

COM 275: Selected Topics in Communication
“Social Media Analytics and Issues for Communication Professions”
Section 05, Fall 2017 Course Syllabus
School of Communication @ Illinois State University

Instructor Information

Instructor: Nathan J. Carpenter, PhD
Office Location: Fell 450 (Temporary)
Office Phone: 309-438-5368
Email: njcarpe@ilstu.edu
Office Hours: Tue 1-2PM; Wed 11AM - noon
(or by appointment)

Course Information

Section: 05
Location: Fell 275A (SMACC)
Meeting Time: TR 11:00AM – 12:15PM
Credit Hours: 3.0
Prerequisite: COM Majors/Minors

Course Description

This course surveys foundational theory, research, and data analysis techniques to examine the role of social media in society. Topics will include communication theory and social media, social media measurement, social network analysis, and social media campaigns. Course includes class lecture and in-class lab time.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce you to methods of collecting, analyzing, and reporting on social media data in professional contexts.
2. Help you identify, assess, and critique contemporary issues and problems associated with contemporary social media.
3. Help you become a better consumer and producer of media on the social web.

Required Course Materials

1. Textbook: Humphreys, Ashlee (2016). *Social Media: Enduring Principles*. Oxford University Press
2. Additional readings assigned via ReggieNet

Strongly Recommended Social Media Tools

1. Active Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Google accounts.
2. A Netlytic account (FREE account available at <http://netlytic.org>)
3. Python 2.7 and Python 3.6 (FREE downloads available at <http://www.python.org>)
4. Gephi 0.9.1 (FREE download available at <http://gephi.org>)
5. OpenRefine (FREE download available at <http://openrefine.org>)
6. Microsoft Excel (available with your Illinois State Office365 account)
7. Picodash (\$8 per month at <http://picodash.com>)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Exercises

Approximately every 2 weeks you will be assigned an exercise that will ask you to apply your understanding of course concepts to real-world scenarios. You will receive detailed instructions and grading rubrics for each exercise. Topics may include (but are not limited to) using social media data for storytelling, analyzing a social movement or hashtag, examining an online community, producing a map of a Twitter network, and conducting a comparative analysis of social media use across several organizations.

Course Readings and Reading Quizzes

Readings will be discussed on the day they are listed in the course calendar. Chapters refer to the chapter in the *Social Media: Enduring Principles* textbook, and other readings will be provided through ReggieNet. Come prepared to discuss these readings and/or ready to use them for classroom activities. To incentivize your engagement with course material, you will be given a total of 10 reading quizzes throughout the semester. These will be assessed through ReggieNet and you will be given at least 48 hours to complete each quiz.

Client Project

In order to provide you experience using social media analytics, you will be assigned a major team project that will serve a real-world organization or business in the Bloomington-Normal community. You will be assigned to a team and will receive detailed instructions and a grading rubric during the 6th week of the semester. Deliverables will be based upon your client's need, but may include benchmarking reports, competitive analysis, and a social media strategy plan.

Grades

Your final grade will be calculated on the following elements and their weights (you will receive a detailed description and rubric for each exercise and project):

Exercise / Project / Assessment Weights

5 Exercises / 100pts each (500 pts total)

10 Reading Quizzes / 15 pts each (150 pts total)

Client Project (250 pts)

Final Exam (100 pts)

Final Grading Scale

A= 900-1000 pts

B= 800-899 pts

C= 700-799 pts

D= 600-699 pts

F= 0-599 pts

COURSE POLICIES

Course Philosophy

My job is to foster an environment conducive to your learning and development as a critically informed and engaged individual. I am here because I believe in YOUR potential to make a better world out of the skills you hone and the theories, concepts, and issues that we encounter in this class. My job is to lead you to relevant material, provide you the tools to engage, assess, and critique the material, and to measure your ability to engage, assess, and critique the material covered in this class. Your job is NOT simply to fill seats, soak up facts, and regurgitate answers. Rather, your job is to struggle with the concepts, to ask good questions, to make meaning, to be part of a community of learning, and to come away with a richer understanding of the world around you. That said, what follows are the policies I use to maintain these relationships:

Attendance / Participation Policy

Q: "What did I miss today?" A: "Everything. Contained in this classroom / is a microcosm of human experience / assembled for you to query and examine and ponder" (from Tom Wayman's 1993 poem "Did I Miss Anything?")

In the simplest economic terms, you are paying to be here, so why not get the biggest bang for your buck? In more altruistic terms, by signing up for this class you are also acknowledging a social contract that exists among you, your classmates, and your instructor. You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner and to arrive on time to class and not leave early. There will be a daily sign-in sheet that will be distributed during the first five minutes of class to track your daily attendance. If you plan on missing a class you are required to inform your instructor and make other arrangements to turn in any exercises or assignments that are due. Missed exercises may be excused ONLY in the event of documented serious illness or immediate family emergency. **You may miss 3 classes without penalty.** After that, your instructor reserves the right to lower your grade by one full letter grade for each subsequent excused absence. For example, a student who has 5 unexcused absences could earn, at best, a C in this course, even if their final earned point value equaled an A.

Course Communication

All students enrolled in this course have access to the course website on ReggieNet (<https://reggienet.illinoisstate.edu>). Important announcements, grades, and copies of assignments will be available through ReggieNet. On occasion, you may be asked to print a document from ReggieNet for use in course activities or readings. Course announcements will be made in class and via announcements on ReggieNet. It is YOUR responsibility to check both ReggieNet and your ISU email on a regular basis. If you need to contact me by email, please feel free to do so at my Illinois State e-mail address. You may also leave a message on my office voicemail, 309-438-5368. Please do not contact me through ReggieNet. As a student of higher

education, it is expected that all communication be of professional quality. When writing through e-mail to an instructor ***identify the subject matter in the subject line of the email and identify your section number.*** Please be sure to address the instructor in a professional manner. Always sign your name in your e-mails. Please follow these guidelines so your e-mail is given full consideration.

Due Dates

No late assignments will be accepted. Late work will receive a zero. Only a notification from the Dean of Students' office will provide a basis for exceptions to this rule. If you are sick or if you know of any conflicts that will prevent you from being in class, it is YOUR responsibility to make arrangements to turn in any assignments on or before the due date.

Academic Honesty

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to: disruption of classes, threatening an instructor or fellow student, giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations or the assignment preparation, knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work, plagiarizing another's work, or acting dishonestly in research. All University Policies concerning academic misconduct will be upheld per the policies found at <http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/academic.php>. Any suspect activity will be investigated according to university policy. All of your work in this class must be your own and produced without the help of others other than your instructor or assistants designated by the instructor.

Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. You may arrange to take an exam on an alternative date if the exam falls on a religious holy day. Let the instructor know in the first two weeks of the semester if any exam date or other due date falls on a religious holy day.

Unique Academic Needs

If you have an academic need or learning disability that should be taken into account in either classroom activities or exams, please be sure that the proper documentation is delivered to the instructor in the first two weeks of the semester. Also, any student needing to arrange reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD) or ableisu@ilstu.edu (email).

This Syllabus is Subject to Change

Any aspect of this syllabus, including course calendar, due dates, content, and schedule, may be adjusted to meet the needs and pace of the class. Changes will be announced via class, Email, or ReggieNet. It is YOUR responsibility to regularly check your ISU email and ReggieNet accounts.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 (Aug. 22 & 24): Introductions; Models of Communication

Thursday: Chapters 1 & 2

Week 2 (Aug. 29 & 31): What's "Social" About Social Media?

Tuesday: Chapter 3

Thursday: Carr & Hayes (PDF)

Exercise 1 Due Thursday

Week 3 (Sep. 5 & 7): Social Media Analytics

Tuesday: Chapter 4, Fan & Gordon (PDF)

Thursday: Analytics Lab

Week 4 (Sep. 12 & 14): Co-Creation & Interactive Media

Tuesday: Chapter 5

Thursday: Andrejevic "Mining the Wealth of Online Communities" (PDF)

Exercise 2 Due Thursday

Week 5 (Sep. 19 & 21): Uses & Benefits

Tuesday: Chapter 6; Bogost (PDF)

Thursday: Analytics Lab

Week 6 (Sep. 26 & 28): Marketing

Tuesday: Chapter 11; Launch Client Project

Thursday: boyd & Crawford (PDF)

Exercise 3 Due Thursday

Week 7 (Oct. 3 & 5): Digital Divides

Tuesday: Read Chapter 7

Thursday: Anderson & Perrin (PDF)

Week 8 (Oct. 10 & 12): Race & Gender

Tuesday: Chapter 8

Thursday: Ramsey (PDF)

Exercise 4 Due Thursday

Week 9 (Oct. 17 & 19): Networks

Tuesday: Chapter 9

Thursday: Network Analytics Lab

Week 10 (Oct. 24 & 26): Online Communities

Tuesday: Chapter 10

Thursday: Trolling readings (PDF)

Exercise 5 Due Thursday

Week 11 (Oct. 31 & Nov. 2): Cultural Representations & Practices

Tuesday: Chapter 12

Thursday: Pepe readings (PDF)

Week 12 (Nov. 7 & 9): Political Life

Tuesday: Chapter 13

Thursday: Rheingold (PDF)

Week 13 (Nov. 14 & 16): Economics & Legal Considerations

Tuesday: Chapter 14

Thursday: Determann (PDF)

Week 14 (Nov. 21 & 23): THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 15 (Nov. 28 & 30): Client Project Presentation Planning

Week 16 (Dec. 5 & 7): Client Project Presentations

Week 17: Final Exam (Date TBD)