Day/Time: Tu/Th, 8:30–9:20 a.m.
Location: LR1, Van Allen Hall

Instructor: Dr. Brian Ekdale, E324 Adler Journalism Building, brian-ekdale@uiowa.edu
Office Hours: Tu 10:30a.m.–12p.m. & W 10:30a.m.–12p.m. or by appointment

DEO: Dr. David Ryfe, david-ryfe@uiowa.edu, E305B Adler Journalism Building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>TA</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04, 05, 06, 07</td>
<td>David Tuwei</td>
<td>E333 AJB</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>01, 03, 10, 12</td>
<td>Yafei Zhang</td>
<td>E333 AJB</td>
<td>M 10–11:30a.m &amp; Th 9:30-11a.m.</td>
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**See ISIS for section meeting times and locations.**

Course Twitter Hashtag: #UIsocial
- Connect with professor, TAs, or peers outside of class
- Ask questions about course, readings, lecture, etc.
- Share links to relevant stories in the news

Overview
Social Media Today is a survey course with no prerequisites, intended for students of any major and interest. It satisfies the General Education requirement in Values, Society and Diversity. This course offers an overview of our current understanding of a wide range of social media phenomena from the point of view of researchers, professionals, and critics. We will begin with a brief history of communication technologies, including the first instances of social engagement on the Web. Next, we will discuss key conceptual and theoretical developments that ground informed discussions of social media. We then will examine what the rise of social media means for contemporary culture and society, focusing on a range of topics including: journalism, politics, justice, romance, and marketing. Finally, we will consider future possibilities for digital and social media.

Objectives
By the end of the semester, students should be able to:
- Understand the historical roots and recent antecedents of contemporary social media
- Recognize and apply major theoretical and conceptual issues in social media studies
- Understand how social media affect various aspects of contemporary life
- Navigate the world of social media in a more professional way
- Read critically and analyze information posted on and about social media
- Write analytically about digital and social media

Required Book
We have one required book, available for purchase at the Iowa Hawk Shop. The book is also available free online in PDF form at http://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf

In addition to our required book, we will read a variety of academic and journalistic accounts of social media in everyday life. These readings are listed on ICON as PDFs or hyperlinks. You are expected to complete the day’s readings by the start of lecture for that day.

**Discussion Sections**

Discussion sections meet weekly at your scheduled time. In section, you will explore course concepts, work on in-class exercises, and discuss examples related to the weekly topics. You are encouraged to bring a computing device (e.g. laptop, tablet, smart phone, etc.) to discussion section. You will be graded on your attendance and participation in discussion section.

**Assignments / Grading**

**Professional Branding Assignment – 50 points**
- For this assignment, you will assess your online brand and create a brand management strategy for a professional brand that would position you well for your ideal post-graduation job. You will create a professional profile on LinkedIn (or another professional social networking site) and write a 500- to 750-word paper that discusses your brand audit, your ideal post-graduation job, and your brand management strategy.
- This assignment will be discussed in greater detail in lecture and discussion section.
- Assigned Week 3; Due Week 5

**Case Study Paper – 75 points**
- For this assignment, you will take a key concept identified during the first five weeks of the semester and apply it to a contemporary issue or event in the news. You will write a 750- to 1000-word paper that demonstrates a clear understanding of the concept and a thoughtful and engaging application of the concept to your case.
- This assignment will be discussed in greater detail in lecture and discussion section.
- Assigned Week 7; Due Week 9

**Social Media Campaign Critique – 75 points**
- For this assignment, you will select a social media campaign and analyze it using key principles of social media marketing discussed in class. You will write a 750- to 1000-word paper that includes a description of the campaign and an assessment of its successes and failures.
- This assignment will be discussed in greater detail in lecture and discussion section.
- Assigned Week 12; Due Week 14

**Exam #1 – 75 points**
- Covers weeks 1–5, including material from lecture, readings, and discussion section.

**Exam #2 – 75 points**
- Covers weeks 7–10, including material from lecture, readings, and discussion section.
Exam #3 – 75 points
- Cover weeks 12–15, including material from lecture, readings, and discussion section.
- Note: Exam #3 will be held during our assigned final exam period. The date and time for Exam #3 will be announced by the Registrar early in the semester. Do not make end-of-the-semester travel plans until the final exam schedule is made public.

Attendance and Participation – 50 points
- Every student gets one “grace” absence from discussion section. Each additional unexcused absence will result in an automatic 5-point deduction from your Participation and Attendance grade. For example, 3 unexcused absences from discussion section will result in a maximum Attendance and Participation grade of 40/50.
  - Note: See attendance policy below.
- Your participation grade will reflect our assessment of your preparedness, cooperation, and contribution. While attendance means “showing up,” preparedness means completing the assigned readings and tasks on time, cooperation means working well with others, and contribution means adding value to class discussions and activities.

Instant Reaction Papers – 25 points
- Throughout the semester, you will be asked to write down your immediate reactions to topics and/or examples discussed in lecture and discussion. You will be given sufficient time to write your instant reaction papers.
- There will be a total of 6 instant reaction papers (5 points each) throughout the semester. We will drop your lowest scoring paper. Instant reaction papers will not be announced in advance and cannot be made up.
- You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, or other computing devices to write your instant reaction papers and upload them directly to ICON. If you prefer, we will supply paper for this assignment, but you must provide your own writing utensil.

Total Points = 500

Grading Scale
Your final grade will be determined by the total number of points earned during the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>485-500 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>465-484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>450-464</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>435-449</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>415-434</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>400-414</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>385-399</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>365-384</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>350-364</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>335-349</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>300-314</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>299 and below</td>
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Attendance Policy
Excused absences will be granted only if (a) you are missing class for a documented illness, mandatory religious obligation, or University-sponsored activity, (b) you email your instructor and your TA prior to the start of the class period you are missing, AND (c) you provide official documentation within one week of the absence. In your email, include your section number, date of absence, and reason for absence.
Missed Class

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to learn what was covered that day and acquire notes from your fellow classmates. Please do no send the following emails to your instructor or TA:
1. “What did I miss?”
2. “Did I miss anything important?”
The answer to #1 is “Lots,” and the answer to #2 is “Yes.” We are happy to discuss course content during office hours, but we cannot cover the material with the same amount of detail as we can during lecture and discussion section.

Late Policy

Assignments that are submitted late will face a 10 percent penalty per day late, beginning at the exact due date/time and including weekends and holidays. For example, an assignment that would have received a 93% if it were turned in on time will receive a 83% if submitted ten minutes late, 73% if submitted two days late, and so on.

Extra Credit

Although we cannot guarantee it, there may be limited extra credit opportunities during the semester. Extra credit will be offered for participation in approved research projects or for attendance at approved events. Students will be notified of these opportunities via email. You should not anticipate that the amount of extra credit offered will be great enough to make a significant impact on your final grade.

Electronic Communication

As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondences sent to your University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

Academic Misconduct

Students are not allowed to collaborate with each other on course assignments and exams. Do not share your work with others or ask others to see their completed assignments – both are considered academic misconduct. If you need assistance on your work, please meet with your TA or course instructor. Clear evidence of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade for the assignment/exam and possibly the course. Per college policy, we are required to report academic misconduct the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

According to the University of Iowa Academic Policies, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Using direct quotations without quotation marks and/or without crediting the source
- Paraphrasing information and ideas from sources without crediting the source
- Failing to provide adequate citations for material obtained through electronic research
- Downloading and submitting work from electronic databases without citation
- Submitting material created/written by someone else as one’s own, including purchased papers, artistic works, photography, and electronic media.

In short, plagiarism occurs whenever someone else’s work or idea is presented as your own. Students are responsible for understanding this policy. If you have questions, please ask your TA or course instructor for clarification.
Helpful Resources
Writing Center: http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/
Speaking Center: http://clas.uiowa.edu/rhetoric/for-students/speaking-center
Tutor Iowa: http://tutor.uiowa.edu/
Schedule

**Due to the contemporary nature of the subject matter, the schedule is subject to change. Changes to topics and readings will be noted in lecture and on ICON.

Week 1
Tuesday (8/25): Course Overview
No reading

Thursday (8/27): Defining Social Media
Reading: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Introduction

Week 2
Tuesday (9/1): History

Thursday (9/3): History
Reading: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Chapter 7: Literacy

Week 3
Tuesday (9/8): Identity
Reading: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Chapter 1: Identity

Thursday (9/10): Personal Branding
Reading: Alice Marwick. (2013). *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age*, Chapter 4 (skim pages 171-183)
Assigned: Professional Branding Assignment

Week 4
Tuesday (9/15): Privacy
Reading: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Chapter 2: Privacy

Thursday (9/17): Speech/Censorship

Week 5
Tuesday (9/22): Participatory Culture

Thursday (9/24): Digital Labor
Week 6
Tuesday (9/29): Exam Review
   No reading

Thursday (10/1): Exam #1
   No reading

Week 7
Tuesday (10/6): Community
   Reading: Baym. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*, Chapter 4
   Assigned: Case Study Paper

Thursday (10/8): Networks

Week 8
Tuesday (10/13): Consuming News
   Reading: Alfred Hermida. (2014). #TellEveryone: *Why We Share & Why It Matters*, Chapter 4

Thursday (10/15): Producing News

Week 9
Tuesday (10/20): Diversity
   Reading: boyd, *It’s Complicated*, Chapter 6: Inequality

Thursday (10/22): Global Networks

Week 10
Tuesday (10/27): Political and Social Change

Thursday (10/29): Political Campaigns
Week 11
Tuesday (11/3): Exam Review
No reading

Thursday (11/5): Exam #2
No reading

Week 12
Tuesday (11/10): Social Media Marketing
Reading: Dave Evans. (2010). Social Media Marketing: The Next Generation of Business Engagement, Chapter 1

Thursday (11/12): Social Media Marketing (cont.)
Assigned: Social Media Campaign Critique

Week 13
Tuesday (11/17): Justice/Injustice

Thursday (11/19): Are We Addicted?
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Ch. 3: Addiction

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14
Tuesday (12/1): Cyberbullying
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Chapter 5: Bullying

Thursday (12/3): Romance/Sex

Week 15
Tuesday (12/8): Futures
Readings: boyd, It’s Complicated, Searching for a Public of Their Own.

Thursday (12/10): Exam Review & Course Evaluations
No reading

Final Exam (date, time, and location TBA)
The Iowa Dozen (practices specific to the School of Journalism and Communication)

As one of more than 104 programs in journalism and mass communication accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), we must assess student learning to assure that each of our graduates meets the following standards.

We learn to ...

1. Write correctly, clearly and well.
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly.
3. Edit and evaluate carefully.

We value ...

6. Free speech and First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups.
7. A diverse global community.
8. Creativity and independence.

We explore ...

10. Theories and concepts.
11. The history, structure and economy of media institutions
12. The role of media in shaping cultures.
Administrative Policies and Notifications

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Accommodations for Disabilities

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty

All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s Code of Academic Honesty: “I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty.” Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies

The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the tenth day of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.