

**Day/Time:** Tuesday/Thursday, 11:00–11:50 a.m.

**Location:** 101 Biology Building East (BBE)

**Instructor:** Dr. Melissa Tully, E332 Adler Journalism Building, [melissa-tully@uiowa.edu](mailto:melissa-tully@uiowa.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 12:00–2:00 p.m. & Thursday, 9:30–10:30 a.m. or by appointment

**DEO:** Dr. David Ryfe, [david-ryfe@uiowa.edu](mailto:david-ryfe@uiowa.edu), E305B Adler Journalism Building

Sections	TA	Office	Office Hours
01, 02, 03, 08	Subin Paul	E327 AJB	Tuesday, 12:30–3:30 p.m. or by appointment
04, 05, 06, 07	Joshua Green	E329 AJB	Thursday, 12:00–3:00 p.m. or by appointment

*\*\*See MyUI for section meeting times and locations.\*\**

**Course Twitter handle and hashtag:** @sjmc\_smtoday and #UISocial

- Connect with your professor, TAs, or peers outside of class using the handle or hashtag.
- Ask questions about the course, readings and lecture. Review for the exams.
- Share links to relevant stories in the news.

### Overview

Social Media Today (SMT) is a survey course with no prerequisites, intended for students of any major and interest. This course offers an overview of our current understanding 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 online. 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, news, politics, and globalization. Finally, we will consider future possibilities for social media. SMT satisfies the General Education requirement in Values, Society and Diversity for students admitted after summer 2011 and the GE requirement in Social Sciences for students admitted before summer 2011.

### Diversity and Discussion

In this class, we will be discussing current events and contemporary social issues, including potentially sensitive subjects such as sexual harassment, hate speech, and violence. We will also be discussing political and cultural topics from a variety of perspectives. In lecture and section, we support the open presentation and discussion of viewpoints, even those we don't like or disagree with, and we will also be respectful of others' ideas. This course is a place to explore new ideas and to think through the complexities of our socially mediated lives.

### SJMC Learning Outcomes

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes for the JMC curriculum. Our course addresses the following outcomes:

#### **Law and ethics:**

- You will demonstrate an ability to anticipate and recognize ethical issues when they arise and to reason through them taking multiple perspectives and contexts into account.

**Multiculturalism:**

- You will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the cultures, histories, perspectives, and socio-economic and political situations of diverse groups.

**Media literacy:**

- You will demonstrate knowledge of the basic tenets of media literacy and how media literacy relates to your personal media habits and professional development.
- You will develop critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.

**Media history:**

- You will demonstrate an awareness of the historical origins of digital communication and the Internet and describe its effect on media industries with emphasis on their business models and audiences.
- You will demonstrate an ability to explain the historical origins of recent examples of convergent digital news and entertainment media.

**Course-Specific Objectives**

By the end of the semester, you will 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 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 Readings**

We will read a variety of academic and journalistic accounts of social media in everyday life. You are expected to complete the readings by the start of lecture for that day. All required readings are posted on ICON as PDFs or links. *It's Complicated*, *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*, and *Social Media and Everyday Politics* are available on reserve in the SJMC Resource Center and may be checked out for two-hour periods. *It's Complicated* is available as a free e-book (pdf linked on ICON).

**Electronic Communication and ICON**

As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondences sent to your @uiowa.edu email. Please check your email regularly for emails from me and your TAs. In addition, I will use ICON announcements and discussion boards as official communication for the class. I expect you to check ICON regularly. Please note that the ICON/Canvas email application has been known to have some bugs. I prefer that you email me directly (not via ICON) at [melissa-tully@uiowa.edu](mailto:melissa-tully@uiowa.edu). We use ICON Assignments for all assignment submissions. You must submit your assignments as a Microsoft Word document (.doc or .docx). We will not accept assignments via email.

**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.

### **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 an 83% if submitted ten minutes late, 73% if submitted two days late, and so on. After 5 days late, the assignment will receive a 0.

### **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 professor 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. Excused absences will only be granted in extenuating circumstances. Only your professor can grant excused absences.

### **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 not** send the following emails to your professor 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.

### **Extra Credit**

Although I cannot guarantee it, there may be extra credit opportunities during the semester. You **should not** anticipate that the amount of extra credit offered will be great enough to make a significant impact on your final grade.

### **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 professor for clarification.

## Assignments and 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 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 10; Due Week 12

### Exam #1 (week 6) – 75 points

- Covers weeks 1–5, including material from lecture, readings, and discussion section.

### Exam #2 (week 11) – 75 points

- Covers weeks 7–10, including material from lecture, readings, and discussion section.

### Exam #3 (finals week) – 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 time. The date and time for our final exam 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. *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 (IRP) – 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 in class.
- 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. Instant reactions papers are due by the end of class.
- 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, you can write your IRP and turn it in to your TA.

**Total Points = 500**

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

A+	485-500	B+	435-449	C+	385-399	D+	335-349
A	465-484	B	415-434	C	365-384	D	315-334
A-	450-464	B-	400-414	C-	350-364	D-	300-314
						F	299 and below

**Grade Inquiries**

If you have questions or concerns about a grade, please speak with your TA in person during his office hours. If you feel like the situation has not been resolved after this conversation, please see me in office hours to discuss the situation and grade. **These conversations will not happen over email.** You must be in contact with us within one week of receiving your grade.

**Helpful UI 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\*

### Week 1

#### Tuesday (1/17): Course Overview

Reading: Bryan Menegus. (2016, November 29). “Reddit Is Tearing Itself Apart,” *Gizmodo*.

#### Thursday (1/19): Defining Social Media

Reading: danah boyd. *It's Complicated*, Introduction (p. 1–28).

### Week 2

#### Tuesday (1/24): History

Reading: Digital Trends. (2016, May 14). “The History of Social Networking,” *Digital Trends*.

#### Thursday (1/26): Causality

Reading: Nancy Baym. (2015). *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*, Ch. 2: Making New Media Make Sense.

### Week 3

#### Tuesday (1/31): Identity

Reading: boyd. *It's Complicated*, Ch.1: Identity.

#### Thursday (2/2): Personal Branding

Reading: James Cohen & Thomas Kenny. (2016). *Producing News and Digital Media: Your Guide to Savvy Use of the Web*, Ch. 7: The Online Personal Brand.

Assigned: Professional Branding Assignment

### Week 4

#### Tuesday (2/7): Privacy

Readings: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Ch. 2: Privacy; and Mark Joseph Stern (2016, October 14). “What Ken Bone’s Porn Preferences Tell Us About Internet Privacy Today,” *Slate*.

#### Thursday (2/9): Speech and Censorship

Reading: Knowledge@Wharton. (2016, November 21). “Fake News, Hate Speech and Social Media Abuse: What’s the Solution?”

### Week 5

#### Tuesday (2/14): Participatory Culture

Readings: Melissa Brough. (2014). Participatory Culture. *Johns Hopkins Guide to Digital Media*; and Henry Jenkins, Mizuko Ito & danah boyd. (2016). *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era*, Ch. 1: Defining Participatory Culture.

Due: Professional Branding Assignment

#### Thursday (2/16): Exploitation and Labor

Readings: Emiko Jozuka. (2016, March 22). “As More Work Moves Online, The Threat of ‘Digital Sweatshops’ Looms,” *Motherboard*; and Adam Fish & Ramesh Srinivasan. (2011). Digital labor is the new killer app. *New Media & Society*, “Introduction” and “Literature Review” (p. 137–140).

**Week 6**

**Tuesday (2/21): Exam Review**

**Thursday (2/23): Exam #1**

[No discussion section this week]

**Week 7**

**Tuesday (2/28): Community**

Reading: Baym. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*, Ch. 4: Communities and Networks.

Assigned: Case Study Paper

**Thursday (3/2): Networks**

Reading: Lee Rainie & Barry Wellman. (2014). *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. Ch.1 and pages 48–57.

**Week 8**

**Tuesday (3/7): Producing News**

Readings: Mike Ananny & Kate Crawford. (2014, September 10). “Designer or Journalist?” *Nieman Lab*; and Nancy Vogt and Amy Mitchell, (2016, January 10). “Crowdfunded Journalism: A Small but Growing Addition to Publicly Driven Journalism,” *Pew Research Center*.

**Thursday (3/9): Consuming News**

Readings: Alfred Hermida. (2014). *#TellEveryone: Why We Share & Why It Matters*, Ch. 4: The Daily We; and Sue Shellenbarger. (2016, November 21). “Most Students Don’t Know When News Is Fake, Stanford Study Finds,” *The Wall Street Journal*.

**Spring Break – Enjoy**

**Week 9**

**Tuesday (3/21): Globalization**

Reading: *Digital Globalization: The New Era of Global Flows*. (2016). McKinsey Global Institute.

**Thursday (3/23): Global Cultural Flows**

Reading: Brian Ekdale and Melissa Tully. (2014). Makmende Amerudi: Kenya’s Collective Reimagining as a Meme of Aspiration, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 31(4), 283–298.

Due: Case Study Paper

**Week 10**

**Tuesday (3/28): Social Media Marketing**

Readings: Anthony Young. (2014). *Brand Media Strategy*, Ch. 2 and 10; and Dave Evans. (2010). *Social Media Marketing*, Ch. 2.

Assigned: Social Media Campaign Critique

**Thursday (3/30): Social Media Marketing (continued)**

Guest speaker: Josh Krakauer, CEO, Sculpt

**Week 11**

**Tuesday (4/4): Exam Review**

**Thursday (4/6): Exam #2**

[No discussion section this week]

**Week 12**

**Thursday (4/11): Everyday politics**

Readings: Tim Highfield. (2016). *Social Media and Everyday Politics*, Ch. 1: Personal/Political; and Sarah Jeong. (2016, December 14). "If we took 'Gamergate' harassment seriously, 'Pizzagate' might never have happened," *The Washington Post*.

**Tuesday (4/13): Vigilantism and Online Shaming**

Readings: Jon Ronson. (2015, February 12). "How One Stupid Tweet Blew Up Justine Sacco's Life," *New York Times*; and Glenn Greenwald (2016, October 13). "On WikiLeaks, Journalism, and Privacy: Reporting on the Podesta Archive Is an Easy Call," *The Intercept*.

Due: Social Media Campaign Critique

**Week 13**

**Tuesday (4/18): Social Movements**

Reading: Highfield. (2016). *Social Media and Everyday Politics*, Ch. 5: Collective and Connective Action.

**Thursday (4/20): Political Campaigns and Elections**

Readings: Highfield. (2016). *Social Media and Everyday Politics*, Ch. 7: The Everyday of Elections; and Monica Anderson (2016, November 7). "Social media causes some users to rethink their views on an issue," *Pew Research Center*.

**Week 14**

**Tuesday (4/25): Cyberbullying and Online Aggression**

Reading: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Ch. 5: Bullying.

**Thursday (4/27): Inequality and Bias**

Readings: boyd, *It's Complicated*, Ch. 6: Inequality; and Robinson Meyer. (2016, August 13). "The Repeated Racism of Snapchat," *The Atlantic*.

**Week 15**

**Tuesday (5/2): Future of Social Media**

**Thursday (5/4): Exam Review & Course Evaluations**

**Finals Week**

**Final Exam – time/date TBD**

*\*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.*



## The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies and Resources

**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>.

**Electronic Communication:** University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2, k.11).

**Accommodations for Disabilities:** The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which include but are not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See <http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/> for 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 fifth week 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 Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator 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.

For more information visit: <http://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-syllabus-insert>