making careful and systematic observations, developing and testing a hypothesis, analyzing evidence, and interpreting results.

## COURSE CONTENT

Weeks	Topic
Weeks 1-3	<b>Orientation</b> mapping of the domain – introduction to issues, research perspectives, theoretical models and critical interpretations
Weeks 4-7	<b>Exploration</b> focusing on specific aspects in depth – including a combination of lecture, student-led seminars, case study discussions, class debates, and expert guest speakers
Weeks 8-13	<b>Application</b> focusing of and substantive support for student projects and research (group and/or individual) – support given through active direction, experiential learning, work-integrated learning opportunities, classroom lecture and discussion.

## EVALUATION PROFILE

Assessment	% of Final Grade
Individual Research and Written Work	20-50% <sup>1</sup>
Individual Presentations	20-50% <sup>2</sup>
Participation & Professionalism	0-10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Participation and Professionalism grade includes punctuality, active engagement in class, regular attendance, respectful peer support, accepting and offering constructive peer feedback, and overall professionalism. Students are expected to work calmly and courteously and meet deadlines.

## GRADING PROFILE

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	

### Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades will not be given unless special arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the date set by University Administration.

### Late Assignments

Homework assignments are due on the due date unless otherwise advised by your instructor. Late assignments will only be accepted if prior approval for a late submission date has been given by the instructor.

### Missed Exams and Quizzes

Missed exams or quizzes will receive a grade of "0" unless PRIOR arrangements (wherever possible) are made with the instructor. Permission to make up an exam will only be given in extraordinary situations such as illness of the student or the death of a close family member. In the School of Communication Policies section of this outline, see "Examination & Pivotal Presentation Exemption

<sup>1</sup> No single assignment will be valued at more than 35%

<sup>2</sup> No single assignment will be valued at more than 35%

Policy". A doctor's certificate, or other proof supporting the reason for the absence, will be required.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance and punctuality are both essential and expected due to the nature and format of the course materials. NOTE: penalties of up to 2% per missed class may be applied in situations where no signed and dated "pivotal exemption" is provided. All assignments will be completed in class; attendance, therefore, is absolutely compulsory. Missed or late assignments, quizzes or presentations will receive no grade unless the student makes arrangements with the instructor well before the due date in question. It is up to the student to contact the instructor to arrange such make-ups.

**English Usage**

All assignments are marked for correct English usage, proofreading and formatting. Students are expected to proofread all written work for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Instructors may deduct marks for incorrect grammar and spelling in written assignments.

**Electronic Devices**

Students may use electronic devices during class for note taking only.

**On-line Communication**

Outside of the classroom, instructors will (if necessary) communicate with students using either their official Capilano University email or eLearn; please check both regularly. Official communication between Capilano University and students is delivered to students' Capilano University email addresses only.

**UNIVERSITY OPERATIONAL DETAILS****Tools for Success**

Many services are available to support student success for Capilano University students. A central navigation point for all services can be found at: <https://www.capilanou.ca/student-services/>

**Capilano University Security: download the [CapU Mobile Safety App](#)**

**Policy Statement (S2009-06)**

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Academic Integrity, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

**Academic Integrity (S2017-05)**

Any instance of academic dishonesty or breach of the standards of academic integrity is serious and students will be held accountable for their actions, whether acting alone or in a group. See policy and procedures S2017-05 Academic Integrity for more information: <https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>

Violations of academic integrity, including dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic performances, are prohibited and will be handled in accordance with the Student Academic Integrity Procedures.

**Academic dishonesty** is any act that breaches one or more of the principles of academic integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to the following types:

**Cheating:** Using or providing unauthorized aids, assistance or materials while preparing or completing assessments, or when completing practical work (in clinical, practicum, or lab settings), including but not limited to the following:

- Copying or attempting to copy the work of another during an assessment;
- Communicating work to another student during an examination;
- Using unauthorized aids, notes, or electronic devices or means during an examination;
- Unauthorized possession of an assessment or answer key; and/or,
- Submitting of a substantially similar assessment by two or more students, except in the case where such submission is specifically authorized by the instructor.

**Fraud:** Creation or use of falsified documents.

**Misuse or misrepresentation of sources:** Presenting source material in such a way as to distort its original purpose or implication(s); misattributing words, ideas, etc. to someone other than the original source; misrepresenting or manipulating research findings or data; and/or suppressing aspects of findings or data in order to present conclusions in a light other than the research, taken as a whole, would support.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting or submitting, as one's own work, the research, words, ideas, artistic imagery, arguments, calculations, illustrations, or diagrams of another person or persons without explicit or accurate citation or credit.

**Self-Plagiarism:** Submitting one's own work for credit in more than one course without the permission of the instructors, or re-submitting work, in whole or in part, for which credit has already been granted without permission of the instructors.

**Prohibited Conduct:** The following are examples of other conduct specifically prohibited:

- Taking unauthorized possession of the work of another student (for example, intercepting and removing such work from a photocopier or printer, or collecting the graded work of another student from a stack of papers);
- Falsifying one's own and/or other students' attendance in a course;
- Impersonating or allowing the impersonation of an individual;
- Modifying a graded assessment then submitting it for re-grading; or,
- Assisting or attempting to assist another person to commit any breach of academic integrity.

**Sexual Violence and Misconduct**

All Members of the University Community have the right to work, teach and study in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual violence and misconduct. Policy B401 defines sexual assault as follows:

Sexual assault is any form of sexual contact that occurs without ongoing and freely given consent, including the threat of sexual contact without consent. Sexual assault can be committed by a stranger, someone known to the survivor or an intimate partner.

Safety and security at the university are a priority and any form of sexual violence and misconduct will not be tolerated or condoned. The University expects all Students and Members of the University Community to abide by all laws and University policies, including B.401 Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy and B.401.1 Sexual Violence and Misconduct Procedure (found on the Policy page <https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>). For more resources and support, visit <https://www.capilanou.ca/student-life/support--wellness/sexual-violence-support-and-prevention/sexual-violence-resources/>

**Emergencies:** Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency policies where appropriate and the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.