

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
SMS101
Introduction to Social Media Theory and Strategy
Spring 2020

Room: AF 102
Class time: W 3:00-3:50
Format: Blended (79% online)

Professor: Dr. Urszula Pruchniewska

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Office Phone: 3-4563

Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4:30; Wednesday (VIRTUAL HOURS*) 1-3; Thursday 12-1:30 and by appointment (*email me to set up a phone call or video chat for virtual hours)

Course Overview

Course Description

A survey of contemporary theories of social media that focuses on how social media affects individuals, communities, and cultures. Particular attention will be paid to themes such as identity, privacy, access, participatory culture, and attention economies. Students will be able to evaluate and analyze how social media impacts social, economic, and civic lives. Students will simultaneously learn about careers in social media, including social media strategy, content creation, user experience, analytics, and data science.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Explain the importance of social media to individuals on a social, economic, cultural, and civic level.
- Recognize the difference between composing in social media versus other print and digital contexts.
- Identify social media strategies used to connect with audiences.
- Explain the importance of analytics, search engine optimization, and other metrics with regard to social media.
- Relate how different platforms affect the creation and deployment of social media content.

Required Textbooks and Course Materials

Clampitt, P. (2018). *Social media strategy: Tools for professionals and organizations*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2017). *Everybody lies: Big data, new data, and what the internet can tell us about who we really are*. New York: HarperCollins Publishing.

Course Format

This course is in a blended format, which means that almost **80% of the class will be conducted online through D2L**. You are expected to check D2L regularly for announcements, quizzes, worksheets, and new assigned readings. We will meet only 9 times over the semester – these class sessions will be reserved for discussions of assigned readings/content, activities, guest speakers, and group work. This means that the bulk of this class content is self-directed learning, with little formal “lecturing.” So, to succeed in this class, you should do the readings and watch/listen to video and audio content on your own EVERY WEEK.

Students are expected to:

- 1) Attend class on meeting days
- 2) Complete all reading/viewing assignments during the week they are assigned and prior to attending class on meeting days
- 3) Actively participate in class discussion and activities
- 4) Complete assignments, quizzes, projects, and exams on the assigned day
- 5) Turn in the final, professional version of each assignment on time

Assessment

Weekly Reading Quizzes/Worksheets (30%) Every week, there will be a short quiz or worksheet to complete online (on D2L) or in class (on meeting days) based on the reading/viewing/listening assigned for the week. You have until midnight on Sunday each week to complete the online assignments.

Social Media Strategy (20%) Drawing on the course textbook *Social Media Strategy* you will **in groups of three** create a social media strategy for an imaginary company of your choice. More details for this assignment will be provided in class.

Career Plan (10%) At the end of the semester, you will write a short (1-2 page, double-spaced) essay outlining a career option in social media that you are considering pursuing. Include an explanation/rationale for why you think this career option would be a good fit for you. You must include the various skills, programs, qualifications, and experience that you would need for this job, and create a plan for how you could complete these requirements over the next five years.

Exams (40%) – There will be two (2) exams over the course of the semester – a midterm (20%) and a final (20%). Each exam will cover material from readings, multimedia, and class discussions. The exams will be given online.

Grading Scale:

93-100% = A
90-92.9% = A-
87-89.9% = B+
83-86.9% = B
80-82.9% = B-
77-79.9% = C+
70-76.9% = C
60-69.9% = D
Less than 60% = F

Course Policies

Attendance

Regular attendance in class is important for fulfilling our course objectives. You are expected to attend class on meeting days, arrive on time, and actively participate in class discussions and activities. Note that you cannot make up quizzes or worksheets that are handed out in class if you are absent without a valid excuse.

IMPORTANT: Winter Weather

Many of you commute, as do I. Bearing that in mind, if winter weather occurs on our meeting days and it is bad enough that driving is dangerous, **we will still hold class, but online.** This applies whether the University is officially closed or not. In the event of severe weather, I will decide whether class will be held online or in person at least **TWO HOURS** before class and will make that announcement through D2L. Therefore, it is important that you regularly check D2L for updates, and especially during periods of bad weather.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will NOT be accepted, unless there is an emergency or an unavoidable conflict, in which case you need to let me know in advance to make alternate arrangements.

Class rules

I am easy-going in class and like to have fun. However, I also take our course content seriously. I expect you to work hard, come to class prepared and on time, and actively participate in class discussions and activities. I also expect you to not use your phone or computer when it is not for class purposes.

General Writing Guidelines

All assignments should be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins on all sides. A 12-point font should be used. Papers should include your name and course title in the upper right-hand corner. Please do not include a title page. **ALL PAPERS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ONLINE THROUGH D2L.**

Application and assimilation of discussion and readings should be evident in all assignments. I admire and reward good writing skills. The use of introductions and summaries, good transitions between paragraphs, and logical arguments is encouraged. **Be sure to proofread your work.** Poor grammar and spelling distract from good communication and will be graded down. I am willing to help you with your writing skills during office hours. Additionally, you might request help from the Writing Center on campus.

Writing Center

The University Writing Center is a free service for students, offering advice and assistance with writing assignments from any course or subject. Tutors can assist you in improving your composing process, as well as with difficulties with development, organization, style, documentation, and mechanics. The UWC is located in Rohrbach Library 100C on the main floor. Its hours are Mon-Thurs 11-9, Fri 11-5, and Sunday 2-9. Please call 610-683-4733, email wrcenter@kutztown.edu, or come in to Rohrbach Library 100C to set up an appointment. Walk ins are welcome!

Accommodations

It is the policy of Kutztown University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any disabled student who needs accommodations (e.g., seating placement,

arrangements for examinations, etc.) should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. If you have already disclosed a disability to the Disability Services Office (215 Stratton Administration Building) and are seeking accommodations, please feel free to speak with me privately so that I may assist you. If you have an injury sustained during military service including PTSD or TBI, you are also eligible for accommodations under the ADA and should contact the Disability Services Office. Students with disabilities must also contact the Office of Disabled Student Services located in the Stratton Administration building, Room 215. They can be reached at 683-4108.

Academic Dishonesty

All work should be your own. Assignments should be individual efforts. Plagiarism includes copying or paraphrasing someone else's words as your own or excessively collaborating with someone and presenting the work as yours alone. College regulations regarding academic dishonesty, as set forth in the Kutztown University student handbook and other College documents and publications, will be strictly enforced. A student caught plagiarizing on an assignment will receive an F for that assignment. A student caught cheating on a test will receive an F for the course.

University Policy on Title IX and Mandatory Reporting

In order to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and university policy, Kutztown University's faculty and staff must report incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, including relevant details, such as the names of those involved in the incident, to the Department of Public Safety and Police Services and to Jesus Peña, Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when the previously listed offenses are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing or other creative assignment for class or as part of a university-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person/entity designated in the university's protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and resources available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: <http://www2.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administrative-offices/social-equity/title-ix-information.htm> and <http://www.kutztown.edu/prebuilt/apps/policyregister/policy.aspx?policy=GEN-005>.

Diversity

This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors as gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant cultural identities. This course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating.

Course Schedule

This is a tentative schedule that is subject to change. Announcements will be made in class and via email through D2L. Note that some additional readings/videos/podcasts may be provided during the semester

Week 1

1/22 Introduction to Course
Definitions and Key Concepts of Social Media
READ: Syllabus
READ: Kaplan, The SAGE Encyclopedia of the Internet: Social Media

*Week 2 (NO MEETING, ONLINE CLASS)

1/29 History of Social Media
READ: boyd & Ellison, Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarships (stop at "Overview of This Special Theme" section)
READ: Sehl, 8 of the Biggest Social Media Moments in 2019

Week 3

2/5 Community, Privacy, and Surveillance on Social Media
READ: Chayko, Sharing and Surveillance

*Week 4 (NO MEETING)

2/12 Identity, Self-Presentation, and Social Media
READ: Chayko, Techno-Socialization and the Self
READ: Weil, What Do Teens Learn Online Today? That Identity is a Work in Progress

*Week 5 (NO MEETING)

2/19 Branding, Promotion, and Influencers on Social Media
READ: Martineau, The WIRED Guide to Influencers

Week 6

2/26 Midterm Review (In class)
Politics and Online Activism (Online)
READ: Earl, Slacktivism for Everyone: How Keyboard Activism is Affecting Social Movements
SKIM: Pew Research Center: Activism in the Social Media Age
WATCH: Stay Woke: The *Black Lives Matter* Movement Documentary

Week 7

3/4 **MIDTERM EXAM (online)**
Social Media Strategy Fundamentals (in class)
READ: Clampitt, Ch 2 What is a Social Media Strategy

*Week 8

3/11 **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

Week 9

3/18

Competitive Environment and Coordinates

READ: Clampitt, Ch 5 Understanding the Competitive Environment

READ: Clampitt, Ch 6 Coordinates

Week 10

3/25

Creating Social Media Content

READ: Clampitt, Ch 7 Channels

READ: Clampitt, Ch 8 Content

Week 11

4/1

Connections and Corrections

READ: Clampitt, Ch 9 Connections

READ: Clampitt, Ch 10 Corrections

Week 12

4/8

Social Media Analytics

READ: Clampitt, Ch 13 Measuring Social Media Effectiveness

DUE: Social Media Strategy 4/12 at 11:59pm

***Week 13 (NO MEETING)**

4/15

User Experience Design and Research

READ: Booth, Complete Beginner's Guide to UX Research

READ: Jewell, User Research: What is UX Design? What is UX Research?

***Week 14 (NO MEETING)**

4/22

Research on Social Media: Big Data and Data Science

READ: Stephens-Davidowitz, Ch 4 Digital Truth Serum - The Truth About Your Facebook Friends (p. 150-164)

READ: Stephens-Davidowitz, Ch 3 Data Reimagined

Week 15

4/29

Research on Social Media: Big Data and Data Science continued

READ: Stephens-Davidowitz, Ch 6 All the World's a Lab

READ: Stephens-Davidowitz, Ch 7 Big Data, Big Schmata? What it Cannot Do

DUE: Career Plan 5/3 at 11:59pm

Finals Week

FINAL EXAM ONLINE (Due 5/8 at 5pm)