

## **JMC:3185:0001: Social Media for Social Change**

**Spring 2019**

Class meets Tuesday and Thursday, 2–3:15 p.m. in E146 AJB

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Office hours: Drop in 12–1:30 p.m. Tues./Thurs. and by appointment

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### **Course Overview**

Individuals and groups use social media to organize, collaborate, and spread their messages to local and global audiences. This class will explore the myriad ways that people and organizations use social media as tools for civic engagement, activism, and political participation. Drawing on a broad range of international and national cases, we will examine early Internet activism through to today, looking at unfolding social movements. We will discuss formal and informal social movements that are deeply connected to social media. In addition to analyzing the specifics of various cases, we will examine the broader communication strategies that activists use.

### **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:

#### ***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 antecedents of contemporary activism and social movements
- Recognize and apply major theoretical and conceptual frameworks related to social media and social change
- Understand how social media affect activism and social change movements
- Think critically about social media
- Write analytically about social media and social change

## Academic Honesty and Misconduct

As a student in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Iowa, you are expected to abide by the College's Code of Academic Honesty. According to the Code:

*Honesty is an essential value of our academic community. You are here to learn, and learning depends upon hard work and academic honesty. Your instructors set high standards and expect you to do your very best, completing your work honestly. Any student who registers for courses in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has, in essence, agreed to the value of learning and thus to the importance of the College's Code of Academic Honesty.*

Code offenses include cheating on exams and quizzes, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, willful misrepresentation, and facilitating academic misconduct of others. Academic misconduct is serious, and therefore, has serious consequences, which can impact your future.

## Required Readings

This course has one required book available as a free download and through online sellers. The book is also on reserve in the SJMC Resource Center and may be checked out for two-hour periods: Zeynep Tufekci (2017), *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*, (ITG). In addition, we will read a variety of academic and journalistic accounts related to social media and social movements. All required readings are posted on ICON. You are expected to complete the readings by the start of class for that day.

## Required Viewings

We will watch films and documentaries about the various social movements that we're discussing. We will watch and discuss most during class time so if you miss class, you must watch the films on your own time. You are responsible for watching any content assigned as homework prior to the class period indicated. You will be asked about the films on exams and response papers.

## Diversity and Discussion

In this class, we will be discussing current events and contemporary social issues, including potentially sensitive subjects. We will also be discussing political and cultural topics from a variety of perspectives. In this class, 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.

## Late policy

No extensions will be given unless you have truly extenuating circumstances. In these cases, you must speak with me **before** the assignment is due to make an arrangement. Technology excuses are not acceptable. Assignments turned in late without an approved extension will be marked down a letter grade for every day late. After five days late, the assignment will earn a 0.

## Expectations and Grade Allocation

### Attendance and Participation: 100 points

- This class is discussion based therefore attendance and participation is essential. Every student gets two “grace” absences from class that will not affect your attendance grade. Each additional unexcused absence will result in an automatic 10-point deduction from your Participation and Attendance grade.
- In addition to attending class, your grade will reflect 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.
- Finally, we will have a number of individual and group in-class exercises throughout the semester that will contribute to your attendance/participation grade.

### Response papers: 200 points (50 points each)

- We will have four response papers due throughout the semester. You will be given a prompt related to the topic and expected to turn in a short paper.
- Response papers may require additional reading, viewing and listening to related content.

### Exams: 400 points (200 points each)

- We will have two exams during the semester. The first exam will cover weeks 1-7 and the second exam will cover weeks 8-13.
- The exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

### Final paper: 300 points

- You will complete a final paper that draws upon course concepts and issues discussed in the class. The final paper will require you to select a relevant case to analyze. The final paper is the most substantial assignment of the semester and is worth 30% of your final grade.
- Your paper is due during our scheduled final exam time, TBD.

### Total: 1000 points

**Grading Scale** (points will be converted to percentages and rounded to the nearest whole number)

A	930-above	B-	800–820	D+	670–690
A-	900–920	C+	770–790	D	630–660
B+	870–890	C	730–760	D-	600–620
B	830–860	C-	700–720	F	590 & below

Schedule <sup>i</sup>	Tuesday	Thursday
<i>Week 1 (1/15, 1/17)</i>  <i>Introduction</i>	Introduction to social change  Read <u>Hashtag Activism: #powerful or #pointless?</u>	Read “Social Media and Activism”
<i>Week 2 (1/22, 1/24)</i>  <i>Early Internet Activism</i>	Read “New Media and Internet Activism: From the ‘Battle of Seattle’ to Blogging”	Read “Civil Society, the Internet, and the Zapatistas”
<i>Week 3 (1/29, 1/31)</i>  <i>Networks</i>	Read “The Social Network Revolution” and “The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics”	Read “Good Citizenship as a Frame Contest: Kony2012, Memes, and Critiques of the Networked Citizen”  <b>Response paper #1 due</b>
<i>Week 4 (2/5, 2/7)</i>  <i>Protests and Movements</i>	Read <i>Twitter and Teargas (TTG)</i> Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2	Read <i>TTG</i> Chapters 3 and 4
<i>Week 5 (2/12, 2/14)</i>  <i>Analyzing Movements</i>	Read <i>TTG</i> Chapters 5 and 6	Read <i>TTG</i> Chapter 7  <b>Response paper #2 due</b>
<i>Week 6 (2/19, 2/21)</i>  <i>Arab Spring</i>	Read “Digital Media and the Arab Spring”	Read “‘We are not the guys of comment and like’: The Revolutionary Coalescence of <i>Shabab-al-Facebook</i> ”  Watch <i>Revolution in Cairo</i> in class
<i>Week 7 (2/26, 2/28)</i>  <i>Indignados</i>	Read “‘We are not on Facebook, we are on the streets’: The Harvesting of Indignation”	<b>Exam #1</b>
<i>Week 8 (3/5, 3/7)</i>  <i>Occupy Movement</i>	Read “‘The hashtag which did (not) start a revolution’: The Laborious Adding Up to the 99%”  Start <i>99%: The Occupy Wall Street Collaborative Film</i> in class	Finish and discuss <i>99%: The Occupy Wall Street Collaborative Film</i> in class
<i>Week 9 (3/12, 3/14)</i>  <i>Black Lives Matter</i>	Read “Beyond the hashtags: #Ferguson, #Blacklivesmatter, and the Online Struggle for Offline Justice,” pages 5–35	Read “Beyond the hashtags: #Ferguson, #Blacklivesmatter, and the Online Struggle for Offline Justice,” Conclusions, pages 75–84

<b>Spring Break – Enjoy and Be Safe</b>		
<i>Week 10 (3/26, 3/28)</i> <i>Ferguson Protests</i>	Read “#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States”  Start <i>Whose Streets?</i>	Finish and discuss <i>Whose Streets?</i>  <b>Response paper #3 due</b>
<i>Week 11 (4/2, 4/4)</i> <i>#MeToo</i>	Read “#MeToo and the Promise and Pitfalls of Challenging Rape Culture through Digital Feminist Activism”	Read: <u>One Year of #MeToo: How the Movement Eludes Government Surveillance in China and Punishing Individual Abusers Is Not the Same as Justice</u>
<i>Week 12 (4/9, 4/11)</i> <i>Never Again</i>	Read <u>How the Survivors of Parkland Began the Never Again Movement</u> and selections from <i>We Say #NeverAgain: Reporting by the Parkland Student Journalists</i>	Read <u>PolitiFact’s Lie of the Year: Online Smear Machine Tries to Take Down Parkland Students</u>  <b>Response paper #4 due</b>
<i>Week 13 (4/16, 4/18)</i> <i>Comparing Movements</i>	Read <i>TTG</i> Chapters 8 and 9	<b>Exam #2</b>
<i>Week 14 (4/23, 4/25)</i> <i>Strategies and Tactics</i>	Final paper assigned	Paper workshop
<i>Week 15 (4/30, 5/2)</i> <i>Going Forward</i>	Read <i>TTG</i> Epilogue and “Social Media Censorship, Privatized Regulation and New Restrictions to Protest and Dissent”	
<i>Finals week</i>	Final paper due	

<sup>i</sup> Schedule subject to change. You will be given advance notice of any changes. You are expected to read/listen/watch assigned material by the start of class unless otherwise indicated. Longer documentaries and films will be shown in class.

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

### Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other policies. These policies vary by college (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>).

### Electronic Communication

Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](#)).

### Accommodations for Disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student should then discuss accommodations with the course instructor (<https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>).

### Nondiscrimination in the Classroom

UI 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](http://diversity.uiowa.edu)).

### Academic Integrity

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#). Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>).

### CLAS Final Examination Policies

The final exam schedule for each semester is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this final exam information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-examination-policies>).

### Making a Complaint

Students with a complaint should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the departmental executive officer (DEO), also known as the Chair. Students may then bring the concern to CLAS (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>).

### 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 must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, definitions, and the full University policy, see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>.