

**COMM4554: Social Media
Autumn 2013**

Instructor: Kelly Dillon, MA
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Time/Location: Tue & Thu 9:35-10:55am (Journalism 0281)
Office Hours: Mondays 12p-2p, Wednesdays 9a-11a, or by appointment (Derby 3055)
Course Twitter: <https://twitter.com/OSUCOMM4554>

Course Description:

We hear the term “social media” everywhere. What are social media, or what does it mean when media are becoming “social?” How are social media different from the traditional mass media and from the “older” forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC)? How will social media affect us and shape our social world? By addressing these questions, this course aims to help students (1) acquire theoretical and practical knowledge about social media, and (2) understand the ways in which social media shape important social/cultural domains. Students will engage in these topics through lectures, academic/journalistic readings, student presentations, film viewing, and in-class discussion.

Learning Objectives:

- Be able to convey the importance of social scientific research findings relating to the growth, prevalence, and effects of social media;
- Develop knowledge of the theories that relate to how humans interact online and learn to develop informed expectations about the effects of social media on identity, interpersonal relationships, and larger societal and community organizing;
- Be able to convince others of how wisely used social media can be an asset to an organization, social group, or individual.

Course Format:

This course will use a variety of instructional techniques including some lecturing, guided class discussions, and in class activities as mechanisms for students to learn the course material. I appreciate lively and respectful discussion using current events and real-world examples to connect course materials. I expect students to come prepared, remain attentive and engaged, and ready to help everyone learn as a group. I promise to do the same.

Textbooks

- *The Dragonfly Effect* by Jennifer Aaker & Andy Smith (DFE). ISBN-13: 978-0470614150
- Additional readings will be available in Carmen

NOTE: This is a required text. You will need to read it and discuss its contents in class to be successful in this class. I will always have a copy in my office available during office hours – the book will not physically leave my office. Quiz, exam, and reading grades will be dependent on your understanding of readings. **If you do not understand or comprehend a reading or concept, meet with me immediately for one-on-one consult.** There are no stupid questions if you are actually putting in effort. I would rather yield questions than assume you understand what you are reading.

Grading Components

Group Project: 100 points

Exams: 100 points

Class Discussion/Attendance: 45 points

Reflection Tasks: 30 points

Quizzes: 25 points

TOTAL POINTS: 400 Points**1. Group Project: 100 points****a. Individual 4-6pg paper = 20 points**

Each individual of the group is expected to turn in a comprehensive paper on their group's topic. These papers must be a MINIMUM of 4 double-spaced pages or a MAXIMUM of 6 double-spaced pages (1" margins, 12pt Times New Roman font). All sources used for the group presentation are to appear and be woven into the individual final paper. You are not beholden to the story your group tells, but it must be comprehensive and connected to your group's presentation. Formatting, expectations, and rubrics will be included in the Content area of Carmen online.

b. Group 12-minute presentation = 30 points

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. For every 30 seconds over 12 minutes, the grade will be deducted 1 point. After 15 minutes, you will be stopped. This grade is a group grade, and whatever the entire group receives is what each individual will receive. Specific instructions and rubrics will be included in the Content area of Carmen online.

c. Individual annotated bibliography = 5 points

Each group project is to include no less than 4 academic sources to support the claims made in your presentation and papers. Each individual in your group is expected to find one peer-reviewed, academic journal article related to social media and your specific topic. You are expected to write a short annotation on your specific research article. This will be shared with your other group members so they can incorporate the source into their papers. Specific instructions and rubrics will be included in the Content area of Carmen online.

d. Individual paper outline = 5 points

You are expected to design a detailed outline of your final paper. This keeps you on track (an anti-procrastination attempt) and keeps me aware of the directions you and your group are going in. Specific instructions and rubrics will be included in the Content area of Carmen online.

e. Group mini-tasks 3 @ 10 points each

Your group will be asked to complete a choice of 3 mini-tasks related to your group project out of 5 choices. These mini-tasks give you an opportunity to demonstrate how social media is used in your topic area. Specific mini-tasks and rubrics will be included in the Content area of Carmen online.

f. Peer evaluation = 10 points

Each of your peers in your group will evaluate you on various aspects of the group project. These evaluations will be made available by week 4. Six points of this evaluation will come from your peers and your own personal evaluation of your performance. The remaining four points will come from your attention to and evaluations of groups on days you do not present.

2. Exams: 100 points**a. Midterm = 40 points****b. Final = 60 points**

- c. Exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in-blank short answer. Study guides will be provided prior to exams. If you attend class regularly, keep up on readings, and engage during class discussions, you should perform well on the exams.
- d. The final exam is **not** cumulative.

3. Class Discussion/Attendance: 45 points**a. Attendance = 15 points****b. Discussion Tweets = 2 @ 5pts each**

- i. You are expected to post one discussion question to the class Twitter account @OSUCOMM4554 at least twice during the term. **YOUR INSTRUCTOR WILL ASSIGN YOU A DATE AND READING.**
- ii. Your tweeted discussion question must be thoughtful, insightful, and relevant to the assigned reading for that day. Discussion tweets should aim to generate some sort of discussion amongst classmates and will be used occasionally in class.
- iii. Tweeted discussion questions are due posted publicly by either Sunday 11:59pm EST for Tuesday classes and Tuesday 11:59pm EST for Thursday classes.
- iv. You must share with your instructor your Twitter handle in order to receive credit for Discussion Tweets.

c. Response Tweets = 10 @ 1pt each

- i. You are expected to post a response tweet to at least ten discussion tweets from your classmates.
- ii. Your response tweet must address the discussion tweet directly and be relevant to the course reading. You cannot simply agree or disagree with the discussion tweet.
- iii. Response tweets are due posted publicly by either Monday 11:59pm EST for Tuesday classes and Wednesday 11:59pm EST for Thursday classes.
- iv. You cannot post a response to more than **TWO** discussion tweets per class period.
- v. You must share with your instructor your Twitter handle in order to receive credit for Discussion Tweets.

d. Class Participation = 10 points

To earn full credit for attendance and participation, students are expected to be present both physically and mentally. That is, students should actively and thoughtfully engage in discussion contributions and listening and should NOT behave in a distractive manner. Participating in non-course related discussions, surfing the internet, social media, use of

mobile devices, and other distractive behavior could result in loss of class participation points.

4. Reflections Tasks: 30 points

- a. You will be asked to choose three (3) communication tasks to complete and write a short reflection essay on. These essays must be a MINIMUM of 2 double-spaced pages or a MAXIMUM of 3 double-spaced pages (1" margins, 12pt Times New Roman font).
- b. Descriptions, formatting, and rubrics of reflection tasks will be included in the "content" section of this course's Carmen page.

5. Quizzes: 25 points (12 @ 2pts each, first day reflection = 1pt)

- a. There will be one quiz or short reflection task per class period we do not have an exam scheduled. Quizzes will help me assess daily the material you are understanding or struggling with, and serve as your attendance check (or incentive to attend class) as well.
- b. Each quiz will comprise of 4 questions, modeled after exam questions. On each quiz will be one question from your next exam *slightly* altered (i.e., answer options swapped around).
- c. Of the given 20 class periods, only your highest 12 quiz grades will count towards your grade.
- d. During group presentations, your quiz/attendance will consist of evaluating your peers. Your attendance is expected and required during other group presentations.

Course Policy

1. Academic integrity

Students in this course are expected to accept responsibility for being held to the highest of academic standards as set forth by *The Ohio State University Office of Academic Affairs*. As such, academic dishonesty (also known as cheating) of any kind is unacceptable. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, (1) plagiarism (using others' work without citing/crediting them), (2) fabricating information or citations, (3) facilitating acts of dishonesty by others, (4) having unauthorized possession of examinations, (5) submitting work previously submitted to another course or work of another person, and (6) tampering with the academic work of other students. **It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty.** When in doubt, be sure to consult the instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.

2. Classroom misconduct

Classroom misconduct includes (1) forgery of class attendance, (2) obstruction or disruption of teaching, (3) physical abuse or safety threats, (4) theft, (5) property damage, (6) disruptive, rude, or obscene conduct, (7) repeated failure to attend, participate, and respond in class when required. Such misconducts WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE.

3. Readings

All readings should be done prior to the assigned class period. Be sure to bring the required reading(s) to class on the assigned date, as we will be referring to relevant readings frequently in class.

4. Writing Policies

All writing submissions are due the time listed in the syllabus or assignment documents. Dropboxes on Carmen will close one minute after all deadlines. If you do not receive a confirmation email from Carmen, it was not submitted properly. **Carmen “losing” your documents will not be a valid excuse.**

All writing assignments must be submitted in Word document formats. PDFs and text files (TXT) are not acceptable. All campus computers have Office available. Late submissions are permitted up to 3 calendar days after the due date, emailed to the instructor. After 3 days, you receive a zero. Rules for late submissions are as follows:

- a. Previous permission must be granted for a late submission. I will not remind you of deadlines after they have passed.
- b. Submissions must adhere to all guidelines as those submitted within deadlines (e.g., format, length, font, spacing, margins, etc).
- c. Each day a submission is late, you will be eligible for 20% fewer points. For example, if you submit a reading response 12hrs after it was due, you are only eligible for 24 points instead of the 30. If you submit a reading response 36hrs after it was due, you are only eligible for 18 points instead of 30.

You are permitted one (1) rewrite of a writing assignment during the term. The revised writing assignment will be graded in full according to the assignment’s rubric. You will be awarded an average of the two scores together.

You are welcome and encouraged to provide rough or early drafts. I am more than happy to review a rough draft or grade an assignment before its deadline to give you an idea of your progress or where you are in the essay. This preliminary grade on the draft will not affect your actual grade. **Rough or early drafts must be emailed no less than 48hrs before the assignment is due.**

You are permitted to submit any writing assignment early. If you wish to submit later drafts, simply indicate the draft you wish to have graded. **If you do not indicate otherwise, the most recent draft in the Carmen dropbox will be graded.**

5. Prevention of distraction

- a. Please turn off your mobile communication devices during class. Mobile devices are not to be on vibrate, but actually OFF. Should you need to keep your mobile device on vibrate due to personal/family obligations (e.g., sick child, on-call) please see me before class. First offense dictates a warning, second offense you will be asked to leave the classroom. More than two offenses could result in deduction in participation points.
- b. Laptop/tablet (e.g., iPad) use is NOT allowed unless approved for note-taking purposes. Please discuss with me if you need to use these devices. You are to turn off your wi-fi access during class. First offense dictates a warning, second offense you will be asked to leave the classroom. More than two offenses could result in deduction in participation points. **If throughout the term I see abuse of laptops/tablets I will prohibit their use by everyone.**

- c. Reading non-course-related materials (e.g., newspapers, magazines, surfing the web) is prohibited at all times. Ironically enough, this includes social media.

6. Attendance

While sickness and unexpected emergencies will arise from time to time, you should expect that if you are regularly absent your grade will be negatively affected. Because things out of your control may occur from time to time, I will allow you to miss only **three** class periods without an excuse. Other absences must be accompanied by a legitimate doctor's note, obituary, official University explanation (for University events), or advanced planning on your part within **72 hours of your absence via email, in-person, or paper**. In general, if you have an excuse, please provide documentation to me. I reserve the right as the instructor to determine the legitimacy of absences if they are a regular occurrence.

It is important that you are FULLY present (both physically and mentally!). Anyone who engages in distracting behaviors (e.g., using mobile devices for non-class-related activities) during class will be marked as absent.

7. Instructor Communication

The online Carmen course and email will be the primary means of communication outside of the classroom for course adjustments, announcements, and reminders. Please be certain the email address associated with your Carmen username is able to receive emails (if forwarded to a gmail or yahoo account). **There is no guarantee I will answer your email in less than 24hrs time, so please do not expect me to be on-call 24/7.** Please be mindful of this caveat when making requests, asking for clarification, or submitting coursework. I will do my best to be available for consultations, but understand I have responsibilities outside of this classroom as much as you do. **As instructor on record for this class, I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus.**

8. Additional Resources

I encourage you to explore the following support resources:

- Walter E. Dennis Learning Center (<http://all.successcenter.ohio-state.edu/>). This is a free service available to all OSU students with a proven track record for helping students succeed in college.
- The Writing Center (<http://cstw.osu.edu/writingcenter>). This may be the last time in your life that you have easily accessible, free help available for your writing skills. I strongly encourage you not to miss out on this excellent resource! Being a good writer will give you an advantage in every walk of life, and if you are a Communication major, it is expected.

9. Accommodations for students with disabilities

I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances. You can also contact the office for disability services at 292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to help coordinate reasonable accommodations (telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>).

Course Schedule				
Wk	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Wk 1	Th 08/22	Course Introduction		
Wk 2	T 08/27	What are social media?	DFE: Intro boyd & Ellison	Discussion Tweet Dates Assigned
	Th 08/29	Types & Affordances	Sundar	Groups Assigned
Wk 3	T 09/03	History	boyd & Ellison	
	Th 09/05	Social Capital	Williams	
Wk 4	T 09/10	Social Capital	Valenzuela	Reflection Task #1 Due
	Th 09/12	Group Meetings in class (w/group, Kelly)	Come prepared to brainstorm, find sources, organize workload. You are expected to attend class these two days to get a good chunk of organization done.	
Wk 5	T 09/17	Group Meetings in class (w/group, Kelly)		
	Th 09/19	Theory	DFE: Dragonfly Body	
Wk 6	T 09/24	Design	DFE: Wing 1	Sources due (email)
	Th 09/26	Design	DFE: Wing 2	
Wk 7	T 10/01	Evaluation	DFE: Wing 3	Annotated Bibliography Due
	Th 10/03	Evaluation	DFE: Wing 4	
Wk 8	T 10/08	Midterm Exam Review		
	Th 10/10	Midterm Exam	Readings, lectures 8/27-10/8	
Wk 9	T 10/15	Relationships	Bryant et al	Mini-Task #1 Due
	Th 10/17	Relationships	Utz & Beukeboom	

Wk 10	T 10/22	Identity	Zhao et al	Paper Outline Due
	Th 10/24	Self-Presentation		
Wk 11	T 10/29	Self-Disclosure	Walton & Rice	Mini-Task #2 Due
	Th 10/31	Personality and SNS use	Hughes et al	Reflection Task #2 Due
Wk 12	T 11/05	Behaving Badly: Disinhibition	Suler	
	Th 11/07	Social Change	Duffy et al	Mini-Task #3 Due
Wk 13	T 11/12	Social Support	Nabi et al	
	Th 11/14	Grieving	Getty et al Brubaker	Reflection Task #3 Due
Wk 14	T 11/19	Group Presentations		
	Th 11/21	Group Presentations		
Wk 15	T 11/25	Group Presentations		Final Papers Due 11:59pm
	Th 11/27	No Class - Thanksgiving		
Wk 16 & Final	T 12/03	Exam Review		Peer Evals Due
	F 12/05	Final Exam Friday, Dec 6 (10:00am-11:45am)		Readings, lectures 10/15-11/14