Social Media Today (JMC:1500:0AAA)  

Fall 2017

Day/Time: Tu/Th, 8:30–9:20 a.m.
Location: Shambaugh Auditorium, Main Library

Instructor: Dr. Sujatha Sosale, W329 Adler Journalism Building, sujatha-sosale@uiowa.edu
Office Hours: Tues. 10 a.m.–11:30 a.m. and Thurs. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A04, A05, A06</td>
<td>David Tuwei</td>
<td>E333 AJB</td>
<td>Wed. 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. or by appt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A01, A03, A08</td>
<td>Ling Qi</td>
<td>E333 AJB</td>
<td>Thurs. 1:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**See MyUI 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 (SMT) 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 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: journalism, politics, globalization, and marketing. Finally, we will consider future possibilities for digital and social media.

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.

JMC 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 that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. You can find more information about these learning outcomes here: [http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/assessment](http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/assessment). We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes.

Broadly speaking, the following outcomes apply to this course:

Law and ethics:
- Students 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.
• Students will demonstrate an ability to explain their ethical approaches and reasoning about a particular dilemma in terms that can be understood by a diverse group of people.

**Media literacy:**
• Students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic tenets of media literacy and how media literacy relates to their personal media habits and professional development.
• Students will develop critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.

**Multiculturalism:**
• Students will demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the cultures, histories, perspectives, and socio-economic and political situations of diverse groups.

**Media history:**
• Students will demonstrate an awareness of the historical origins of digital communication and the Internet and describe its effect on print and online media industries with emphasis on their business models and audiences.
• Students 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, 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 readings**
We have two required books, available for purchase at the Iowa Hawk Shop. The first book is also available for free online in PDF form at [http://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf](http://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf), and both books are available online through the University of Iowa Library system.


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 links. You are expected to complete the day’s readings by the start of lecture for that day.

**Electronic Communication**
As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondences sent to your @uiowa.edu email. Please check regularly for emails from me and your TAs. ICON announcements and discussion boards will also be used as the official communication medium for this class. You will need to check regularly and keep up to date with course changes and developments. You will need to submit ICON for submission of assignments. Assignments should be submitted and will be accepted as Microsoft Word documents only. We will not accept assignments via e-mail.
If you need to get in touch with me by e-mail, please send it directly to me at sujatha-sosale@uiowa.edu, and not through ICON.

**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 as well as participation in discussion section.

**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.

**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 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.

**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 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 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. 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. Instant reaction papers are due by the end of the class period.
- 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, and you can write your IRP and submit it to your TA.

Total Points = 500

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/

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>435-449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>415-434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>400-414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>385-399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>365-384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>350-364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>335-349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>315-334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>300-314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>299 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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.

**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.
**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 (8/22): Course Overview**  

**Thursday (8/24): Defining Social Media**  
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Introduction

**Week 2**

**Tuesday (8/29): History**  

**Thursday (8/31): History**  
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Chapter 7: Literacy

**Week 3**

**Tuesday (9/5): Identity**  
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Chapter 1: Identity

**Thursday (9/7): Personal Branding**  
Readings:  
Christina DesMarais. (2017, January 16). Why You Need a Personal Brand and How to Build It on Social Media.” Inc.com

Assigned: Professional Branding Assignment

**Week 4**

**Tuesday (9/12): Privacy**  
Reading: boyd, It’s Complicated, Chapter 2: Privacy

**Thursday (9/14): Speech/Censorship**  
Reading: Knowledge@Wharton. (2016, November 21). “Fake News, Hate Speech and Social Media Abuse: What’s the Solution?”

**Week 5**

**Tuesday (9/19): Participatory Culture**  
Viewings:  
What is participatory culture? Audiopedia.  
Henry Jenkins. (2013, May 7.). Participatory Culture (Big Thinkers Series)

**Thursday (9/21): Exploitation and Labor**  
Reading: Adam Fish and Ramesh Srinivasan. (2012). Digital labor is the new killer app. New Media and Society. Read Introduction and Literature review. (and Jozuka reading next page)

**Due:** Professional Branding Assignment

**Week 6**

**Tuesday (9/26): Exam Review**

*No reading*

**Thursday (9/28): Exam #1**

*No reading*

**Week 7**

**Tuesday (10/3): Community**

*Reading:* Baym. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age,* Chapter 4

*Assigned:* Case Study Paper

**Thursday (10/5): Networks**


**Week 8**

**Tuesday (10/10): Consuming News**

*Reading:* Alfred Hermida. (2014). #TellEveryone: Why We Share & Why It Matters, Chapter 4

**Thursday (10/12): Producing News**


**Week 9**

**Tuesday (10/17): Diversity**

*Reading:* boyd, *It's Complicated,* Chapter 6: Inequality

**Thursday (10/19): Gender**

*TBA*

**Due:** Case Study Paper

**Week 10**

**Tuesday (10/24): Social Media Marketing**

*Knowledge@Wharton.* (2017, July 18). How Brands Can Engineer Social Media Content. [knowledge.wharton](http://knowledge.wharton)

Anthony Young. (2014). Brand Media Strategy. Chapters 1, 2, & 10

*Assigned:* Social Media Campaign Critique

**Thursday (10/26): Social Media Marketing Guest Speaker**

**Week 11**

**Tuesday (10/31): Exam Review**
Thursday (11/2): Exam #2

No reading

Week 12
Tuesday (11/7): Globalization
Reading: Digital globalization: The new era of global flows. *McKinsey Global Institute*

Thursday (11/9): Globalization II  Guest speaker
Reading: TBA

Due: Social Media Campaign Critique

Week 13
Tuesday (11/14): Social Movements
Reading: Reading: Tim Highfield. (2016). *Social Media and Everyday Politics*. Chapter 1: Personal/Political.

Thursday (11/16): Political Campaigns

Happy Thanksgiving – no classes this week

Week 14
Tuesday (11/28): Are We Addicted?
Reading: boyd, *It’s Complicated*, Ch. 3: Addiction

Thursday (11/30): Cyberbullying
Reading: boyd, *It’s Complicated*, Chapter 5: Bullying

Week 15
Tuesday (12/5): Futures

Thursday (12/7): Exam Review & Course Evaluations
No reading

Final Exam Date to be announced
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies & 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 https://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 includes but is 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 https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

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.