Contact Name: Doug Ferguson Email: fergusond@cofc.edu Phone: 478-0558

Department Name: Communication Graduate Program name: MA in Communication

Course Prefix, Number, and Title: COMM 514 Social Media

I. CATEGORY OF REVIEW (Check all that apply)

NEW COURSE | CHANGE COURSE | DELETE COURSE
---|---|---
☑ New Course | ☐ Change Number (IV, VII, VIII, IX) | ☐ Delete Course (IV, VII, IX)
(attach syllabus*) | ☐ Change Title (IV, VII, VIII, IX) | ☐ Change Credits/Contact hours (II, IV, VII, IX)
 | ☐ Prerequisite Change (IV, VII, VIII, IX) | ☐ Edit Description (III, IV, VII, VIII, IX)
☐ Approve for Cross-listing (attach Graduate Permission to Cross-list Form)

Date (Semester/Year) the course will first be offered, course changes or deletion will go into effect: Spring 2013

NEW COURSE:

*ATTACH THE SYLLABUS FOR A NEW GRADUATE COURSE to include:

- Course description and objectives
- Method of teaching (e.g., lecture, seminar, on-line, hybrid)
- Required and optional texts and materials
- Graduate School Grading Scale
- Assignments, student learning outcomes and assessment components
- Policies to include attendance, Honor Code, American Disabilities Act statement
- Tentative course schedule with specific topics

List prerequisites and / or other restrictions below

September 2011
Will this course be added to the Degree Requirements?

a) [ ] Yes  [x] No

b) If yes, explain

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II. NUMBER OF CREDITS and CONTACT HOURS per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Lab</th>
<th>Seminar</th>
<th>Ind. Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

B. Credit Hours

3

Is this course repeatable? [ ] yes  [x] no  If so, how many credit hours may the student earn in this course?

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III. CATALOG DESCRIPTION Limit to 50 words EXACTLY as you want it to appear in the catalog: include prerequisites, co-requisites, and other restrictions. If changing course description, please include both old and new course descriptions.

This course examines the role and influence of social media on communication processes, effects, and other forms of interpersonal and mediated messages. Students will conduct original research that explores contemporary theories of communication as applied to social media.
IV. RATIONALE / JUSTIFICATION: If course change – please indicate the course change details. If course change or deletion—please provide reasons for change(s) to or deletion of a course. If a new course—briefly address the goals/objectives for the course and the relationship to the strategic plan.

Students studying communication are greatly interested in learning about the influence and importance of social media. The subfield is very active. Citation indexes show that communication article titles that address internet and social media topics dominate the top of the most-cited list, owing to intense interest in new media.

The primary objective is to introduce students to the complex role of social media in communication processes, effects, and co-existence with other forms of interpersonal and mediated messages.

V. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES and ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Method and Performance Expected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What will students know and be able to do when they complete the course?</td>
<td>How will each outcome be measured? Who will be assessed, when, and how often? How well should students be able to do on the assessment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Understand empirical evidence of the influence of social media</td>
<td>Research paper; students write one per semester and achieve a passing grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understand the fundamental role of communication theory in social media</td>
<td>Exam; theory paper; students write one per semester and achieve a passing grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Understand the role of social media in organizations</td>
<td>Exam; book report; students write one per semester and achieve a passing grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understand the influence of social media on society and culture</td>
<td>Reflection papers; students write ten per semester and achieve a passing grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does this course align with the student learning outcomes articulated for the major, program, or general education? What program-level outcome or outcomes does it support? Is the content or skill introduced, reinforced, or demonstrated in this course?

This course is aligned with the outcomes of graduate education in communication. Social media are central to all communication processes in 2012.
VII. IMPACT ON EXISTING PROGRAMS and COURSES: Please briefly document the impact and expected changes of this new/changed/deleted course on other departments, programs, and courses; if deleting a course—list all departments and programs that include the course; if adding/changing a course—explain any overlap with existing courses in the same or different departments; if adding or deleting a course that will be part of a joint program identify the partner institution.

There is no overlap within the department.

There are no similar courses offered across campus.

VIII. COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ACTION REQUESTED: List all of the new costs or cost savings, (including new faculty/staff requests, library or equipment, etc.) associated with the action requested. New courses requiring additional resources will need special justification.

None.
IX. APPROVAL AND SIGNATURES

Signature of Program Director:  

Date: 2-13-12

Signature of Department Chair:  

Date: 2-14-12

Signature of Additional Chair*:  

Date: 2-15-12

Signature of Schools' Dean:  

Date:  

Signature of Additional Schools' Dean*:  

Date:  

Signature of the Provost:  

Date: 2/15/12

Signature of Budget Director/Business Affairs Office:  

Date: 2-15-12

*For interdisciplinary courses

Return form to the Graduate School Office for Further Processing

Signature of Chair of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education & Special Programs:  

Date: 2/23/2012

Signature of Chair of the Graduate Council:  

Date: 3/16/12

Signature of Faculty Senate Secretary:  

Date:  

Date Approved by Faculty Senate:  

September 2011
Communication 514: Social Media
Instructor: Douglas Ferguson, Ph.D.
Office: 9 College, #205
Office Hours: TR 11:00-2:30
Office Phone: 608-8008

TEXTBOOK
Wiley & Sons [buy online or at the bookstore]

Additional and/or assigned readings (e.g., Wealth of Networks, Chuetrain Manifesto) are available online or can be purchased in print form.

TWITTER
@socialmedia580 [this account was named when the course was COMM 580, but changing the name to match the new course number would lose the account’s numerous followers]

You must join Twitter for this class. If you have a private account, then get a free account from somewhere and create a public account to sue for this class. You need not become a heavy tweeter; you can mostly follow others. FOLLOW: mashable; socialmedia580; plus any other social media sites you can find to retweet

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Social media are a collection of tools and online spaces (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn) available to help individuals and organizations to facilitate their information and communication needs. Students will use readings, exercises, self-reflection, and data collection to optimize their own understanding of social media. Course output includes active participation in a discovery of underlying themes and meanings, as well as a guided research project. Through a balance of theory and application, COMM 514 emphasizes how organizations and individuals use their basic understanding of communication to guide their use of social media. Course goals are accomplished through dialog, class exercises, and group projects.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
This graduate course will examine concepts related to communication via social media. This course will emphasize understanding, applying, and developing concepts and strategies through cases, readings, discussion, and observation. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
• Appreciate concepts and theories that explain social media
• Understand the fundamental role of communication in social media
• Analyze specific social media situations and the associated communication behaviors

• Understand and appreciate the important link between social media and organizations
• Gain insights about styles, approaches and goals of those who use social media

COURSE INSTRUCTION AND EXPECTATIONS
Lectures, discussions, and individual and group exercises will be used to present social media communication literature and engage students in the practical application of concepts and principles. Guest speakers, case studies, and group scenarios will be employed to guide students to a better understanding of social media.

Course grades will be assigned on the basis of the following criteria:
* Class participation
* Completion and quality of assignments
* Research project
* Midterm/final

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
Class Participation 70 points
Book Review Presentation 80 points
Reading Reflection Questions 100 points
Midterm 150 points
Theory Application Essay 150 points
Research Project 300 points
Final Exam 150 points

Class participation – You will be asked to read before class so you can discuss the material during class. Throughout the course, you will be expected to contribute to the discussions.

If you do not read, you will not be able to contribute to the discussion and/or complete participation exercises.

Book Review - Each student will be responsible for selecting and reviewing one book related to social media (see http://proconnections.net/social-media-reading-list/ for suggestions).

The goal of your review is to concisely summarize and evaluate the book related to the concepts and theories presented in the book. Attention should be given to the concepts learned while reading the book.

Reading Reflection Questions – Each class you will be responsible for sending Dr. Ferguson questions or comments that have emerged from your reflection of the assigned readings.

Reflection questions or comments may include personal experiences related to the readings, questions for clarification of material presented in the readings, or agreement/disagreement with concepts presented in the
readings. Reflection questions/comments will be used to facilitate classroom discussion and must be emailed by noon on Thursdays.

Theory Application – Each student should select a theory that he or she believes has an impact on the understanding of social media. This theory can be a traditional communication theory or one from an allied discipline that studies social media. The student must write an essay that integrates social media practice and concepts with existing theory.

Research Project - Students, working alone or in groups of no more than three, produce a class research project that will be submitted to an academic conference. Data can be collected/analyzed using either qualitative or quantitative methods.

Midterm/Final Exam – At the middle and end of the semester, you will be tested on your comprehension and ability to apply the concepts from class discussion and course readings through in-class and take-home exams.

**GRADING**
Course grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- **A** = 92 to 100 pts
- **B+** = 87 to 91.99 pts
- **B** = 81 to 86.99 pts
- **C-** = 78 to 80.99 pts
- **C** = 70 to 77.99 pts
- **F** = below 70 pts
- **I** = Incomplete (extremely rare cases only, for truly extraordinary circumstances)

**ATTENDANCE**
Success in this course is highly dependent on attendance and class participation. Therefore, students are required to attend class and to be in class on time. Only documented doctor’s excuses or CoC-approved activities will be excused. These attendance guidelines are extremely important for the successful completion of this course.

**LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY**
There will be no makeup of presentations, assignments, or in-class activities. No late work will be accepted without advanced notice and arrangements. Late work will be penalized one letter grade for each day of delay.

**HONOR CODE**
Students will adhere to the honesty policies in the College of Charleston Graduate Student Handbook. Transgressions will result in a zero on the assignment. A repeated offense will result in failure for the entire course.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact me with the appropriate documentation.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week #1 - PREVIEW OF THE COURSE**
What are social media? Discussion of precursors to social media.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media#Examples

**Week #2 - TWITTER**
Read: (Qualman) Chapters 1 and 2
http://www.chuetrain.com/book/index.html (Read from the Forward through the end of “Internet Apocalypse”)

**Week #3 - FACEBOOK and MYSPACE**
Read: (Qualman) Chapters 3 and 4, Chuetrain Manifesto Chapter 2 “The Longing”

**Week #4 - YOUTUBE**
Read: (Qualman) Chapter 5; Chuetrain Manifesto Chapter 3 “Talk is Cheap”

**Week #5 - LINKEDIN**
Read: (Qualman) Chapter 6; Chuetrain Manifesto Chapter 4 “Markets are Conversations”

**Week #6 - BLOGGER**
Read: (Qualman) Chapter 7 and 8; Chuetrain Manifesto Chapter 5 “The Hyperlinked Organization”

**Week #7 - SOCIAL BOOKMARKING**
Due: Introduction to Research Project

**Week #8: Chuetrain Manifesto, Chapters 6 (“EZ Answers”) & 7 (“Post-Apocalyptico”)**

**Week #8 - GROUPON (first hour)**
Midterm: Understanding of social media concepts (short-answer/essay)

**Week #9 - CELL PHONE APPS**
Read: Wealth of Networks Chapters 1 and 10

**Week #10 - GOOGLE APPS**
Read: Wealth of Networks Chapter 2

**Week #11 - COMMUNICATION THEORIES AND MODELS**
Read: Wealth of Networks Chapter 3

**Week #12 Wealth of Networks Chapter 4**
Due: Theory Essay

**Week #13 Wealth of Networks Chapter 5**

**Week #14 - viewing of SOCIAL NETWORK plus group discussion**
Read: Wealth of Networks Chapters 6 & 7

**Week #15 - RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS**
Read: Wealth of Networks Chapters 8 & 11
Due: Research projects

**Week #16 - FINAL EXAM**