

USC Annenberg



CMGT 530. Technoclash: Social Psychology and New Media Industries (4 Units)

Spring 2025, ANN 406

Wednesdays, 6-8:50pm

Section: 21739D

Location: ANN 404

Instructor: Dmitri Williams

Office: ANN 414k

Office Hours: By appointment, usually before or after class.

Contact Info: dwillia@usc.edu

Class is in person, but when needed, this is the [Zoom link](#).

I. Course Description

CMGT 530 is a crash course in technology and the human condition. We'll cover media history along with the fundamentals of sociology, psychology, analytics and business, exploring why and how we use, think, fear and embrace tech.

This class is about how we use, are affected by, and interact with communication technologies. It is heavy on community, psychology, and business. It's a mix of understanding the systems themselves--their architectures, their business models, their practices--and the fundamentals of human social psychology. Those things come together and create constant change, pressure, crisis and opportunity.

Taking the course will give you the tools to plan products, run organizations, or simply live smarter lives in an era of constant change.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

Students taking the course gain a working knowledge of online industries, human nature, and the mix therein. You get some practical and some theoretical knowledge, making you better prepared as a potential worker in the tech and communication industries, as a consumer, or policy maker.

Prerequisite(s), Co-Requisite(s), Concurrent Enrollment, Recommended Preparation:

- CMGT 540, or another course training in methods and/or writing a research paper, is recommended but not required.

III. Course Notes

Materials and lecture slides are on Brightspace and will be updated with current events and news.

IV. Policies and Procedures

Respect in the classroom

The classroom is a safe space for ideas and discussion, which requires that everyone does their part to create an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance. There will be no discrimination based on anyone's background, demographics, or politics, etc. In short, the only thing I don't tolerate is intolerance. All that said, have a sense of humor.

Attendance

Attendance is a key part of your participation grade. If you're going to miss a class, a courtesy notice is helpful, but not required. If you aren't there, you aren't participating, and your grade will naturally go lower as a result. If you need to miss a timed class session, you need documentation explaining (doctor's note, etc.). No documentation means a zero on anything that is part of that day.

Communication

I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, except on weekends. The class will also use Discord, so that you can communicate with each other, or ping me in a group setting. Join [here](#).

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Term paper & Presentations (35%)

A term paper project will consist of a 15-20 page (main text, including tables and figures but not references or appendices) paper analyzing an issue from the class. Tailor it to your own interests, and to a practical real-world project if you like. Papers must be based on some kind of empirical data—whether statistical or qualitative. Ph.D students will be expected to write a paper that could be submitted to a conference or a journal, and so may go up to 23 pages of main text if needed.

30% of the grade is based on the paper. 5% of the grade will be based on a presentation of your ideas and/or findings in the last class session

A note on the USC IRB ([Institutional Review Board](#), which monitors all human subjects research, meaning basically anything we do): Papers done only for class do not need IRB review, but if you think you might want to make the results public or peer reviewed, submit an IRB application ASAP. Wait times can be 7-10 weeks, even though most of what you would do would be labeled exempt and wouldn't go to full review, and can be OK'd much faster. *You can't do this retroactively*, i.e. if you later decide it's cool and want to publish it, you can't. You'd need to get approval and collect new data from scratch. If your class data are only a pilot project for later, more ambitious work, you don't need to worry about this.

Group projects (2: 20% total).

(1) Find an online community and evaluate it using the tools you've learned in class. Present your community to the class. I suggest you find one that is interesting and active. In the past, groups have chosen things as disparate as vacuum cleaner enthusiasts, long-haired people, couch surfers, gamer clans, and vampires. 10%

(2) Propose a mobile, AR, or location-aware community, product, or app. Pitch the class as if you were seeking funding. Include the problem or opportunity, explain the proposed technology/product/service/idea, briefly cover the market potential, and state the outlines of a business plan. 10%

Short Assignments (3: 30%)

1) Black Mirror assignment. 10%

Watch one of the episodes below and write a 1-2 page reaction paper using at least two concepts from the lecture, and also your own values or opinions.

Episodes you can choose:

Season 2: White Christmas

Season 3: San Junipero or Playtest

Season 4: Arkangel

Season 6: Joan is Awful

Grading rubric: Did you analyze or merely describe? Did you apply concepts from class? Was it thoughtful or surface-level? Was your formatting, spelling and grammar professional grade?

2) Industry interview. 10%.

Find a full-time industry person who will give you 30-60 minutes of their time. Interview them about a topic of your interest, then write up a summary of the interview in a two-page paper. Be prepared to talk about what you learned in class. You may not interview a guest speaker. *Use this as an excuse to network!* Pro tip: If someone can tell you are genuinely interested, they will be happy to talk about themselves, their path, their job, etc. Real attention is the best kind of flattery, and flattery works.

Grading rubric. You found a real person with a real job, not someone working at T-Mobile. You had clear questions considered ahead of time rather than asked on the fly. You reported what they said, but also took the extra step to consider and analyze their meaning. You related what they said to concepts from class and/or to the real world and/or to your own potential career path. You wrote clearly, concisely, with professional grammar and formatted properly, including any references (not part of the page count). You put your questions in an Appendix at the end. A transcript is optional and won't contribute toward your grade. Consider using software to automate this so you have it for reference, not for me. Use Times 12-point font, with double-spacing.

PhD students. You can interview industry and/or academic sources, and you can do 1 or 2 interviewees. The topic should be tied to a potential research direction, or method, or something else you OK with me. You get four pages rather than two.

(3) Social Media Blackout. 10%.

From February 20 to 25, don't use any social media. Email is OK, and text is up to you, but see if you can avoid it. On the evening of February 25 (before our Wednesday class on the 26th) write 2 pages about the experience. Was it good, bad, or something else? What were the pros and cons? Did you learn anything about yourself or your friends? Will you do anything differently after the experience? Consider comparing your results with the Facebook Quitting study on Brightspace. You must apply 2-3 concepts from lecture or the readings.

Grading rubric: Did you answer all of the questions above? Did you apply course concepts? Was it thoughtful or surface level? Was your formatting, spelling and grammar professional grade?

Participation (15%)

Half of your participation grade is quantity, and half quality. Informed participation in class matters more than in a typical course, i.e. I *will* give a wide variance far more than in the other categories. If you do a good job here, these are easy points. If you do a poor job, expect a poor overall grade. What is a good job? Here are the criteria: Was it obvious that you did the reading and came prepared? Did you speak up in class, or only talk when called on? Had you thought about the readings and tied them to related material or current events? Were you present and engaged with me and the other students? Did you maintain good eye contact with me and with the other students or were you more focused on your laptop?

V. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Term paper & Presentations	35	35
Group projects (2)	20	20
Short assignments (3)	30	30
Participation	15	15
TOTAL	100	100%

b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

Only the highest-quality work earns an A. Average work can expect Bs and Cs, with significant underperforming resulting in Ds and Fs. High quality includes critical thinking rather than basic description and always includes professional writing.

Use professional-grade English, whether writing a paper or an email.

d. Grading Timeline

Assignments are typically graded and returned within 1-2 weeks.

VI. Assignment Submission Policy

a. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, usually with some kind of documentation, grades are reduced by 10% per day late, starting immediately at the time and date due.

VII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Books & Readings

All books and readings are on Brightspace.

Ph.D. students only should get the full copy of:

Christakis, N & Fowler, J. (2009) *Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives.*

and

Meyrowitz, J. (1985) [*No Sense of Place.*](#)

Generative AI Policy

AI is going to be part of your life after this class and into your careers. So, our mutual job is to have you learn how to use it intelligently while still making you intelligent. Learning to write and think are crucial parts of your training, and if you outsource the mental work you'll be less than you should be. I've tried all of the assignments for this class using AI, and I think it tends to give mostly correct, but flowery output. Some things were just flat-out wrong. It didn't have my voice or ideas, and it won't have yours. If you had the ideas and voice first and then used it, well, that might be different. Using AI tools to improve (not invent) your grammar is a good idea.

When using AI, keep in mind that:

Low quality prompts equal low-quality results.

Don't trust a thing it says.

Whatever it says, you're responsible.

To protect yourself from plagiarism, or accusations of utilizing AI improperly, consider completing your work in Google Docs or another platform that leaves a digital trail of your changes to prove your work is yours and yours alone.

There are also issues of transparency—giving credit for work done by AI, or showing how you used it. My policy is that you can use it, but you need to be clear you did, and how. If you use AI in your assignments, you must include a statement at the end (which won't count in any page totals) explaining how. If you want to use a template for that, here's a good one:

Usage	Tool Used (e.g., ChatGPT-x)	How you edited the output, if at all	Conversation Link (If available)
Topic selection			
Brainstorming and idea generation			
Research			
Source valuation			
Outlining/planning			
Drafting			
Media creation			
Revising			
Polishing			
Other			

IX. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, etc.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework
Week 1 1/15	<p>Intro, foundations of communities, and basic communication theory. The prisoner's dilemma model of everything. Dead German and French philosophers.</p> <p>1) Structuralism</p>	<p>1) The World's Most Livable Cities 2) <i>Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft</i>, brief definition link 3) Structuralism, brief definition link Note: These are the driest things you'll read all semester, but they help a lot later. Optional: Universal Kindness</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) The Prisoner’s dilemma as a model for general interactions 3) What is a community? 4) Types of community: differences, classifications, etc. 5) The question of proximity (Imagined communities) 6) Functions of communities 7) Things that shape community. 8) Wenger’s Communities of Practice 	Reference slides: Trust, Systems, Community
Week 2 1/22	Histories of media and social networks <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Transportation vs. communication 2) Utopian/Dystopian frameworks 3) Case studies of media and social networks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Writing b) Telegraph c) Telephone (Fischer)/“Terrors of the Telephone” picture 4) The Medium is the Message/The Global Village 5) Bits are bits, Delivering bits 6) Internet history Diffusion and Being Digital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Czitrom, D. <i>Media and the American Mind</i>, Ch. 1. 2) McLuhan reading 3) Rogers reading Reference slides: Early Media, Pool, McLuhan; Diffusion, Being Digital
Week 3 1/29	Reactions to Technology; Science Fiction as a Black Mirror	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cottom, A Big TV Hit 2) Love in the time of robots (WIRED). 3) Glassner reading Reference slides: Reactions, Sci Fi as Metaphor
Week 4 2/5	Traditional Media Business Models, New Media Models	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Litman, p. 265-272 2) WIRED Guide to Blockchain 3) Wikipedia entry: Creative Destruction Reference slides: Traditional Business Models; New Business Models, Disruption, The Long Tail Short Assignment Due: Black Mirror

<p>Week 5 2/12</p>	<p>Foundational Comm Theories; Theories of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Basic communication theories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effects theory: direct vs. resistant ● Uses & gratifications ● Cultivation ● Priming, framing, agenda-setting ● Neomarxism, Gramsci, etc. 2) CMC basics 3) Code is law (structuralism, but interesting) 4) Four puzzles and themes 5) CASA and AI <p>In-class video, Lessig on user-generated content: http://www.ted.com/talks/view/id/187</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Hacker ethic 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Walther, J. (2006) Nonverbal dynamics in computer-mediated communication, or :(and the net :(‘z with you, :) and you :) alone. In V. Manusov & M. Patterson (Eds.), <i>The Sage Handbook of Nonverbal Communication</i>. 2) Lessig, L. <i>Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0</i>, Ch. 1-3 <p>Reference slides: Basic Comm Theories, CMC Theories, Lessig and Code</p>
<p>Week 6 2/19</p>	<p>Theories of Social Impact</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Social Capital: bridging and bonding 2) SocioTechnical Capital 3) Social Capital and displacement 4) Entry and Exit Costs 5) Tie strength, bridging and bonding online vs. offline 6) Third places 7) Best vs. Worst thing ever: Halloween, framing, PR, dealing with the press 8) The changing, empowered audience, or dupes? 9) Amy Jo Kim’s framing of online communities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Putnam, R. Bowling Alone. Ch. 13: Technology and Mass Media 2) Galston, W. Does the Internet Strengthen Community? 3) Oldenburg, R. The Great, Good Place. Ch. 2: The Character of Third Places. or, if you feel lazy, here is a popular press writeup of the same thing: Conti, Do Yourself a Favor (The Atlantic) Ph.D. students: 4) Hirschman, A. Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Ch. 1-3. Optional/Reference: Facebook Quitting Experiment <p>Reference slides: Social Impact I; Social Impact II</p>
<p>Week 7 Dates: 2/26</p>	<p>Networks, Social Influence, Analytics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Networks 2) Centrality, density, depth, breadth 3) Knowledge transfer and expertise 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Christakis, N & Fowler, J. (2009) <i>Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives</i>. Ch. 1-3 2) SaS page on analytics 3) Vast New Study/Rich and Poor 4) Skim Williams et al (2022) Social Value. <p>Note: the Christakis and Fowler book is worth owning</p>

		Reference slides: Networks and Analytics Short Assignment Due: Social Media Blackout
Week 8 3/5	Technology and Politics through a pandemic and out again: Isolation, mobilization, democracy, information warfare	1) Shirky, C. (2008) Here comes everybody. Chapters 1-4. 2) WIRED on Cloudflare 3) WIRED on Reddit 4) America without family, god or patriotism Reference slides: Democracy, Speech and Tech <i>Hand in 1-paragraph tentative term paper topics (if we've met and you are past this point, you don't need to)</i>
Week 9 3/12	Analytics Catch-up, Affordances discussion, Methods basics, Term Paper Workshop Epic video	<i>Preparation:</i> Bring your ideas, questions and a theory-driven hypothesis. If you want to propose a method, that's optional. We will workshop a handful of student papers, starting with their hypotheses, going to possible methods, the results, and what it all means. Short Assignment Due: Industry Interview
Week 10 3/19	Spring Break, No Class	
Week 11 3/26	Term Paper workshopping, if needed The Future is Already Here. It's Just Not Evenly Distributed. AI, AR, New technologies roundup and discussion	1) Hong, AI article Reference slides: Next big thing in tech
Week 12 4/2	Identifiers/Identity, Reputation Systems, Roles 1) Balance theory triangle 2) On the Internet, no one knows you're a dog 3) Reputational systems/trust, eBay, MySimon & e-commerce 4) Identity/deception 5) Kim on roles 6) Identity and Authentication	1) NYT: Don't Worry He's All Right 2) Turkle, Life on the Screen, Ch. 8. Reference slides: Identity I, II & III Group Assignment #1: Evaluate communities

Week 13 4/9	A) Identity, continued B) Play nice with the other kids: Norms and Etiquette 1) More on Turkle, group identity via the Sneetches 2) Identity and mediation of front and back stage 3) Roles, norms, etiquette 4) Deception 5) Dating, sexuality	1) Meyrowitz, J. <i>No Sense of Place</i> . Ch. 3 & 4
Week 14 4/16	Persuasion 1) Persuasion, consistency, liking, social proof, reciprocity	Assigned portions from Cialdini, R. (2006) <i>Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion</i> <i>Ph.D. Students</i> : whole book. Reference slides: Influence slides Group project #2: Pitch your idea
Week 15 4/23	Managing the playground 1) Rituals, an extension of roles? 2) Governance, the role of the state 3) Conflicts/Tragedy of the commons 4) China's Social Credit System	1) Lessig, Ch. 6, Cyberspaces 2) Dibbell, J. (1993) A Rape in Cyberspace. http://www.juliandibbell.com/articles/a-rape-in-cyberspace/ Content trigger warning: this article involves descriptions of a virtual sexual assault. Skip if this is problematic. 3) WIRED: Inside China's Vast New Experiment Reference slides: Managing Communities
Week 16 4/30	Term Paper Presentations & Feedback	Presentations Course evaluations (in class)
STUDY DAYS Dates: 5/3-5/6		
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Dates: 5/7-5/14	The term paper is due 5/7 by 5 pm to Brightspace. Submit by 4/4 at 5pm get +4% to your paper's grade.	

X. Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university itself, such as suspension or even expulsion.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#). Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation, is prohibited. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than

individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relation to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. Distributing course material without the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](#). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems:

[Annenberg Student Success Fund](#)

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

[Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund](#)

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

About Your Instructor

Did you actually read all the way down here? Or just scroll out of curiosity? Either way, that's impressive. Here are some random facts about me as a reward:

- I used to play drums in a band.
- I love to travel. I've been to 80 countries, plus Antarctica.
- I'm a cancer survivor. Get annual health checkups and blood work, people!
- I have two kids, one of which goes here, and he/she forbids me to say their name.
- I think the best TV show ever was "The Wire," despite having no real interest in shows about drugs, cops, or Baltimore.
- I love cats, but am allergic. Dogs are great. Recently I was able to hang out with and pet a capybara and an otter (not together).
- I collect T-shirts and rotate about 150 of them through the school year for fun.
- I have two degrees from USC and one from Michigan. So, now that those teams will play, I have to cheer for USC because that's 2-1.
- I'm a good tournament poker player, and have had small cashes at a few minor WSOP events.
- I read lots of novels instead of the academic works I should be reading.
- I play video games, though I'm not as good as I used to be. Aging is annoying AF.
- My personal website with more is [here](#).