

Spring 2016
COMM4554 Social Media [Hybrid]

Instructor: Dr. Roselyn J. Lee-Won
E-mail: Lee-Won.1@osu.edu
When emailing, please include our course number (Comm4554) in the subject line

Location & Time: Journalism 216
Wed & Fri; 10:20am to 11:15am

Office Hours: Wed 1:00pm to 2:00pm or by appointment (Derby 3074)

Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to help students (1) acquire theoretical and practical knowledge about social media and (2) understand the ways in which social media influence important social domains. Specifically, we aim to address the following questions:

1. What are social media, or what does it mean when media are becoming “social”?
2. How are social media different from the traditional mass media and from the “older” forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC)?
3. How do social media shape the way we connect to and build relationships with others?
4. What strategies should individuals and organizations adopt in order to use social media effectively? What are some of the pitfalls should individuals and organizations avoid?

Course Format

This course is a **hybrid course**, which means that the course has **offline (in class) and online components**. We meet offline for two days; we make up what would have been the third class in a variety of ways involving online activities, which include online reading tests, watching videos, posting reflections on Carmen, etc. To make best use of the hybrid format, this course will take a *flipped classroom* approach. For most of the weeks, students will first engage themselves with the online materials and then discuss the content in greater depth with the guidance of the instructor.

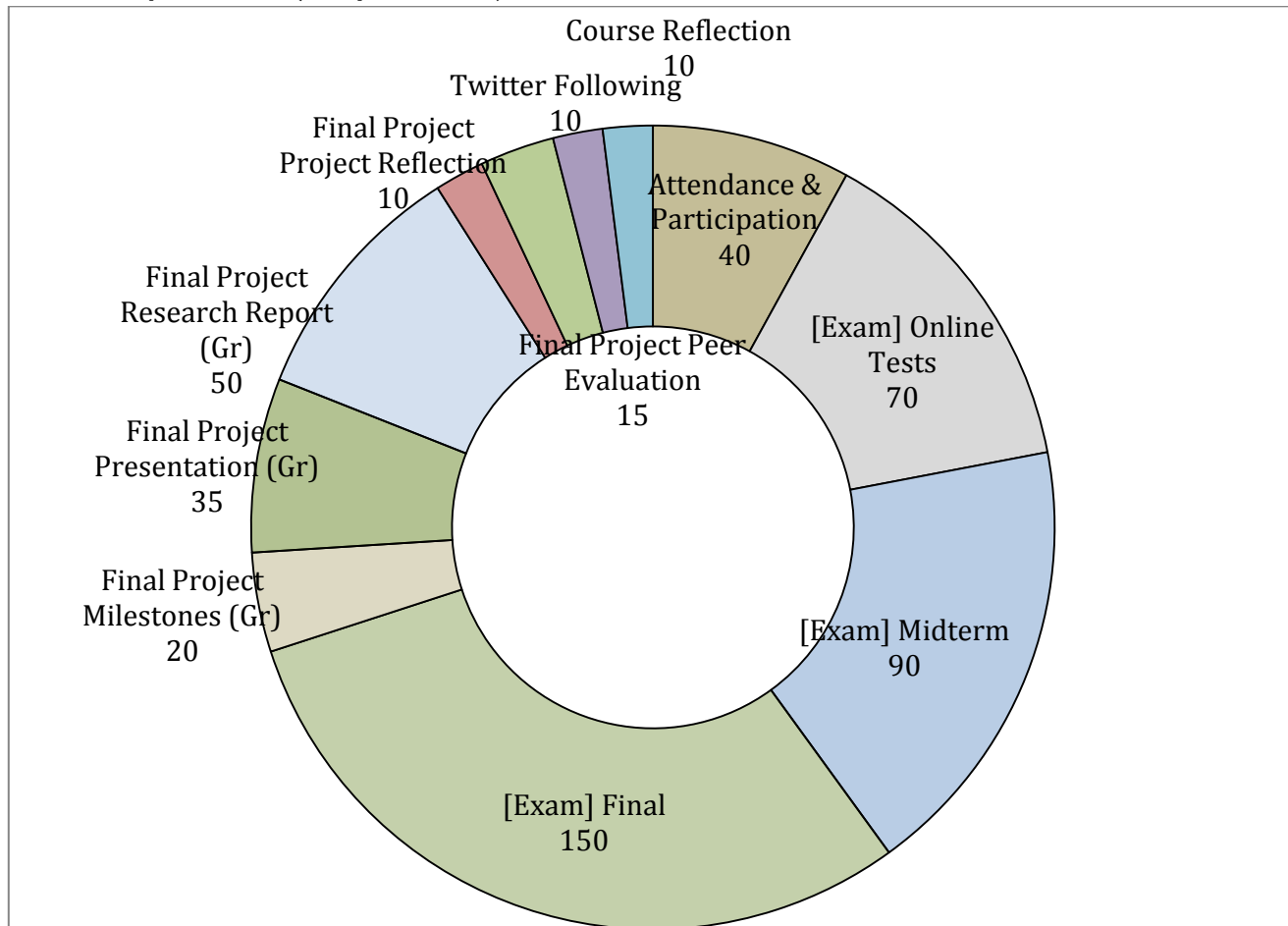
Course Readings

All required readings will be available through Carmen.

Special Accommodations

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs, or contact the office for disability services (E-mail: ods@osu.edu; Phone: 614-292-3307) in Room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate your documented disabilities.

Course Requirements (500 pts in total)



1. Attendance & participation: 40 pts

Students are expected to come to class and actively participate in class activities. Starting on 1/20/16, attendance will be taken regularly. You are allowed to use **a maximum of THREE penalty-free absences. You are NOT required to notify me of these absences.**

- **Beyond the THREE penalty-free absences, students should submit a copy of official documentation** (e.g., doctor's note) to avoid penalization. **An undocumented absence will result in a deduction of -2 points.**
- **THREE OR MORE undocumented absences beyond the penalty-free absences will lower your final grade by half letter grade unless you present formal documentation that explains these absences.**
- *The instructor does reserve the right to lower the participation grade of those who repeatedly cause distractions or do not pay attention to lectures/discussions/student presentations during class.*

2. Online tests: 70 pts (10 pts x 8 tests with lowest score dropped)

Students will be required to take online reading tests via Carmen (note the dates in the schedule).

- Tests are *open-book*—the questions are designed to engage you with the assigned readings ahead of in-class sessions. All of the online tests will be available for you to take on Friday afternoon and should be completed **no later than 11:59pm on the following Tuesday**. For example, Test #1, which will be given on 01/22/16, will be due no later than 11:59pm on 01/26/16.

- **IMPORTANT: All of the 8 tests are required; missing a single test will automatically result in failure of this element.**
- The lowest grade will be dropped.
- As there will be a sufficient amount of time and flexibility for you to complete each test, no make-up request will be considered except for extenuating circumstances that can be documented (see the make-up policy below).

3. In-class exams (Midterm & Final): 240 pts

Both midterm (90 pts) and final exams (150 pts) will contain true-false and multiple-choice questions. To help students prepare for the exams, I will provide exam guides and review sessions.

4. Final project: 130 pts

In a team of four to five members, students will conduct a project in which they will analyze social media platforms covered in the course. The final project will be composed of (1) a series of Carmen Group posts on project milestones (20 pts), (2) oral presentation (35 pts), (3) research report (50 pts), (4) project reflection (10 pts), and (5) peer evaluation (15 pts). **Specific guidelines on the project will be provided during Week 3.**

5. Reflections on public figure following on Twitter (Carmen posting): 10 pts

Those who have work experience relevant to social media will be invited to be panelists for the “Social Media at Work” Panel and will be waived from this assignment. Please contact the instructor if you are interested in this option.

6. Course reflection: 10 pts

At the end of the semester, students will choose and write a short reflection paper on the theories, concepts, and phenomena addressed in the course they found most intriguing. More instructions will follow.

Grading Scale

| Final Letter Grade | Percentage | Points |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| A | 93-100% | 465-500 |
| A- | 90-92% | 450-464 |
| B+ | 87-89% | 435-449 |
| B | 83-86% | 415-434 |
| B- | 80-82% | 400-414 |
| C+ | 77-79% | 385-399 |
| C | 73-76% | 365-384 |
| C- | 70-72% | 350-364 |
| D+ | 67-69% | 335-349 |
| D | 60-66% | 300-334 |
| E | Less than 60% | 299 or less |

Course Policy

1. Respect for fellow students, professor, and the class community as a whole

- If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (whether it is the professor or another student). Do not engage in any distracting behavior.
- ***The instructor may ask students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors class to leave.***

2. Academic integrity

Academic misconduct will NOT be tolerated in this course. The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process."

Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. *The sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in the course, suspension, or even dismissal from the University.* Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so students should review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp. It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty. **When in doubt, be sure to consult your instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.**

3. Grading policy

- Late submission of assignments will be subject to **20% score deduction** for each late day. ***After the third late day, submissions will NOT be accepted.***
- There will be no rounding-up of individual grades, no matter how close you may be, because it's not fair to other students.

4. Make-up policy

Exams can only be made up in the event of serious illness, death in the family, a religious conflict, or pre-approved university activity (e.g., athletic event).

- For a religious conflict or university activity, the request must be made in advance; otherwise, make-up/rescheduling will not be allowed.
- In the case of an illness, students will need to present documentation from a medical professional stating that the student's illness prevented them from taking the exam on the date in question. Documents that are not dated and do not indicate the severity of the illness will not be accepted.
- Documentation is required in the case of a death in the family.

5. In-class laptop/tablet use and lecture notes

Students may bring their own laptop computers/tablet devices to class for note-taking purposes or use the computers in the classroom. ***Please note that I will NOT make full class lecture notes available.*** This is intended to (1) minimize distractions during class and to (2) prevent unauthorized distribution and misuse of lecture materials outside the class (which may constitute academic misconduct). ***It is important that students make every effort to attend class and take notes during class.*** If a student, for any reason, misses class, it is his or her responsibility to obtain notes from someone else in the class; I will be happy to answer specific questions about missed content during office hours.

Course Schedule

This syllabus presents a contract in the works. Events that happen over the semester may require me to modify the administration of the course; therefore, specific items listed in the table may be subject to change. If changes/adjustments need to be made, I will make announcements well in advance to help you to plan things ahead.

| Wk | Date | Offline Activities: Topics & Readings | Online Activities |
|----|---------|---|---|
| 1 | W 01/13 | Course Introduction | |
| | F 01/15 | The self on the network | |
| 2 | W 01/20 | Social media vs. mass media Rosen (2012); Johnson (2009) | Two tasks due on 01/18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile creation assignment Class survey |
| | F 01/22 | Masspersonal communication O'Sullivan & Carr (excerpts) | |
| 3 | W 01/27 | Social media: Technological Basis Walther and Jang (2012) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch TEDTalk video Test #1 on Walther & Jang (2012), boyd & Ellison (2008), and Williams (2006) |
| | F 01/29 | Social network sites (SNSs) and social ties boyd & Ellison (2008); Williams (2006) | |
| 4 | W 02/03 | Ephemeral social media (1) Bayer et al. (2015) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test #2 on Bayer et al. (2015; pp.1-8, pp. 10-18) Read: A Parents' Guide to Snapchat |
| | F 02/05 | Ephemeral social media (2) Bayer et al. (2015), cont'd | |
| 5 | W 02/10 | Interacting with the public via social media (1) Frederick et al (2014) | Test #3 on Frederick et al (2014) and boyd et al. (2010) |
| | F 02/12 | Interacting with the public via social media (2) boyd et al. (2010) | |
| 6 | W 02/17 | Project team meeting with the instructor (1) | Follow a public figure on Twitter (take notes) |
| | F 02/19 | Project team meeting with the instructor (2) | |
| 7 | W 02/24 | Midterm Exam Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a public figure on Twitter (take notes) Carmen Group: Project milestones (1) due on 02/24 |
| | F 02/26 | Midterm Exam | |
| 8 | W 03/02 | Social media and professional norms Lee (2015) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carmen posting on Twitter following due on 02/28 (Sun) Test #4 on Lee (2015) |
| | F 03/04 | Twitter following Discussion | |

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|----|---|-------|--|---|
| 9 | W | 03/09 | Social media and organizations (1) Rybalko & Seltzer (2010) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test #5 on Rybalko & Seltzer (2010) and Lovejoy et al. (2012)• Carmen Group: Project milestones (2) due on 03/09 |
| | F | 03/11 | Social media and organizations (2) Lovejoy et al. (2012) | |
| 10 | Spring Break (No Class on 03/16 & 03/18) | | | |
| 11 | W | 03/23 | What goes viral? (1) Berger (2013) Ch3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test #6 on Berger (2013) Ch3&5• Carmen Group: Project milestones (3) due on 03/23 |
| | F | 03/25 | What goes viral? (2) Berger (2013) Ch5 | |
| 12 | W | 03/30 | Virality on social media Malhotra et al. (2012, 2013) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test #7 on Malhotra et al. (2012, 2013)• Carmen Group: Project milestones (4) due on 03/30 |
| | F | 04/01 | Social media @ work panel | |
| 13 | W | 04/06 | Dark sides of social media (1) Aaker & Smith (2010); <i>Instafame</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watch <i>Instafame</i>• Test #8 on <i>Instafame</i>, Aaker & Smith (2010) and Kawase et al. (2013) |
| | F | 04/08 | Dark sides of social media (2) Kawase et al. (2013) | |
| 14 | W | 04/13 | Project Presentations (1) | Work on the project deliverables (presentation slides and research report) using online collaboration tools |
| | F | 04/15 | Project Presentations (2) | |
| 15 | W | 04/20 | Project Presentations (3) | |
| | F | 04/22 | Final Exam Review | |
| 16 | Final exam Wed. 4/27 (10:00am - 11:45am) | | | |

An important note on the final exam schedule:

Because the exams should be administered and graded in a fair manner for everyone enrolled in this course, alternative arrangements will be made only for extenuating circumstances (e.g., family emergencies, medical emergencies) that can be formally documented either (1) PRIOR to the exam or (2) within 24 hours of the exam schedule. Pre-purchased trip tickets or car-poor arrangements for going home will NOT be considered as valid excuses for an alternative arrangement.

Reading List

- Aaker, J., & Smith, A. (2010). *The dragonfly effect: Quick, effective, and powerful ways to use social media to drive social change*. San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bayer, J. B., Ellison, N. B., Schoenebeck, S. Y., & Falk, E. B. (2015). Sharing the small moments: ephemeral social interaction on Snapchat. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1-22. doi: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1084349
- Berger, J. (2013). *Contagious: Why things catch on*. New York: NY: Simon and Schuster.
- boyd, d., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x
- boyd, d., Golder, S., & Lotan, G. (2010). Tweet, tweet, retweet: Conversational aspects of retweeting on Twitter. In *Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)*. Kauai, HI: IEEE Computer Society.
- Frederick, E., Lim, C. H., Clavio, G., Pedersen, P. M., & Burch, L. M. (2014). Choosing between the one-way or two-way street: An exploration of relationship promotion by professional athletes on Twitter. *Communication & Sport*, 2, 80-99. doi: 10.1177/2167479512466387
- Johnson, S. (2009). How Twitter will change the way we live. *Time Magazine*, 173, 23-32. doi:
- Kawase, R., Nunes, B. P., Herder, E., Nejd, W., & Casanova, M. A. (2013). Who wants to get fired? In *Proceedings of the Proceedings of the 5th Annual ACM Web Science Conference*. Paris, France: ACM.
- Lee, J. (2015). The double-edged sword: The effects of journalists' social media activities on audience perceptions of journalists and their news products. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 20, 312-329. doi: 10.1111/jcc4.12113
- Lovejoy, K., Waters, R. D., & Saxton, G. D. (2012). Engaging stakeholders through Twitter: How nonprofit organizations are getting more out of 140 characters or less. *Public Relations Review*, 38, 313-318. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.01.005
- Malhotra, A., Malhotra, C. K., & See, A. (2012). How to get your messages retweeted. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 53, 61-66.
- Malhotra, A., Malhotra, C. K., & See, A. (2013). How to create brand engagement on Facebook. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 54, 18-20.
- O'Sullivan, P. B. & Carr, Caleb T. (manuscript). Masspersonal communication: A model bridging the mass-interpersonal divide.
- Rosen, J. (2012). The people formerly known as the audience. In M. Mandiberg (Ed.), *The social media reader* (pp. 13-16). New York: NYU Press.
- Rybalko, S., & Seltzer, T. (2010). Dialogic communication in 140 characters or less: How Fortune 500 companies engage stakeholders using Twitter. *Public Relations Review*, 36, 336-341. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.08.004
- Walther, J. B., & Jang, J.-W. (2012). Communication processes in participatory websites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 18, 2-15. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01592.x
- Williams, D. (2006). On and off the net: Scales for social capital in an online era. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11, 593-628. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.00029.x