

Comm 261 - Social media

Sarah Leiser (sleiser@luc.edu)

Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 12:35-1:25pm

Water Tower Campus: School of Communication; Room 014

Office Hours (Zoom): Mondays, 9:30am-11:30am

Course Description:

This is a course designed to explore the impact of social media on everyday life and practices. It is centered on learning the different forces that shape social media and the roles it plays in our lives. Currently we are immersed in a media culture, and in this class we will take a step back and examine the relationship between media, technology, and society. We start by learning about the history and evolution of the internet and web, examining how this history connects to contemporary social media. Then we look at different areas of social media and the debates, discussions, and practices within them. In this course you will develop the ability to examine and analyze communication technologies, how they are shaped by society, power, and economy, and how they are changing our everyday lives.

Course Objectives:

Course Learning Objectives

- Understand the evolution of the internet and social media and the different social, cultural, and political factors that shape mediated communication technologies
- Identify the shifts in production and content creation between offline media and social media
- Analyze the impact of the internet and social media on people's identities, patterns of interaction, communities, and consumption
- Apply relevant theories and perspectives to the analysis of the impacts of the internet and social media on everyday life

Course COVID Policy:

Please do not come to class if you are feeling unwell, especially if your symptoms include shortness of breath, coughing, difficulty breathing, head and body aches, fever or chills, and loss of smell or taste. Send me an email if you are feeling any of these symptoms and contact Dial A Nurse and follow their instructions. If you have been exposed to a confirmed COVID case and are unsure about coming to class, send me an email and we will figure out what you should do. The health and safety of you and your classmates is very important to me and I will be flexible in accommodating any health concerns. COVID policy subject to change as new guidelines and regulations are released throughout the semester. Go to <https://www.luc.edu/coronavirus/> for information and updates.

Late or Missing Work:

If you are concerned about completing your work or dealing with something that could potentially affect your ability to participate in class, please email me sooner rather than later. I don't need details, but knowing earlier allows me to help find ways to accommodate you and keeps you on track in the class. I publish all due dates and details of assignments from the beginning of the semester so you can plan for them and let me know as soon as possible of any conflicts or concerns. It is disrespectful of my time and dedication to this class to wait until the last few days to reach out and ask for exceptions or accommodations. Additionally, there is often very little I can do or change at the end of the semester due to limited time and university policies.

Course Communication and Information:

- Class announcements and reminders
- Course Sakai Page
- Email
 - sleiser@luc.edu
 - I do not regularly check my email after 5pm or on weekends, but I try to reply within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 on weekends.
- Office hours - via Zoom
 - Mondays, 9:30am-11:30am (link on Sakai)
 - By appointment

Required Text:

All required readings will be posted on our class Sakai page, there is no textbook requirement.

AI Policy:

Direct copying and pasting of AI work and passing it as your own will not be allowed in this course. However, using AI to brainstorm assignments or for grammar review is permissible as long as the work has been rewritten and edited by the student.

Assignments:

Participation and In class engagement

Completing the in class activities and assignments, participating in the in class discussion, and attending class regularly all will add to this score. Attendance and participation will be graded at the midpoint and the end of the semester.

Reading Reviews (2)

Students will select two readings throughout the semester to write a review on. The review should include a summary of the reading that highlights main the arguments and objectives. It should also include a discussion of how the reading relates to other course readings and discussions, as well as connections to societal examples and personal experiences. Reading reviews should be 700-1000 words, double spaced, in Times New Roman, 12-point font.

Discussion Day Leader

Each student will be required to sign up to the leadership team for one discussion day. Discussion day leaders are responsible for coming up with at least two questions each to guide the class discussion based on the corresponding unit. The questions need to be different from each other, relate to the unit, and are open-ended to encourage discussion. Discussion day leaders are also responsible for facilitating the class discussion by introducing the questions, calling on students, keeping the discussion on topic, and moving the discussion forward as needed.

Project 1

Students can decide between the following project idea:

Option 1: Students will track their own social media use for 1-2 weeks. Collect observations on which apps and sites are used, how frequently they are used, the different types of interactions/use on

different sites, mood and feelings before and after use. Students will respond to questions and summarize their experience in a reflection paper.

Option 2: Students will not use social media sites for 1-2 weeks. They will track how they feel, observations about not using social media, impacts in their daily life, etc.,. Students will respond to questions and summarize their experience in a reflection paper.

Option 3: Students will interview 3-5 people on their thoughts, experiences, understandings, and feelings about social media. They will summarize their findings and reflect on their experience in a paper.

All students will present a 5-10 minute powerpoint on their experience and what they learned from their project. All papers should be 5-8 pages, double spaced.

Final Project

Students will determine a final project (could be a paper, a podcast, a creative work, etc.) that relates to course materials and class discussions. Students will be required to determine the requirements of their own specific projects, and each student will present on their project as part of the grade. Additional assignments within the final project will include a project idea submission, project overview (including details on the required elements of your project), checkpoint, and an individual reflection of the project process. Detailed instructions will be available on Sakai.

Evaluation Components and Points

Assignment	Points
Participation and Class engagement	100
Reading Reviews (2)	150 each (300 total)
Discussion Day Leader	100
Project 1	200
Final Project	300
Total Points:	1000

Grading Scale:

A 940-1000; **A-** 900-939; **B+** 870-899; **B** 830-869; **B-** 800-829; **C+** 770-799; **C** 700-729; **C-** 700-729; **D+** 670-699; **D** 630-669; **D-** 600-629; **F** 599-0

Accommodations:

Students with Disabilities: If you have documentation from Loyola's Office for Students with Disabilities, let me know as soon as possible and I will make accommodations if there are instances in which course requirements conflict with your needs. If you have a chronic health issue that may become a factor in your ability to complete assignments, do not wait to meet with someone in that office until you

have an emergent situation. If there is any possibility that you may need their services or documentation at any time during the semester, please get it now so that there are no questions should an emergency situation arise.

Absences and Tardiness: If you miss a class, you do not need to explain it to me or apologize, but I would appreciate a heads up. However, it is your responsibility to find the information you missed through class resources or classmates. While there is not an attendance grade, missing class means you will also miss that day's lectures and activities, which are part of a cumulative assignment grade. There is a direct correlation between class attendance and overall grades, especially as this class incorporates a lot of applied skill and work on your final project in the classroom.

If you experience illness serious enough to warrant medical documentation and/or the death of someone close to you, please let me know as soon as possible and when you are ready and able, we will create a plan to help you get caught up on material and complete your assignments

If you are late to class, please do not ask me to repeat important information I discussed at the beginning of class. Please get it from a fellow class member. If you are consistently late, your overall grade will be negatively affected.

If you miss class to represent Loyola University Chicago in some formal capacity—e.g. athletics, Model United Nations, etc., please bring me the documentation and accommodations will be made.

Academic Integrity

There is no place for academic dishonesty in the School of Communication or at Loyola University Chicago. Please familiarize yourselves with ALL potential errors of judgment, intentional or unintentional that could be perceived as dishonest behavior. For example, a simple failure to cite sources appropriately will likely result in, at minimum, a failing grade for that assignment and a referral to the SOC Dean's office. Citations and reference pages that are obviously copied and pasted (formatting doesn't match) and incomplete citations can also result in a failing grade for the assignment. Since this is a writing course, these policies are especially important.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as: Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher; Providing information to another student during an examination; Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination; Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor; Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted; Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom; Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;

Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;

Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or

Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>.

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans. Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

The School of Communication policy is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.