Special Topic in Social Media and Mass Communication
JOUR 4801-01
Spring 2011
Tuesday & Thursday 11:20a.m. to 12:45p.m.
Meeman 106
Instructor: Dr. Carrie Brown-Smith
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COURSE-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will introduce you to the basics of using social media in strategic ways as reporter and/or as a public relations or advertising professional. It will help you develop an understanding of the many changes rocking the media landscape and build the skills you will need in today's media careers.

Social media is altering how journalists and public relations professionals do their jobs and how we communicate in a Web 2.0 world. We will be actively using blogs, RSS feeds, Twitter, widgets, social bookmarking, mapping, and other Web 2.0 tools to produce and curate content and interact with other professionals in our field.

It's important to note that particular sites like Twitter or Foursquare may come and go in this fast-changing environment in which it seems every month brings with it a new must-have app, toy, or social network. Ultimately, this course hopes to foster the meta-skill of applying the core values of journalistic practice to new media forms in productive, creative, and intelligent ways. Flexibility and the ability to experiment and think critically will perhaps be among the most vital abilities of the new era.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
- Understand how social media is changing the media landscape and what that means for the present and future of news, advertising and public relations
- Learn how to use a variety of social media tools from Posterous to Foursquare and beyond effectively as a media professional.
- Understand how to analyze and evaluate your social media performance so that you can continue to improve it.
- Build upon previous coursework to hone your writing, reporting/researching, and multimedia production skills.

TEXTBOOKS:
- Shirky, Clay. Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations (2008).
- Briggs, Mark. Journalism Next. (2009) CQ Press.
- A variety of additional articles will be assigned and will be available online, distributed to you via email or available using the UM drive. The UM drive is accessible from MyMemphis under the eCampus Resources tab (on the top left).

While not required, I strongly encourage all students to have a laptop computer and/or a smart phone (iPhone, Pre, Blackberry, etc.) and broadband home Internet access. I realize this is an expensive proposition and I'm extremely respectful of student finances. However, I fundamentally believe that to be a good journalist or PR practitioner in the 21st century and to prepare for your future more generally, you should be a true Web native – reading, playing, connecting, and creating (yes, Facebook counts as "work" in this equation) online all the time. It's how you develop a strong news sense and hone your skills as a producer of content. It's worth the investment in your future.

1. Be sure you have **read the material** BEFORE class and come prepared to discuss it.
2. **Assignments:** You will receive a wide variety of assignments throughout the semester that will allow you to practice using social media and to reflect on that experience. There will be a lot of assignments. If you have no interest in actually USING social media and would prefer to just hear a professor drone on in a lecture and then take a multiple choice test, I would highly suggest that you drop this course.
3. **Class blog:** You will be contributing regularly to a class blog in which you will reflect on the readings and your experiences using social media and what you have learned and interact with other students in the class. You should keep track of your contributions to the class blog to turn in at the end of the semester. How many posts did you make? How many comments did your posts from the class generate? How many comments did you make? Keep a log using an Excel spreadsheet or a Word document. Each student in class will be taking turns writing brief posts highlighting the most important/interesting elements of each one of our readings; you will also be posting other articles related to the topic of the week you find on the Web. Other students will then comment on these articles. The use of photos and/or video in blog posts is highly encouraged as is posing questions for the class to discuss.
4. **Final project** There will be no final exam in this class, but you will have a final project that will allow you to showcase all of the new skills you have learned.
5. How to turn in assignments: Please turn in assignments as a Microsoft Word document via email. **You MUST use relevant email subject lines**; I get a lot of email and that helps me to keep track of things. If your email does not have a relevant subject line, it may not be graded. No dead trees allowed.
6. **CHECK YOUR EMAIL AT LEAST ONCE A DAY. I use it frequently to communicate with the class.**
7. **LATE WORK POLICY.** I'm a generally laid-back person, but this is a deadline business, whether we like it or not. No foolin around. Deadlines are 11:59 pm on the day the assignment is due unless otherwise specified. Work received up to 24 hours past deadline will receive a one letter grade deduction. Work received more than 24 hours late will NOT BE ACCEPTED unless you have made specific prior arrangements with me.
8. **ATTENDANCE POLICY:** I take attendance very seriously. Everybody gets one (1) free pass, no questions asked, because life happens. After that you MUST notify me BEFORE 11:20 a.m. if you will not be in class. You can call me, text me, email me, IM me, or Tweet me. It's not hard to do. You should only be missing class if you have a genuine personal emergency. **Each unexcused absence will result in TWO PERCENTAGE POINTS being deducted from your final grade in the class.**

GRADING:
Class Blog Contributions: 30 percent
Assignments: 40 percent
Final Project: 30 percent
**See attendance policy, above

TIMETABLE

Week 1: Introduction to the Course
- Explanation of course objectives, expectations, syllabus
- Preparing for a changing profession: Why understanding social media and Web 2.0 matters
- Watch Social Media Revolution video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIFYPQjYhv8 and Googlezon video: http://idorosen.com/mirrors/robinsloan.com/epic/
- Quick intro to the class blog and how to post to it.
  Assignment:
  Your first post on the class blog:
  1.   A brief personal bio and photo of yourself. Tell us a little bit about yourself - your year in school, your hobbies, etc.
  2.   What forms of social media do you currently use the most often, and how do you use them? For example, do you use Facebook, and if so, for what purposes?
  3.   What do you hope to get out of this class?
  Here are a few examples of common social media tools you might use: Twitter, Flickr, Digg, Friendfeed, LinkedIn, Wordpress, YouTube, Posterous, Tumblr, MySpace, Foursquare, etc.

Week 2: Disruptive Forces Affecting Journalism, Advertising, and Public Relations
- Everyone is a media outlet
- Publish, then filter
- Two-way communication with audiences/customers
- Changes to business models and best practices
  Read: Shirky Chapters 1-3 and "Newspapers and Thinking the Unthinkable"
  http://www.shirky.com/weblog/2009/03/newspapers-and-thinking-the-unthinkable/
  Johnson "Old Growth Media and the Future of News"
  http://www.stevenberlinjohnson.com/2009/03/the-following-is-a-speech-i-gave-yesterday-at-the-south-by-southwest-interactive-festival-in-austiniif-you-happened-to-being.html
  Selected chapter from "Crush It" by Gary Vaynerchuk
  Assignment:
  1. Class blog assignment.
  2. Choosing your "beat." It is VERY IMPORTANT to choose wisely, so put some serious thought into this. [Note: I'm calling this a beat, which is a journalism term, but it should be quite obvious that your beat could be a client or industry that a PR or ad professional might be working with or for.] Choose a subject you are interested in and passionate about, personally or professionally. This could be anything from bowling to city/county consolidation to local bakeries to the Memphis hip hop scene to the aviation industry to a particular company, industry or cause you are interested in promoting and/or understanding. Consider your post-graduation goals, but be sure you genuinely care about the subject. It will be critical for you to narrow your topic as much as possible. Explain what you chose and why in a second post on your reflection blog, as well as who you might think would be interested in reading it (hint: if you can't answer the last question with any specificity, your topic is probably too broad).

Week 3: Blogging
- Basics of blogging using Wordpress
- Why journalists and public relations practitioners blog

- RSS feeds
- Discussion of your blog topics, feedback from the class
- What makes blogging social?
- Blogging vs. Journalism (please make it stop)
  Read:
  Briggs Chapters 1 & 2
  "Why beatblog?" by Patrick Thorton, Beatblogging.org
  http://beatblogging.org/2009/04/25/bcni-philly-why-beatblog-and-why-news-should-be-social/
  Technorati State of the Blogosphere 2009 http://technorati.com/blogging/article/day-1-who-are-the-bloggers1/
  Rosen, Jay. Bloggers vs. Journalists is Over
  http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/2005/01/21/berk_essy.html
  Assignment:
  - Class blog assignment
  - Set up blog on Wordpress, including "About Me" and "About This Blog"
  - Develop a list of other blogs or Web sites that meaningfully cover the same or similar topic to you. Summarize some of the key features of each blog or site using bullet points, and describe what you like/don't like about them. You are essentially analyzing the competition/collaboration partners. Can you identify an unfilled niche for your blog, or something you can do differently or better?
  - Set up blogroll, using above list
  - Set up Google Reader and select at least 10 RSS feeds to monitor related to your beat (can also use your list)
  - Set up Google Alerts

Week 4: Microblogging (Twitter)
- Using Twitter for reporting/finding information/monitoring a topic or issue
- Using Twitter for promotion
- Twitter and conversation – Getting to know people
  Read: Briggs Chapter 4
  "How to Verify a Tweet" by Craig Kanalley in Twitter Journalism:
  http://www.twitterjournalism.com/2009/06/25/how-to-verify-a-tweet/
  Selected chapter from Chris Brogan's Social Media 101

  The following two links are resources you should skim over and bookmark for reference:
  "Basic Twitter Links for Journalists" by Patrick LaForge:
  http://palafo.com/2009/06/20/basic-twitter-links-for-journalists/
  Twitter Guide Book" by Mashable
  http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/
  Assignment:
- Set up Twitter account (if haven't already)
- Live Tweeting an event (related to your beat) See handout. Don't forget the hashtag!
- Over the course of the next week, identify at least 10 individuals who often tweet about your beat blog topic, and create a list for them. Offer at least one thoughtful and meaningful response to at least one of them.
- Use widget to show your Twitter feed on your blog
- Class blog assignment

Week 5: Crowdsourcing, Collaboration, and Networking

- Using social media can help you develop sources of information, get feedback, find answers to questions, and nurture contacts (and even…make friends)
- Feedback via social media can help you understand what your audience/customers want and how to serve them
  Reading: Shirky Chapters 5 and 6
  Briggs Chapter 3
  10 Rules for Increasing Community Engagement
  http://mashable.com/2009/12/16/community-engagement/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:%20Mashable%20(Mashable)&utm_content=Google%20Reader by Leah Betancourt (Mashable)
  Assignment:
  - Class blog assignment
  - Crowdsourcing assignment (see handout for details). You will be using crowdsourcing to develop your next Wordpress blog post on your beat.

Week 6: Telling and Sharing Your Story With Photos
- Some introductory basics
- When to use photographs
- Flickr, Picasa, Facebook, and other photo sharing tools
  Read: Briggs Chapter 4
  Resource: 10 Great Photoshop Tutorials on YouTube
  http://mashable.com/2010/04/11/youtube-photoshop-tutorials/
  Assignment:
  - You will need to produce 5-10 GOOD photographs on a subject/at an event related to your beat. (You will want to take many more and select from those). Upload photos to Flickr and Picasa using appropriate hashtag. Share them using Twitter. Leave comment on at least one other students' photo.
  - Personal reflection blog post on your experiences taking and uploading the photographs. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of the sites you've used? How can you continue to use photos to enhance your beat blog?

Week 7: Telling and Sharing Your Story With Video
- Some introduction to how to do video
- When to use video
- Examination of YouTube, Vimeo, Blip.tv, Ustream, Livestream and other social video sharing services
  Read: Briggs Chapter 8
  Assignment:
  - Video related to your beat using department Flip cameras, uploaded to YouTube and shared via social media
  - Class blog assignment
  - Leave a comment on a video related to your beat.
  - Leave a comment on another students' video

Week 8: Location, Location, Location
- Intro to Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, Yelp, etc. and their journalistic and persuasive communications applications
- Mobile: The future?
- Look at visualizations and consider possible secondary uses for data, like weeplaces
  Read: Briggs Chapter 5

21 Unique Location Examples from Foursquare, Gowalla, Whrrl, and MyTown by Jason Keith http://socialfresh.com/foursquare-case-studies/
7 Ways Journalists Can Use Foursquare http://mashable.com/2010/05/14/journalists-foursquare/ by Shane Snow
Mobile Internet Access is Now Mainstream
http://www.knightdigitalmediacenter.org/news_blog/comments/20100707_mobile_internet_access_is_now_mainstream_pew_research_shows/
Resource to bookmark: http://www.journaliststoolbox.org/archive/mobile-journalism/
Mobile Journalism from SPJ Journalism Toolbox
Assignment:
- Class blog assignment
- How could location-aware applications enhance YOUR beat blog?
- Leave at least one tip
- Write a review for Yelp

Week 9: Data and Mapping
- Learning to create a map using Google Maps
- How and why journalists and public relations practitioners might use data and maps
- How mapping and data can be social: Searchable databases, Document Cloud, services like Map My Run, etc.
  Reading: Briggs Chapter 9
  "The "Lack of Vision" thing? Well, here's a hopeful vision for you" Dan Conover, Xark http://xark.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/05/the-lack-of-vision-thing-well-heres-a-vision-for-you.html
  "Government Online" Pew Internet http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Government-Online.aspx
  5 Ways to find, mix and mash your data http://www.10000words.net/2009/11/5-ways-to-find-mix-and-mash-your-data/
  Assignment:
  - Class blog assignment
  - Mapping assignment (see handout)
  - Find a source of data relevant to your beat. Describe why it is relevant and how you might utilize it.

Week 10: Two Way Street: Journalism as Conversation
- Theory of conversation
- Cultivating community
- Blog Comments
Reading: Briggs Chapter 10
Selections from Journalism as Conversation by Doreen Marchionni:
http://blog.sasquatchmedia.com/
Continuing the Participatory Revolution by Steve Yelvington
http://www.yelvington.com/content/continuing-participatory-revolution
Why Comments Suck (And Some Ideas on Unsucking Them), Xark
http://xark.typepad.com/my_weblog/2009/05/why-comments-suck-ideas-on-unsucking-them.html
If you can't manage comments well, don't offer them
http://www.ojr.org/ojr/people/robert/201003/1836/
Selected reading on use of Twitter by Comcast and MLGW to engage with customers.
Assignment:
- Class blog assignment

- Leaving comments in at least three different social media forms related to your beat

Week 11: Social Media Demographics And Uses and Gratifications
- Who is using social media? Are there any differences in how different groups use social media?
- Bridging and bonding social capital
- How or why are people using social media, and how should that shape your strategy in using it effectively?
  Reading:
  - How social media can help journalists reach ethnographically diverse groups: http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=58&aid=186491 by Angie Chuang, Poynter
  - Viewing American Class Divisions Through Facebook and MySpace http://www.danah.org/papers/essays/ClassDivisions.html and MySpace and Facebook: How Racist Language Frames Social Media (and Why You Should Care) http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2010/07/21/myspace-and-facebook-how-racist-language-frames-social-media-and-why-you-should-care.html by danah boyd
  - How Black People Use Twitter by Farhad Manjoo, Slate: http://www.slate.com/id/2263462 and response by Jessica Faye Carter http://jessicafayecarter.com/a-response-to-farhad-manjoods-how-black-people-use-twitter/
  Assignment:
  - Class blog assignment
  - Research and describe the demographics of the target audience of your blog.
  - Start working on project for your beat blog on WordPress (see handout for details)

Week 12: Building Audience
- Learn the basics of SEO, understanding your metrics
  Read: Briggs Chapter 11
  Selected chapter from Social Media 101 by Chris Brogan and Engage by Brian Solis
  The missing Google Analytics manual by Bryan Eisenberg
  http://www.grokdotcom.com/2009/02/16/the-missing-google-analytics-manual/
  What Web Analytics Can - And Can't - Tell You about Your Site's Traffic and Audience
  http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=31&aid=188162 by Dorian Benk
  Wall Street Journal
  http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703940904575395073512989404.html?mod=WSJ_hps_LEFTTopStories#project=COOKIESLIDE1007&articleTabs=article vs.
  Jeff Jarvis: http://www.buzzmachine.com/2010/07/31/cookie-madness/
  Assignment:
  - Class blog assignment
  - SEO practice exercise
  - Begin charting your blog analytics (final summary will be due at end of semester)

Week 13: Web Curation and Linking
- What is curation, and why does it matter?
- How has gatekeeping and agenda setting changed in the 21st century?
- Why is linking so important on the Web?
  Reading: Curation, and Journalists As Curators by Mindy McAdams
  http://mindymcadams.com/tojou/2008/curation-and-journalists-as-curators/
  Watch Rosen, Jay "The Ethic of the Link"
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIMB9Kx18hw

Content is No Longer King. Curation Is King by Scott Rosenberg
http://www.businessinsider.com/content-is-no-longer-king-curation-is-king-2010-6
The Link Economy vs. the Content Economy by Jeff Jarvis
http://www.buzzmachine.com/2008/06/18/the-link-economy-v-the-content-economy/
Related video: http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/video/2008/jun/24/jarvis.future2
What is link journalism? Publish2 http://blog.publish2.com/what-is-link-journalism/
Why Does the BBC Want to Send It's Readers Away? The Value of Linking
http://www.niemanlab.org/2010/05/why-does-the-bbc-want-to-send-its-readers-away-the-value-of-linking/
The case against linking http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/links_in_text.php
Assignment:
- Class blog assignment
- Linking/curation exercise related to your beat
- Work on blog project

Week 14: Privacy: The Big Bugaboo
- The privacy debate: Just how concerned should we be? How do we evaluate the relative advantages of privacy vs. openness?
- How are social media shaping our society in terms of what we share and what we keep private?
- How should journalists and public relations practitioners respond to/anticipate/handle public concerns about privacy?
- Are social norms surrounding privacy changing, and if so, how?
- Who is responsible for protecting privacy?
  Facebook's Move Ain't About Changes in Privacy Norms, by danah boyd:
  http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2010/01/16/facebooks_move.html
  Oversharing on Oversharing by Jeff Jarvis
  http://www.buzzmachine.com/2010/06/21/oversharing-on-oversharing/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed:+buzzmachine+(BuzzMachine)
  The Web Means the End of Forgetting, Jeffrey Rosen, NYT magazine
  http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/25/magazine/25privacy-t2.html
  Facebook's Gone Rouge, by Ryan Singel
  http://www.wired.com/epicenter/2010/05/facebook-rogue
  Assignment:
  Class blog assignment
  Prepare for class debate

Week 15: Bringing It Home – Review and Small Group Presentations
- Review of main themes of the course
- Each group will present an article on an issue related to social media or a form of social media that we did not have time to discuss in class
  Reading: Finish Shirky Book
  10 Questions for Journalists by Matt Thompson
  http://www.rjionline.org/projects/thompson/stories/journalism-overload/index.php
  Assignment: Concluding Reaction Post - everybody
  Finish beat blog project

Please note: Syllabus is subject to change.

DEPARTMENT-WIDE POLICIES

EMAIL:
You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the http://iam.memphis.edu website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

CELLPHONES:
You must turn them off during class.

ATTENDANCE:
Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence due to illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:
In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.
"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:
You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DISABILITY:
Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at (901) 678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

EXIT EXAM FOR ALL JOURNALISM MAJORS:
All Journalism majors are required to take the Journalism Exit Exam their last semester before graduation. Please contact the Journalism office staff anytime during the semester to sign up. You may take the test anytime there are open lab hours during the semester. You will not be certified to graduate until you have completed the test.