

#4558

Social Media Research and Analytics The Ohio State University Journalism 216

Course Instructor

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Include 4558 in Subject

Office Hours

Thursdays
Derby Hall 3143
11:30am-12:30pm (or by appt.)

Course Description

This course represents an introduction to analyzing social media data with an emphasis on the implications for communication strategy, market research, and technology history. How do we know whether a feature on the new iPhone is working? What type of consumers are most likely to buy a given product? How does the perception of a company change after a crisis? Social media streams can provide valuable insights into users, brands, audiences, and industries. The course is composed of two primary parts: (1) an overview of the approaches and challenges associated with doing social media research, and (2) an involved project in which you will apply the knowledge gained to a self-determined case study on a social platform.

Objectives and Outcomes

The primary objectives of this course are to teach students how to obtain, monitor, and evaluate digital traces from online social platforms. When we are finished, you will be prepared to approach future industry and academic problems with an understanding of how social media data can help accomplish your goals. You will learn the advantages/disadvantages of using social media data, how to operate an established analytics platform, and how to complete a novel research project using social listening. Altogether, you will acquire the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to work with social media data to approach new problems.

Course Materials

A number of platforms for the purpose of learning and conducting social media analytics over the semester, with a special focus on the following five...

1. Canvas and/or Carmen (for class materials)
2. TopHat (for in-class activities)
3. Crimson Hexagon (for social analytics)
4. Netlytic (for social analytics)
5. Google Spreadsheets (for data analysis)

Students are also recommended to acquire one book that serves to compliment the online and offline course activities. Combining business and academic perspectives, Lutz Finger (Snap) and Dr. Soumitra Dutta's (Cornell University) *Ask, Measure, Learn* will provide insights into the communication strategies for conducting robust analytics from an industry standpoint. The book will reinforce the weekly readings and highlight a range of business applications.

Finger, L. & Dutta, S. (2014). *Ask, Measure, Learn: Using Social Media Analytics to Understand and Influence Customer Behavior*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.

Course Format

The course is composed of one weekly offline (in-person) class and regular online activities. On most days, classes will be composed of hybrid activities as individuals or within groups. Class time will be split between teaching analytics skills and rehearsing learned skills through an involved case study, which represents a substantial portion of the course grade.

Grade Distribution

This class has 200 possible points. Points are distributed as follows:

Class Attendance	20 points
Hybrid Activities	30 points
Platform Proposal	10 points
Netlytic Report	30 points
Crimson Report	20 points
Case Proposal	20 points
Case Blueprint	20 points
Case Poster	50 points

Requirements (200 points)

- Class Attendance (20 pts.)
 - Attendance will be taken each lab. Students will be allowed **ONE** absence for personal matters (i.e., no excuse necessary) during the semester. For each unexcused absence after that, you will lose 2 points for every missed class.
- Hybrid Activities (30 pts.)
 - A participation grade will be assigned at the end of the course based on your completion of hybrid (in-n-out-class) activities. All activities will begin in-class and submitted to the Activity HQ on Google Spreadsheets.
- Platform Proposal (10 pts.)
 - You will recommend implementation of a social media analytics platform to a self-selected company. See assignment instructions on Carmen.
- Netlytic Report (30 pts.)
 - You will report the results of text and network analyses related to a self-selected product on Netlytic. See assignment instructions on Carmen.
- Crimson Report (20 pts.)
 - You will provide a summary report concerning the brand selected by the class this semester. See assignment instructions on Carmen.

- Case Proposal (20 pts.)
 - In teams of ~3 individuals, you will propose a case study on a “social platform” in front of the class. Make-up presentations will be arranged for excused or unavoidable circumstances only (e.g., deaths, personal/family illness, emergencies) with written verification. See assignment instructions on Carmen.
- Case Blueprint (20 pts.)
 - Your case team will provide the research design for your case study, including how exactly you will employ data from Wayback Machine and Crimson Hexagon to learn about your chosen platform. See assignment instructions on Carmen.
- Case Poster (50 pts.)
 - Your case team will complete the analytics project detailed in your Case Blueprint. After conducting your analysis, you will make a poster to represent your project and its key findings. I will provide detailed instructions as the semester progresses. Toward the end of the semester, we will transition from focusing on hybrid activities to your case projects. As the largest share of your grade for the class, the poster will be scrutinized and used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of your research project. See assignment instructions on Carmen.

Course Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to act responsibly and abide by the following policies:

All cell phones must be silenced during class. Students must refrain from reading the newspaper,

texting, listening to headphones, e-mailing, or using the Internet during class unless it is part of the lecture. Students may be asked to leave class for such behaviors. Any form of audio or video recording is **not** allowed in class. Students are also not permitted to take pictures of the projection screen. The instructor does **not** give permission for the lecture sessions to be recorded (in either an audio or video format).

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated on any occasion. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>. Final papers and research proposals will be submitted to turnitin.com. Work that has been submitted to other courses will count as plagiarism even if you were the originator of that work.

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

Course Grading

At the end of the course, dividing your total number of points by 100 will yield your final course grade percentage. Letter grades will be assigned using the following grading scheme.

93 - 100 (A)	80 - 82.9 (B-)	67 - 69.9 (D+)
90 - 92.9 (A-)	77 - 79.9 (C+)	60 - 66.9 (D)
87 - 89.9 (B+)	73 - 76.9 (C)	Below 60 (E)
83 - 86.9 (B)	70 - 72.9 (C-)	

Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this course. To be fair to all students in the class, there will *not* be opportunities for students to re-complete assignments in order to raise their grades. *It is the student’s responsibility* to ensure that he or she receives a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. *Exceptions will not be made.*

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. Events that transpire over the semester may require me to modify the syllabus. In the event that I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification in class. However, it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc.

By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described above.

Mini-Schedule

Week	Date	In-Class Activities	Assignments
1	Aug 21	Co-Learning Crowdsourcing	Hybrid Activity A
2	Aug 28	Collecting Data Twitter API	Hybrid Activity B
3	Sep 4	Questioning Hypothesizing	Platform Proposal
4	Sep 11	Wayback Machine Case Planning	Hybrid Activity C
5	Sep 18	Text Analysis Network Analysis	Hybrid Activity D
6	Sep 25	#Trending @omparing	Netlytic Report
7	Oct 2	Text Analysis 2.0 Case Planning	Hybrid Activity E
8	Oct 9	Audience Analysis Crimson Review	Hybrid Activity F
9	Oct 16	Case Proposals Team Presentations	Case Slides
10	Oct 23	Historicizing Data Collecting Wayback	Crimson Report
11	Oct 30	Critiquing Data Collecting Crimson	Hybrid Activity G
12	Nov 6	Linking Analyses Reporting Insights	Case Blueprint
13	Nov 13	Guest Speaker Career Strategy	Hybrid Activity H
14	Nov 20	Thanksgiving Case Workshop	Case Posters
15	Nov 27	Visualizing Analyses Case Storytelling	
16	Dec 4	Final Week Case Workshop	

See Full Schedule Below for Details!

WEEK 1 (Aug 21)

Learning through Co-Construction and Crowdsourcing

Due Online: Hybrid Activity A

Key Reading #1: Birnholtz, J., Hancock, J., & Retelny, D. (2013). Tweeting for class: co-construction as a means for engaging students in lectures. *Proceedings of CHI*, 797-800.

WEEK 2 (Aug 28)

Collecting Social Media Data and (Mostly) Simple Programming

Due Online: Hybrid Activity B

Key Reading #2: Brooker, P., Barnett, J., & Cribbin, T. (2016). Doing social media analytics. *Big Data & Society*, 1-12.

- **See also...** F&D Ch. 9

WEEK 3 (Sep 4)

Analytics Questions (Induction?) vs. Hypotheses (Deduction!)

Due Online: [Platform Proposal](#)

Key Reading #3: Lewis, K. (2016). Three fallacies of digital footprints. *Big Data & Society*, 1-4.

- **See also...** F&D Ch. 8

WEEK 4 (Sep 11)

Picking Social Media Winners... and Forgotten Losers

Due Online: Hybrid Activity C

Key Reading #4: Lampinen, A. (2016). Why we need to examine multiple social network sites. *Communication and the Public*, 1-5.

WEEK 5 (Sep 18)

Basic Text and Network Analytics via Netlytic Freeware

Due Online: Hybrid Activity D

Key Reading #5: Felt, M. (2016). Social media and the social sciences: How researchers employ Big Data analytics. *Big Data & Society*, 1-15.

WEEK 6 (Sep 25)

Evaluating Trends and Comparisons via Crimson Hexagon

Due Online: [Netlytic Report](#)

Key Reading #6: McFarland, D. A., & McFarland, H. R. (2015). Big Data and the danger of being precisely inaccurate. *Big Data & Society*, 1-4.

WEEK 7 (Oct 2)

Advanced Text Analysis: Sentiment and Topic Analysis

Due Online: Hybrid Activity E

Key Reading #7: Diesner, J. (2015). Small decisions with big impact on data analytics. *Big Data & Society*, 1-6.

WEEK 8 (Oct 9)

Audience Analysis and Review of Crimson Hexagon

Due Online: Hybrid Activity F

Key Reading #8: Wilkinson, D. and Thelwall, M. (2010). Social network site changes over time: The case of MySpace. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 2311-2323.

WEEK 9 (Oct 16)

Time to Propose: Making a Case for Your Social Media Case Study

Due Online: [Case Slides](#)

Key Reading #9: Dimmick, J., Feaster, J. C., & Ramirez, A. (2016). The niches of interpersonal media: Relationships in time and space. *New Media & Society*, 1-18.

- **See also...** F&D Ch. 10

WEEK 10 (Oct 23)

Historicizing and Collecting Wayback Data for Case Projects

Due Online: [Crimson Report](#)

Key Reading #10: Salisbury, M., & Pooley, J.D. (2017). The #nofilter self: The contest for authenticity among social networking sites, 2002-2016. *Social Sciences*, 1-24.

WEEK 11 (Oct 30)

Critiquing and Collecting Crimson Data for Case Projects

Due Online: Hybrid Activity G

Key Reading #11: boyd, D., & Crawford, K. (2012). Critical questions for big data: Provocations for a cultural, technological, and scholarly phenomenon. *Information, Communication & Society*, 662-679.

WEEK 12 (Nov 6)

Aggregating and Analyzing #Data for Your Case Projects

Due Online: [Case Blueprint](#)

Key Reading #12: Shaw, R. (2015). Big data and reality. *Big Data & Society*, 1-4.

WEEK 13 (Nov 13)

Guest Speaker! *Imagining the Real World...*

Due Online: Hybrid Activity H

Key Reading #13: Moe, W., & Schweidel, D. A. (2017). Opportunities for innovation in social media analytics. *Journal of Product Innovation and Management*, 697-702.

- **See also...** Stone, B. (2016). Twitter's cofounder on creating opportunities. *HBR*, 1-10.

WEEK 14 (Nov 20)

Thanksgiving! *Case Workshopping*

Due Online: [Case Posters...](#)

Key Reading #14: Hogan, B., & Quan-Haase, A. (2010). Persistence and change in social media. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 309-315.

WEEK 15 (Nov 27)

Visualizing and Storytelling: Make that Data Sparkle!

Due Online: [Case Posters...](#)

Key Reading #15: Natale, S. (2016). Unveiling the Biographies of Media: On the Role of Narratives, Anecdotes, and Storytelling in the Construction of New Media's Histories. *Communication Theory*.

WEEK 16 (Dec 4)

End of Semester! *Finish your case studies!*

Due Online: [Case Posters!!!](#)