COMM 620: Practicum in Social Media Research    Spring 2017
Thursdays, 12:30-3:30 pm ASC 236

Instructor:

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Description:

Our purpose in this class is first to look at a wide range of research papers focusing on the use and impact of social media. Of particular interest are studies which examine social networks (and social networking) and the new tools which are available for capturing and classifying large bodies of user-generated content. We will look at some theoretical models of participation in social media; social media inside the enterprise; health and social media; use of social networks for recruiting research participants and delivering interventions; the role of mobility and geolocation in social media; and available, user-friendly tools for collecting data from social media.

Class Requirements:

1. Complete and present a data-based term paper on some aspect of social media (50%)
2. Complete the weekly reading assignments and participate in class discussion (50%) Each week we will select (1) three articles to be formal 12 minute presentations plus Q/A, and (2) three or four articles for detailed discussion for which the students generate the discussion questions/points

Presentation. In addition to weekly preparation, you will be asked to present an empirical paper from the day’s readings in conference-style as if you were the presenter three times during the semester. Eligible papers are marked by (P) in the course reading list. After your presentation, the class may ask you questions or make comments and you should stay in your "role" as the author of the paper.

Discussion Leadership. Three articles have been selected each week for full class discussion. These are marked with (DL). Each of these discussions will be led by a member of the class.

A signup sheet for the papers will be provided through the class Dropbox folder which will be shared with the class members. Each student should sign up for at least three presentations and three discussion leaderships.

Research Project

Fifty percent of your course requirement will involve the preparation of a research project which you will present in stages or chunks over the second half of the semester, beginning with the literature review and rationale March 23, followed by
the hypothesis, methods, data analysis and results. Each student will present his or her progress to the class in a few slides, and solicit feedback from the group. This process should lead to strong papers suitable for publication or at least conference submission by the end of the semester. The final paper will be presented on the last class day.

Your research project should result in a data-based paper of 20-25 pages. IRB approval must be obtained prior to data collection. Students should identify a target publication opportunity early on and be prepared to explain their choice of preferred venue.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems
A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Topic Schedule
Overview January 12


**Social Networking Studies January 19**


**Social Capital January 26**


**Health and Social Media February 2**

(P) Okike K, Peter-Bibb TK, Xie KC, Okike, ON. Association Between Physician Online Rating and Quality of Care J Med Internet Res 2016;18(12):e324 DOI: 10.2196/jmir.6612


**Enterprise Social Media for Internal Organizational Communication February 9**


**Using Social Media for Recruiting Research Participants** February 16


**Capture and Analysis of Large Data Sets from Social Media  February 23**

**Tools to analyse Networks and Graphs in Social Media**


Research using social media; users’ views. NatCen Social Research.


Leveraging Mobility and Geolocation March 2


Crowdsourcing March 9


