

COMM 4554

Social Media Spring 2018

Meeting Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 09:35 am – 10:55 am
Journalism Building, Room 216

Instructor: Dr. Hyun Suk Kim
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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 am – 12:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed to help students (a) acquire theoretical and practical knowledge about social media and (b) understand why and how certain social media messages catch on and go viral while others fail. We particularly focus on examining factors influencing how individuals select, consume, share, and create messages and, as a result, change their attitudes and behaviors in the emerging public communication environment.

Readings:

There will be no textbook for this course; instead, all readings will be made available through Canvas.

Course Objectives:

1. To understand what social media are and how they differ from traditional mass media and from the “older” forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC).
2. To understand the social psychological mechanisms through which messages attract attention, prompt social sharing, and persuade individuals on social media.
3. To understand and apply theory and research findings in communication research to effective social media message design.

Course Requirements:

1. **Attendance and Participation:** This course is a *seminar* and includes elements of lecture and discussion formats. As such, a critical portion of the learning occurs through the active discussion of the readings in class meetings. Therefore, attendance and participation in class are vitally important, as is conducting the readings in a timely fashion. Students must complete assigned readings before lectures and be prepared to participate in class. Each lecture is designed to supplement the course readings, *not to replace them*, and exams will cover material from both the required readings *and* the lectures. Participation will be evaluated based on attendance, active listening, and engagement in discussions. Students who attend all class sessions but are not actively participate in class will receive a B on participation.

2. **Group Project:** Throughout the semester, you will be working on a group project. Each group may consist of 4 to 5 students. Each group will write a paper and give an oral presentation to the class on a topic related to public communication campaigns on social media. Each student will be evaluated individually based on their unique contribution to the project as well as evaluations that they will receive from other group members. Additional information about the group project paper and presentation will be provided in class and be available on Canvas. Attendance will be taken during presentation days.
3. **In-Class Quizzes:** Throughout the semester, there will be a total of 6 in-class quizzes about supplemental materials to read before class. *These quizzes cannot be made up outside of class.* That is, you must be in class in order to earn these points. I will drop your lowest score providing you some cushion should you need to miss class on the day of an in-class quiz. Once in-class quizzes are passed out and students begin them, I reserve the right to not pass out any additional quizzes.
4. **Exams:** Two exams will be administered in class. Both will be closed book exams, which will cover the required readings and any material covered in class. The format for both exams will be multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions.

Breakdown of Grades:

Attendance and In-Class Participation	20 pts
Group Project Paper	100 pts
Group Project Presentation	20 pts
In-Class Quizzes	50 pts
In-Class Exam 1	100 pts
In-Class Exam 2	100 pts
Peer Evaluation	10 pts
Total	400 pts

Grade Assignment:

At the end of the course, dividing your total number of points by 4 will yield your final course grade percentage. Letter grades will be assigned using the following grading scheme. THERE WILL BE NO ROUNDING UP OF GRADES.

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

Policies and Procedures

I expect you to act as responsible students. I understand that you have other demands on your time and that this course will not always be your top priority. However, the amount of time you spend on this course will have a direct impact on your grade for this course.

If there are unusual circumstances that are affecting your performance in this class, you should inform me of them as soon as possible. I can adjust time schedules, but I will not adjust my grading policies. If you are experiencing personal difficulties that are affecting your performance in your classes you may find it helpful to contact the Student Advocacy Center, 001 Drackett Tower, 614-292-1111, <http://advocacy.osu.edu>.

The Use of Technology in Class: 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.

Laptops and other electronic devices are allowed in class. *However*, they must only be used for taking down notes. If a student uses a laptop or other device for non-class related purposes (e.g., social networking sites, etc.) and it is distracting to others, the student will be asked to leave class.

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).

Lecture Notes: Lecture slides will be posted in the PDF format on Canvas. However, you need contextual information provided during lecture in order to understand the content on the slides. Students, therefore, need to take good notes during lectures.

Attendance: Starting on 1/16/2018, attendance will be taken regularly and will factor into each student's participation grade. Students who will be absent from class due to a religious holiday, travel with a university affiliated team or group, or because of an emergency should speak with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as possible thereafter. Please note that airline schedules are not considered unavoidable conflicts. Excused absences will need to be documented and provided in advance of class (except for emergencies). An unexcused absence will result in a zero grade for participation that day.

Make-Up Exams: Exam dates are given in this syllabus (p. 6) in order to provide ample notice to all students. As a general rule, if you do not take an exam on the scheduled day and time, you will receive a zero for the grade on that exam. Make-up exams will not be given except in cases of extreme, unforeseen, and convincingly documented emergencies (notification within 24 hours of the exam time is required) or official University related absences (you must notify me at least two weeks in advance). Any foreseeable schedule conflicts or medical issues should be discussed immediately with me. I reserve the right to determine what qualifies as acceptable and what documentation is required. Unacceptable excuses include, but are not limited to: having a cold, being emotionally distraught, being out of town, oversleeping, having to work, not being able to find a parking space, car trouble, and flight delays or cancellations.

Group Project: The group research paper assignment due date/time is presented in this syllabus (p. 6). The group assignment is to be submitted via Canvas. You will have 20 points deducted from

your score for *each day* it is late (including weekends). Assignments turned in more than three days late will receive a zero for a grade.

Use of Email and Canvas: You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Canvas course site. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account regularly and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Similarly, check the Canvas website regularly for any updates or announcements. If you email me, please put the course number (Comm 4554) in the subject line. I will check e-mail at least twice a day on weekdays, so you should get a response within 24 hours most days. I reserve the right *not* to check email on weekends.

Classroom Civility: We want to build a classroom climate that is comfortable for all. In a communication class, it is *especially* important that we (a) display respect for all members of the classroom – including the instructor and students, (b) pay attention to and participate in all class sessions and activities; (c) avoid unnecessary disruption during class time (e.g., having private conversations, reading the newspaper, doing work for other classes, making/receiving cell phone calls, text messaging, etc.); and (d) avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is not an exhaustive list of behaviors; rather, they represent the minimal standards that help make the classroom a productive place for all concerned. Any student who engages in these sorts of behaviors will be asked to leave class, suffer a grade penalty (your final grade may be reduced by 1% each time you engage in such behaviors), and/or be reported to the School of Communication Director, the Dean of Students, and/or University Police.

Academic Misconduct: 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/>.

Graduating Seniors and Other Students: 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-take exams or 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.*

Student Academic Services: Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services’ website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisors can be obtained through this website. The site is: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>

Student Services: The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site at: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

Copyright Disclaimer: The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or

disseminating materials outside of the course.

Diversity Statement: 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.

Title IX: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu

Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Requesting Accommodations: The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; www.slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Tentative Nature of This Syllabus: 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 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 in the syllabus.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Required Readings & Assignment
01/09	Course Overview	Syllabus
01/11	Intro: Common Sense vs. Science	Watts (2011)
01/16	Social Media Communication Model:	O'Sullivan & Carr (2017); Hornik &
01/18	Selection, Sharing, and Persuasion	Yanovitzky (2003)
01/23	* Project Topic	
01/25	Social Media Communication Effects on	Fishbein & Cappella (2006)
01/30	Behavioral Decision-Making	<i>Quiz 1</i> (01/25); <i>Group Project Topic Due</i>
02/01	Social Media Message Processing	O'Keefe (2016)
02/06	Message Diffusion on Social Media	Rogers (2003); Katz (2006)
02/08		<i>Quiz 2</i>
02/13	Exam 1 Review	
02/15	Exam 1	
02/20	Paper Workshop	<i>Work on Proposal & Proposal Due</i>
02/22	Technological Basis of Social Media	Humphreys (2016); Walther & Jang (2012)
02/27		<i>Quiz 3</i> (02/22)
03/01	Social Media & Interactivity Effects	Sundar et al. (2015)
03/06		<i>Quiz 4</i> (03/01)
03/08	Viral Communication on Social Media	Berger (2013)
03/13	<i>Spring Break</i>	
03/15		
03/20	Group Project Workshop	
03/22	Message Selection & Sharing on Social	Cappella et al. (2015)
03/27	Media: Psychological Motivations	<i>Quiz 5</i> (03/22)
03/29	Message Selection & Sharing on Social	Kim (2015)
04/03	Media: Message Characteristics	<i>Quiz 6</i> (03/29)
04/05	Social Networks & Social Influence	Salganik et al. (2006)
04/10	Group Project Presentations	
04/12	Group Project Presentations	
04/17	Exam 2 Review	
04/19	Exam 2	

* **Group Project Paper Due: 04/16, 11:59pm**