

# Social Media and Society

JRSM 4910-001, 350, 501

Fall 2020

Class meeting: MW 9:10 a.m.-10:35 p.m.

**Melissa L. Janoske McLean, Ph.D.**

**Office:** 306 Meeman Journalism Building

**Office Hours:** MW 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., TR 1-3 p.m., and by appointment

**Office Phone:** (901) 678-2853 (do not call unless you know I will be there)

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Catalog description

Discussion of social media's impact on individuals, organizations, and society. Examines the fundamentals of social media-based community, diversity, and influence. Includes broad understanding of a variety of platforms and trends and their place and importance in the social media ecosystem.

Social media has altered how journalists and strategic communication professionals do their jobs and how we communicate as a society. We will be analyzing multiple apps, platforms, and trends to determine social media's impact on society, including digital inequality and social justice, online communities, photo and video manipulation, influencers, virality, and wearable technology. It's important to note that particular platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat will come and go in this fast-changing environment, but the need for high quality social content and understanding is constant. Thus, this course will help you apply these platforms and trends to the overarching understanding of social media and its place in society.

### Prerequisites

None.

### Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Humphreys, A. (2016). *Social media: Enduring principles*. New York: Oxford.

*The Associated Press stylebook 2018 (or 2017)*. New York: Basic Books.

Other readings will be assigned in class and will be posted to eCourseware.

### Classroom format

This course is delivered online in a synchronous format, which means that we will meet on Zoom twice a week during the assigned class times for lecture and discussion

(<https://memphis.zoom.us/j/94391730234>). Some assignments will be completed in class; others will need to be completed during the student's own time. The professor is available to answer any questions via email, and will post to eCourseware every Monday with plans for that week, discussion of

topics covered, and reminders about assignments. It is your responsibility to keep up with these notes and all of the information contained within.

Students will write and submit assignments that will be returned with feedback via eCourseware meant to encourage student improvement over the course of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss any questions or writing struggles with me as they become evident.

While it's not required, it's highly recommended that you have (or have regular access to) some sort of mobile device (smart phone, tablet, etc.). You're also going to need reliable internet access. This is a web-based class, and learning to publish from (and for) these devices is a huge part of our class and your future as digital content creators.

In order to get the most out of this class and prepare for your future career, it's important to be a digital native, which means you should be constantly reading, interacting, playing, and creating online. It's nearly impossible to learn online news values and produce quality online content without consuming it. Consider the time you spend online an investment in this class, and in your future.

All work and papers submitted must reflect critical thinking and knowledge of the material. In all our assignments, elaboration and examples (either from the text or elsewhere) are required. Items given as facts in elaboration must be referenced using APA referencing criteria (see below for APA citation resources).

### Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JRSM 4910 – 001/350/501 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

### Course Requirements

#### *Quality of Work*

All work in this course should follow AP Style, including proper spelling, grammar, and language. A large part of journalism and strategic media is having a polished written concept of what you are communicating. This includes all class work and presentations. Problems in these or other areas will result in the deduction of points.

I expect your work to be good and to be yours. What is not yours should be fully cited. In documenting sources you must use APA formatting. If you need help with writing and citing sources, please see me for resources. In addition, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab is an excellent resource, and can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>.

I am willing to read over and provide comments/edits on rough drafts of all work, but require a minimum of 24 hours for turnaround (longer over a weekend). This should be done via email, not eCourseware.

#### *Repetition of Courses and Coursework*

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by

the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the resume and logo).

### *Questions about Grades*

If you would like to ask about a grade, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class time, as I will not discuss grades via email or during class. If you have a question or problem with a grade, exam question, or assignment, you have 48 hours after the assignment is returned to you to contact me, or the grade stands. Your question or appeal must be stated in writing, citing your position and why you feel the mark is incorrect. The appeal should be turned in to the professor or sent via email within the stated time frame.

Additionally, you are responsible for tracking your grade online and meeting with the professor early in the semester if you are concerned about your overall grade. Meeting with the professor early and often can help both parties involved find ways to improve student-instructor understanding and quality of work.

### *Attendance*

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. This is a professional program for strategic communicators 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.

In addition, frequently we will engage in class exercises that will count as participation points; if you are not in class, you will have 24 hours from the time of class to complete the participation assignment and turn it in via eCourseware. Doing so is entirely your responsibility; if the participation assignment is not completed within those 24 hours, no participation points will be given.

Late work will be accepted, but points will be deducted for lateness. The absolute final day to turn in any late work will be the final day of class for the semester (10:35 a.m. Central on Monday, November 16, 2020). No work, late or otherwise, will be accepted beyond that date.

### *Student Resources*

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, please visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the [Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support](#) (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. If you are comfortable doing so, please also let the instructor know you are experiencing challenges as they may be able to assist you in connecting with campus or community supports.

### **Grading**

There are 620 possible points in this class. At the end of the semester, your class average will be calculated and fractions will be rounded to the nearest whole number. Letter grades will be determined according to the scale below.

Social Media Fast	50 points
Platform/Trend Boot Camp	100 points
Viral/Trend Video	100 points
Daily Photo Assignment	100 points
Online Portfolio	30 points
Hootsuite or Google AdWords certification	50 points
<i>**You may NOT turn in certifications earned in another course**</i>	
Class Participation	130 points
Class Exercises	60 points
Total	620 points

### *Honors*

Any student taking this class for honors credit (section 350) must verify this with the instructor by the end of the second week of class. Students taking the course for honors credit must complete the Social Media in the News Report, worth 100 points, and present it to the class on a mutually agreed upon date. These students will thus have a course total of 900 possible points for the class.

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%  
 B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%  
 C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%  
 D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%  
 F 0-59.4%

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

This is a basic schedule for topics and major assignments over the course of the semester. Although every effort will be made to stick with this schedule, please understand that some material may require more or less discussion and class time. Thus, changes to the schedule may occur. All changes will be announced in class.

### *Week 1, August 17-21*

Introduction, Syllabus, What is social media?

Brainstorm platforms/trends for bootcamp

Readings: Social media usage in 2019 (and linked articles); Tech use in older adults

### *Week 2, August 24-28*

Platform/trend Bootcamp

Assignments: Social media fast due

### *Week 3, August 31-September 4*

Changes in social media over time

Readings: Humphreys Chapter 3; End of a decade; Hive mind; Writing the way we talk

Assignments: Boot camp reflection due; Daily photo starts; CE #1: Social media timeline

### *Week 4, September 7-11*

Organizational voice & Measurement

Readings: Humphreys Chapter 4; PRSA measurement standards; TripAdvisor rankings; SEO 101

Assignment: CE#2: Organizational voice

### *Week 5, September 14-18*

Digital inequality and social justice

Readings: Humphreys Chapters 7 and 8; Algorithms are the new digital divide; Class on Facebook and MySpace; #GirlsLikeUs; #nomoreCRAPtions

### *Week 6, September 21-25*

Online communities: Formation and maintenance

Readings: Humphreys Chapter 9; Long live the group chat; Diverse YouTubers; TikTok and the Trump rally

### *Week 7, September 28-October 2*

Online communities: Maintenance and dissolution

Readings: Humphreys Chapter 10; Borrowing sugar; Accidental bachelor party

Assignments: Daily photo ends September 30; CE#3: Create community plan

### *Week 8, October 5-9*

Virality and livestreaming

Readings: How livestreaming is changing the news; Viral just kidding!; Why that video went viral; Charli D'Amelio

Assignments: Daily photo reflection due; CE#4: Livestream event

### *Week 9, October 12-16*

Photo and video manipulations

Readings: Deepfakes and manipulated videos; Mukbang videos; I don't care, I love my phone;

Photojournalists

Assignment: CE#5: Manipulation test

### *Week 10, October 19-23*

Influencers and crowdsourcing

Readings: Humphreys Chapter 11; Made for Instagram; Influencing during a pandemic; Basics of being a travel influencer; Do influencers need college? Influencers faking brand deals

Assignment: Viral/Trend video due

### *Week 11, October 26-30*

Monetizing creative content

Readings: Hidden cost of a GoFundMe; Financials of Sailor Art; Internet Creators Guild; Strong Opinions Loosely Held podcast; Kardashians monetizing female friendship

Assignment: CE#6: Made for IG event

### *Week 12, November 2-6*

Wearable technology

Readings: Can you be private online?; Your face is now your boarding pass; Who is your iPhone talking to?; iNeed Apple Watch; Is VR the future?

### *Week 13, November 9-13*

Algorithms and privacy

Readings: The 10 Year Challenge; Traumatic lives of FB moderators; Teaching AI to forget; The coming privacy crisis; Trackers are following you

### *Week 14, November 16*

The future of social media

Readings: The future of social media platforms; People who are constantly online; Who isn't using the internet?; Popular YouTube channels

Assignments: Extra credit due; Hootsuite/AdWords certification due, online portfolio due, all late work due

## **ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES**

### **Five Pillars in JRSM 4910**

- *Critical Thinking:* Students must demonstrate an understanding of the audience that will consume work.
- *Media Literacy:* Students learn the vocabulary and tools of social media. Students learn how content and platforms are researched, planned, and created.
- *Multimedia:* Students create content with photographs and videos for social media.
- *Professionalism:* Students learn the professional standards and routines of creating and maintaining content for social media sites.
- *Writing:* Students write content and plans of action for social media campaigns.

### **Professional Values and Competencies in JRSM 4910**

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and

petition for redress of grievances.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications,
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

### **How professional values and competencies will be met**

#### *Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)*

- Learn about the many ways the use and presentation of images and information are shifting in the new media landscape, and how these changes affect journalism, public relations, advertising, and society as a whole
- Develop the ability to use numerous tools and technologies that have become vital to advertising, journalism and public relations
- Hone their written and visual communication skills through content production in multiple media
- Apply knowledge of best practices and core values of journalism, public relations, and advertising to new contexts
- Learn about the ethical implications of social network use, such as the concerns surrounding privacy

#### *Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)*

- Read and critically reflect, both orally and in writing, on a number of contemporary texts that explore how social networking is changing the use and presentation of images and information
- Complete numerous assignments that will require them to master the basics of how to use social networking tools and to improve their written and visual skills to create content for these sites
- Interact with other journalism students, professors, and professionals worldwide to enhance their understanding of the collaborative power of social media
- Complete a final project that allows them to apply and advance the skills they learned in

the course

## How assessment of student learning will be met

### *Awareness*

- Becoming aware of social media tools, resources and ethics.

### *Understanding*

- Understanding the process of creating content driven to a specific audience and brand channel.

### *Application*

- Creation of multiple content posts for varying social media platforms.

## JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

### Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or SquareSpace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### Email

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check

their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

### **Electronic devices**

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

### **Attendance**

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of 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). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

### **Course repetition**

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

### **Academic integrity**

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is

solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

### **Online SETEs**

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

### **Deadlines**

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

### **AP Style and grammar**

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

### **Disability and accommodations**

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **Diversity and inclusivity**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

### **Weather policy**

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

### **Student support**

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk

with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

## COVID-19 protocols for this course

### COVID-19 Health and Safety Policy - Masks and Social Distancing

All students, faculty and staff will wear masks in all public spaces, including our classroom (lab) per the COVID-19 policy. The first time a student enters a classroom without wearing a face covering, the student will be asked to leave the class until they return a covering. Further violations will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability. Students who repeatedly or flagrantly violate these community expectations may be referred for discipline under the Student Code and, if appropriate, immediately removed from campus by the Dean of Students.

### Student Health

Students who are experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing or a higher than normal temperature should inform me by email so they can be excused from class and should stay home. Students should contact their health care provider or the Student Health Center at <https://www.memphis.edu/health/>.

Students who have a positive COVID-19 test should contact the Dean of Students at [deanofstudents@memphis.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu).

### Student Accommodations

If and when we return to class, students seeking to remain remote for health or other serious reasons should discuss their options with me. Students with accessibility issues or with other learning accommodation needs due to a disability should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to submit an official request for course accommodations. Contact DRS at 901.678.2880 or at [drs@memphis.edu](mailto:drs@memphis.edu). (<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/index.php>)

### Student Resources

Students who need additional resources can contact the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>.