Each student is expected to fully participate in a group assigned to one of the topics below. The group project includes a presentation (30pts), 3 mini-tasks (30pts). The topics are broad enough in description that each group has quite a bit of latitude in choosing direction. Group tasks are briefly described below. Individual assignments (peer evaluation of other group members and presentations, final paper, bibliography, and outline) are also expected. Detailed description of expectations and grading rubrics are found separately on Carmen.

SCOPE:
Each topic description includes a what (what is the *specific* topic your group is addressing. Define this specifically, set boundaries, and clearly describe it for your audience in both presentations and papers), a why (why is social media important in this topic? Why the specific social media platform you chose? What does the research say about this "why?"), who (who is your key audience? Who is leading the charge on the topic? Who manages/disseminates/controls the topic?) and how (how is social media used in your topic?) Use specifics (and especially your mini-tasks) to demonstrate the how.

PRESENTATION:
Each group is expected to give a presentation at the end of the term no less than 10 minutes and no more than 12 minutes in length. Each group member is expected to contribute to the visual (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi, etc), any written handouts, and actual public presentation of the projects. This grade is a group grade, and whatever the entire group receives is what each individual will receive.

SOURCES:
Each group project is to include no less than four (4) peer-reviewed, academic research journal articles to support your claims. Course materials and readings are not permitted as one of your main, required four sources, but can be used for inspiration (see: works cited!). It is helpful if you search for articles as a group, decide who will find, read, and write about which articles, before working individually. A list of your sources is due in email form to me by 11:50pm Tuesday September 26th. **When you discuss with your group assign one person to be designated to send this to me.**

Each group member must read and write about at least one research article synthesizing the research and describing how it fits into the group project. This annotated bibliography must be sent to all group members and will be graded for an individual grade (see Bibliography Rubric for more information). Please include the article itself so I can upload the literature to the Carmen course for your group members to use when writing their papers. All sources must be used in your presentation and your individual papers. Remember, you are not permitted to cite each other's annotated bibliographies. Please reference your Student Code of Conduct to understand how to best avoid plagiarizing each other. If you have questions, please see me.

MINI-TASKS:
Your group must complete three (3) mini-tasks that are due during different points of the semester (see syllabus). As a group decide which tasks you prefer to complete at what time. Keep in mind some of the tasks require creation of visual components or mock-ups of websites. These mini-tasks are group efforts and each individual will receive a group grade for each assignment. See the Mini-Tasks document for specific information and rubrics.

1. **Political or social action (non-individual or candidate)**

   a. Description: Social media has proven to be both an asset and Achilles' heel for social and political causes. From the Affordable Care Act to the Arab Spring, or from School Levies to Stand Your Ground legislation, Twitter and Facebook can be used to advance or nullify community action. This group will determine what direction to take this topic in, bearing in mind:

      i. WHAT: What specific topic of political or social action will your group focus on? A specific piece of legislation? A specific movement?

      ii. WHY: Why is the use of social media important to social or political action? How is it successful? How has it failed? Research is important in this area.

      iii. WHO: Who is the main audience for social media in this topic area? Are there different audiences for different media? How do you tap into that audience? How do you keep or prevent alienation of this audience?

      iv. HOW: How exactly has social media been used for this topic? Previous research on the efficacy of social media in the topic area is useful here. Use your mini-tasks to demonstrate how it *could* be used were you to put together a true social media campaign on this topic.

   b. Research Topics: social action, community activism and social media, bandwagon effects,

   c. Example: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/10/08/technology/campaign-social-media.html?_r=0

2. **Disease awareness/health-social support**

   a. Description: The Internet has erased physical boundaries that have limited social support in the past. Social media has helped individuals seeking social support while ill connect with understanding individuals and necessary information. Additionally, social media has been effective to disseminate information about disease prevention (e.g., vaccinations, flu shots), information or combating misinformation, and outbreaks (e.g., daily allergy or smog reports).

      i.   WHAT: What specific disease or health-social support topic will your group focus on? You can choose *either* disease awareness or social/actual support (e.g., "Prayers for ____" or finding a donor type social media).

      ii. WHY: Why is the use of social media important to disease awareness? How is it successful? How has it failed? Research is important in this area.

      iii. WHO: Who is the main audience for social media in this topic area? Are there different audiences for different media? How do you tap into that audience? How do you keep or prevent alienation of this audience?

      iv. HOW: How exactly has social media been used for this topic? How is momentum kept? Previous research on the efficacy of social media in the topic area is useful here. Use your mini-tasks to demonstrate how it *could* be used were you to put together a true social media campaign on this topic.

   b. Research Topics: Peruse Journal of Health Communication, Health Communication, or most research that looks at CMC social-support but specifically social media.

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://mashable.com/2012/02/27/doctors-twitter-social-media/, Rabin reading on Carmen.

3. **Celebrity or brand management (non-specific)**

   a. Description: Celebrities and brands have begun to rely on social media to get the word out about products, to establish and maintain relationships with their consumers, and to address customer service or scandal issues. In this topic, you are to choose a broad approach rather than a specific celebrity, character, or brand (e.g., reality television stars, technology companies, international fiction like *Doctor Who*).

      i. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? Actual celebrities', fictional characters', or companies' use of social media? Will you focus on when it goes right, or when it goes wrong?

      ii. WHY: Why is the use of social media important to celebrity or brand management? How is it successful? How has it failed? Research is important in this area.

      iii. WHO: Who is the main audience for social media in this topic area? Are there different audiences for different media? How do you tap into that audience? How do you keep or prevent alienation of this audience?

      iv. HOW: How exactly has social media been used for this topic? How is momentum kept? Previous research on the efficacy of social media in the topic area is useful here. Use your mini-tasks to demonstrate how it *could* be used were you to put together a true social media campaign on this topic.

   b. Research Topics: mass media theories such as identification can be used in this context (how is social media used to identify with a character/celebrity/brand?), followers, peruse advertising and marketing communication journals

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-do-celebrities-manage-their-social-media-accounts-and-what-can-we-learn-from-them/

4. **Social media and employment/networking**

   a. Description: Increasingly, employers are relying on social media presence to paint a more complete picture of candidates during the hiring process. Additionally, younger generations are turning to their virtual networks to help connect in physical networks, leading to job prospects, connections, offers, and management of offers.

      i. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? Will you look at what social media is doing to the hiring process from the employer or the candidate perspective?

      ii. WHY: Why are employers using social media to vet candidates? Why use social media connections in a job hunt?

      iii. WHO: Who is the main audience for social media in this topic area? Who typically uses social media for employment networking? Who (what companies/industries) are the leaders in this tactic?

      iv. HOW: How exactly is social media changing the traditional hiring process?

   b. Research Topics: networks and how they work, social media and human resources, warranting theory

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/04/16/how-social-media-can-help-or-hurt-your-job-search/

5. **Standing-up to cyberbullies**

   a. Description: Cyberbullying is defined as intentional, repeated aggressive communication or threats online designed to create or maintain a power imbalance between the victim and bully. Cyberbullying includes threats, teasing, ostracism, name-calling, rumors, etc. After high-profile suicides like Tyler Clementi and Megan Meier after being mercilessly cyberbullied, the public has taken notice of this phenomenon. This group project needs to focus on the affordances of social media that not only create a safe haven for cyberbullying to take place, but also an environment that helps bystanders and witnesses standup for the victim and against bullying.

      i. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? It is best if you choose a specific social media format (e.g., Facebook OR Twitter OR Instagram OR YouTube). What affordances of the technology leads to cyberbullying and giving bystanders the opportunity to be upstanders? What does research say about the effects of cyberbullying? What about the effects on bystanders?

      ii. WHY: Why do some people become cyberbullies? Why do some cyberbystanders choose to standup and other choose to stand by?

      iii. WHO: Who is the main audience for social media in this topic area? Who typically uses social media for bullying? Who typically stands up? Who can help?

      iv. HOW: How exactly is social media changing the face of traditional bullying? Bystanders? Use your mini-tasks to illustrate clearly how one can stand up to cyberbullies.

   b. Research Topics: Cyber-bullying, predictors of cyber-bullying, bystander intervention online, reporting of cyber-bullying (and efficacy), legislation regarding reporting of cyber-bullying

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://stopbullying.gov

6. **Stereotypes in social media**

   a. Description: Stereotypes, both positive and negative, are found in every corner of the Internet and especially on social media. The reliance on social identities can tend to lead us to overuse stereotypes or assign stereotypes to others. Any perusal of an Internet comment board or provocative Facebook meme will find plenty of stereotypes. This group should focus on how social media perpetuates and combats stereotypes. It may be helpful to focus on one social media platform but remain broad in your stereotypes.

      i. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? What affordances of social media allow for the perpetuation of stereotypes? What are the affordances that help dispel or discredit stereotypes?

      ii. WHY: Why are stereotypes dangerous? Why is it important to combat stereotypes? Why are social media useful tools in this endeavor?

      iii. WHO: Who, or what groups, are most often victims of stereotypes on social media? Who is perpetuating stereotypes? Who is combatting? Who amongst your group may have inadvertently perpetuated a stereotype?

      iv. HOW: How exactly are stereotypes perpetuated? How are stereotypes combatted in social media? How is shaming or ostracism effective in comparison to other strategies? How is silence as a strategy when dealing with stereotypes on social media?

   b. Research Topics: stereotypes, social learning theory, hyperpersonal theory, social information processing theory (SIPT), social ostracism online

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://www.bitrebels.com/social/social-stereotypes-average-infographic/ or as an example: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/18/marc-anthony-god-bless-america_n_3618420.html

7. **Managing personal privacy and identity on social networking sites**

   a. Description: Your personal identity (e.g., name, images, likes, shares, tweets, reposts) is no longer limited to only those in your friends or followers list. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and even YouTube are selling your social media presence to other companies for advertising and marketing purposes. Furthermore, security and privacy settings are constantly changing on social media, and sometimes it's difficult to keep up with it. New affordances of social media, such as hashtags on Facebook, complicate matters. This topic is broad enough where your group can consider many different angles.

      i. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? Will you look at privacy management on social media? Will you focus on the true/false self-presentation on social media? Choose either privacy or identity.

      ii. WHY: Why (or why not) is privacy management important on social media? Why is identity management easy/difficult on social media?

      iii. WHO: Who dictates or manages your identity on social media: you? Affordances of the media? Your friends (look at warranting theory)?

      iv. HOW: How exactly are the constantly changing settings affecting users? How is identity presented through social media? How is social media affecting our sense of self, self-esteem, comparison to others, happiness, life satisfaction?

   b. Research Topics: hacking in social media, privacy laws, Proteus effect, self-presentation or social identity theories specifically in CMC contexts, social comparison theories.

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/14/privacy-in-social-media-age

8. **Non-profit fundraising**

   a. Description: Social media has become an almost necessary tool for non-profit to raise funds as a response to a disaster or for a cause. Large organizations such as the Red Cross have secured millions of dollars through Twitter and Facebook shares or posts, utilizing mobile technology such as SMS and PayPal applications. What are the components of fundraising through social media that spell success? Are we beginning to reach a ceiling effect for non-profit fundraising due to scams or sheer volume? What does this mean for crowd-fundsourcing in the future?

      v. WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? Will you focus on disaster relief (e.g., Sandy relief), individual calls for help (e.g., Kickstarter campaigns), or general fundraising (e.g., Pelotonia)? Choose a specific umbrella not a specific campaign, cause, or organization.

      vi. WHY: Why (or why not) is non-profit fundraising successful on social media? Why is fundraising for these organizations or causes easy/difficult on social media?

      vii. WHO: Who uses social media the most successfully in this way? Who is the audience for these calls for funds? Who answers those calls?

      viii. HOW: How is non-profit fundraising done through social media? How are rules of fundraising changing as a result? Use your mini-tasks to truly illustrate these points.

   b. Research Topics: crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, non-profit, stakeholders, community organizing

   c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: See "How Facebook and Twitter changed disaster relief" document in Content area on Carmen or for examples/industry visit http://socialmedia4nonprofits.org.

9. **Crisis management**

    a. Description: In an age of smartphones and mobile computing devices, the public no longer relies on breaking news during television programming to know what is happening during a crisis. Twitter and Facebook have been key sources of real-time information in times of natural disasters (e.g., Canadian floods), active shooter scenarios, product recalls, terrorist attacks (e.g., Boston Marathon Bombing), and even simple traffic accidents and detours. However, in the rapid pace of breaking news, some information either gets lost in translation due to the media used or is simply wrong. This group should choose one type of crisis and how it could be or has been managed using social media.

        i.   WHAT: What specifically will your group focus on? What specific type of crisis and specific type of social media will your group use for the project? There is a plethora of

        ii. WHY: Why is social media useful and helpful in times of crisis? Be specific according to the type of crisis your group has chosen.

        iii. WHO: Who manages the specific type of crisis on social media? Is it crowdsourced or are more specific/official social media profiles more useful? Who is the main audience? Is this a top down (from the mass media to the masses) or bottom up (from the masses to the mass media) process?

        iv. HOW: How exactly is/was your specific type of crisis managed using social media? How do trending topics or viral posts/links used in social media during these incidents?

    b. Research Topics: crowdsourcing, crisis management, social constructivism

    c. Example/Suggested Starting Point: See "Social Networks Crack Boston Case" or Schultz, Utz, & Gortz (2011) documents in Content area on Carmen