COM634 Social Media
Spring 2012

Course Information
Meetings: Wednesday, 3-5:30pm, Business Admin E204
Instructor: Wayne Buente
Office hours: Thursdays, 3-5pm or by appointment
Contact: wbuente@hawaii.edu
(808) 956-3360 (phone)

Course description
This course surveys recent research on social media with particular attention to the idea of the networked self. Interactive technologies have "generated new forms of communication, in social networking sites and other systems, which bridge the structural and functional characteristics of mass/interpersonal/peer communication" (Walther et al., 2011, p. 18). As a result, there is an emerging pattern of networked sociality that "combine old and newer social habits, reform and remediate several social routines of the past, and reflect social tendencies and tensions that take shape on networked planes of social activity" (Papacharissi, 2011, p. 316).

Social media affords the opportunity to construct, validate, and remix one's identity online by providing a stage for self-presentation and social connection. As a result, social media allows one to take on a number of roles such as citizens in networked publics and students as social connectors.

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Understand the idea of the networked self and networked sociality.
- Familiarize yourself with a wide range of issues raised by contemporary online social networks.
- Engage in research that explores the major issues in social media.

Readings
Readings will be provided through Laulima. We will read a few chapters from the following titles.

Course assignments
Readings will typically be assigned for each class period and the latest information about reading will be listed in Laulima. Please come prepared. Class discussions are important especially for small class sizes. Your grade will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead discussant</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-class participation
Class participation is expected. Class participation takes form in asking and answering questions, summarizing and adding insights related to readings, debating issues, and other forms of "active" involvement in class. Attendance, though expected, does not constitute participation.

Lead discussant
The professor will lead the class discussion the first few sessions. Starting on the third session, students will take on this responsibility for the remaining classes during the semester. Students, thus, will take turns being the lead discussant for the remaining weeks of the semester. We will set a beginning schedule on the first day of class. If students miss one of their "lead discussant" days, they will receive a "0" for that portion of the assignment.

On days that you are the lead discussant, you should do the following:
1. Create a single-sided one-page overview of each reading (double-sided two-page overview for each book). Bring enough copies to class for each student and the professor.
2. Plan what you will do in the class. You should begin with at least 10-12 minutes of "lecture" type
material—where you lay out the basic theory/topic and direction of the article. You should make sure that students understand clearly the concepts and their relationships present in the study. What are the conceptual and operational definitions? What is “new” about the study? You should also have a plan for a discussion to follow, with questions to ask and other means of spurring class discussion.

3. This is your class. Come prepared to be the teacher.

**Emails related to class readings**

Students need to send an email related to each set of assigned readings to the professor and the lead discussant. The email should include two things. First, it should answer the question, “What’s new?” In other words, you should consider the reading and explain what advancement the study offers. Second, you should pose two questions that can be potentially used to generate class discussion, as well as related thoughts. These emails must be sent by 6pm on Tuesday.

**Book analysis**

Suggest a book that analyzes a particular aspect of social media that is relevant to your interests. If you need assistance, I have a list of books to guide your search. You will present your book analysis in class along with a double-sided two page overview of the book. Your book analysis should present its main arguments along with demonstrating how the book ties into the course.

**Research papers**

The research assignment is designed to give students the opportunity to create a research paper appropriate for journal submission. The paper can focus on any aspect of social media broadly defined. The paper, which will be constructed as a journal article, will attempt to add to the literature in the field. The paper should be about 20 pages long, 12 size font, double-spaced, using APA style.

Completed papers will be presented in class at the end of the semester. Students should treat the presentations as though they are conference presentations.

**Evaluation**


**Grading Criteria**

These grading standards establish four major criteria for evaluation at each grade level: rhetorical situation, reasoning and content, organization and expression. Since papers may have some characteristics of “B” and others of “C,” the final grade depends on the weight the instructor gives to each criterion. A paper grossly inadequate in one area may still receive a very low grade even if it successfully meets the other criteria. A brief summary of the grading criteria is provided below. Please consult the grading criteria in Appendix C for a more detailed explanation.

The "A" Paper: An "A" paper is clear and consistent and the content is appropriate for the assignment. It also demonstrates clear organization and expression.

The "B" Paper: The "B" paper shows an awareness of the audience and purpose. Its content is reasonably well developed with adequate evidence. The organization is clear and expression is competent.

The "C" Paper: The "C" paper has a clear purpose but lacks originality in topic selection. The content is adequately developed and supported with valid reasoning. Organization is clear with mechanical but appropriate transitions. The paper also demonstrates mastery of most conventions of edited English.

The "D" Paper: The "D" paper has an unclear purpose and an inappropriate topic for its intended audience. The content is inadequately developed and evidence is insufficient. The paper also shows flawed reasoning. Organization is deficient and the paper exhibits poor grammar.

The "F" Paper: The "F" paper has no clear purpose or remotely appropriate for its intended audience. The content is not developed nor adequately supported. The paper has no organization and serious errors with English comprehension.

**Attendance**

I expect you to be at all class sessions. Excessive absences that are not excused will lower your final grade.

**Course schedule**

**Week 1**
January 11, 2012
COM634: Social Media

Class introduction and review syllabus

**Week 2** Convergence  
January 18, 2012

Introduction and Chapter 1, *A Networked Self*  
Jenkins chapter (pp. 109-125), *YouTube*

*Titanpad for lead discussant*  
*Titanpad for book selections*

**Week 3** Social Network Sites  
January 25, 2012


Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 *A Networked Self*

**Week 4** Online Communities  
February 1, 2012 (Joanne)


**Week 5** Communication and Marketing in Social Media  
February 8, 2012 (Brian)


**Week 6** Political Engagement and Social Media  
February 15, 2012 (Uayporn)

Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 in *A Networked Self*


**Week 7** Guest speaker: Cliff Lampe  
February 22, 2012

Chapter 6 in *A Networked Self*

**Week 8** Twitter, Community, and Audience  
February 29, 2012


**Week 9** Social Media Strategy, Guest speakers: Cassie Harris and Colin Burns
March 7, 2012


**Week 10** Social Media and Collective Action
March 14, 2012 (Kathie)


**Week 11** Social Media and Sport Culture
March 21, 2012 (Nick)


**Spring Break Week**
March 28, 2012

Spring Break

**Week 12** Phatic Culture and Narcissism
April 4, 2012

Chapter 12 in *A Networked Self*


**Week 13** Guest speaker: Bryan Seeman - Social Media and the Citizen Response to Crisis
April 11, 2012

Readings in *Laulima*

**Week 14** Social Media, Prosumer, and Exploitation
April 18, 2012
Chapter 4 in A Networked Self

**Week 15** Nonprofit Use of Twitter
April 25, 2012 (Suria)


Book presentations.

**Week 16**
May 2, 2012

Final paper presentations