

CMGT 529: Social Media Entertainment

Semester/Session: Spring 2020/21724D
Day/Time: Thursday/ 6:30-9:20pm
Building/Room: ASC 228

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Office Hours: Before class by appt; email your request and topic. Please reconfirm that day.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This class examines the industry, management, and practices within two competing social media entertainment (SME) industries, including China's wanghong. Unlike legacy media industries based on control of distribution or content, SME refers to an industry distinguished by how creators (aka influencers, YouTubers, Wang Hong, etc.) harness social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Douyin) to create fan communities that can be converted into many forms of revenue as well as culture. Students will conduct case studies of platforms, creators, or firms, including interviews with SME professionals.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To map the ecology of social media entertainment through case study research.
- To identify how this new industry is redefining Hollywood and entertainment theory.
- To conduct graduate-level research, generate state-of-the-art media presentations, and build a network of relationships with media professionals and scholars.

COURSE READINGS

- Cunningham, S. & Craig, D. (2019). [Social Media Entertainment](#).
- Lotz, A. (2017). [Portals](#).
- Stokel-Walker, C. (2019). [YouTubers](#)
- OTHER READING WILL BE POSTED ON BLACKBOARD and is subject to change
 - Cunningham & Craig (2020). Creator Governance.
 - Cunningham, Craig, & Lv (2019). [China Live](#).
 - Duffy (2016). [The Romance of work](#).
 - Gillespie, T. (2018). [Platforms are not intermediaries](#).
 - Mohan & Punathambekar (2019). [Localizing youTube](#).
 - Napoli, and Caplan (2017). [Media companies are media companies](#).
 - Taylor, T. (2018). [Watch me Play: Twitch and the Rise of Game Livestreaming](#)
 - Van Dijck & Poell (2013) [Understanding Social Media Logic](#).

COURSE GRADING

- 45 Blogs (15 x 3 points each)
- 15 Platform Histories (Group presentations)
- 40 Case Studies (Individual Presentations)

You will receive details about each assignment/exam separately. **All assignments need to be completed and handed in on time to avoid a grade reduction. If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide written documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with me in a timely manner. Do not wait until the end of the semester to sort things out.**

In order to pass this class you will need to complete ALL of the assignments. Failure to complete one or more of them will result in an F in the class.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

- A/A- outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
- B+/B above average work, demonstrating good insight into assignment
- B-/C+ needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow through
- C and below fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the material

Each assignment will be worth 100 points and will be converted to a percentage score depending upon the weight assigned to each. Your percentage scores on the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade per the scale shown below:

A	= 100-94	C	= 76-74
A-	= 93-90	C-	= 73-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-84	D	= 66-64
B-	= 83-80	D-	= 63-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-0

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must appeal it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate, within one week of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

Late assignments/Emergencies: No late assignments will be accepted. If you have a legitimate and verifiable emergency that makes it impossible to turn in your assignment you must:

- email me before class the day the assignment is due to notify me of your emergency,
- you may be asked to provide official proof (doctor's note or other evidence), and
- arrange to email the assignment at a time to be determined.

SYLLABUS (Subject to Change)

WEEK	Topics	READINGS (Due before class)	ASSIGNMENTS
1/16	Intro; Vlogumentary		
1/23	Legacy Media and Portals; How to Blog	Lotz - PORTALS	Start reading blog; 1 st blog to be posted in class
1/30	Social Media and Platforms assign platforms	SME/ Intro and 1 Van Dijck and Poell- Social Media Logics	
2/6	Labor and Management	SME/ 2 and 3 The Influencer Report	
2/13	Content and Culture; review platform outlines	SME/ 4 and 5 Duffy/ Romance of Work	Email outlines by 5pm
2/20	Wanghong / Livestreaming; review platform prezis	SME/Conclusion Cunningham, Craig, & Lv – China Live Taylor – Twitch and game livestreaming	Email prezis by 5pm
2/27	PRESENT PLATFORMS	Watch People's Republic of Desire	
3/5	Global SME; Case Studies; choose topic; set up debates	SME/6 Mohan & Punathambekar/Localizing YT	
3/12	SME Policy debates; review outlines and targets	Gillespie-Platforms are not intermediaries Cunningham & Craig - Creator Governance Napoli and Caplan – Media companies	Email outlines and interview targets by 5pm
3/19	SPRING BREAK	NO READING OR BLOGGING	
3.26	Guests;	YouTubers/ Parts I – II	Email prezis by 5pm
4/2	Guests; review Prezis	YouTubers/ Parts III – V	Case study blog
4/9	No Class	YouTubers/ Parts VI-VIII	
4/16	Case Studies	NO READING	Case Study blog
4/23	Case Studies	NO READING	Case study blog
4/30	Case Studies	NO READING	Case study blog
5/7	Final (Take home)	NO READING	Final blog

BLOG (individual): READING, CASE STUDY, AND FINAL

- **READING:** Complete that week's reading and find a related media industry news article. Write a 2-line summary plus 2 lines relating the article to the reading. The news item must be from the past week and a reputable source (not gossip). Post Blog before 6pm of each class and you cannot post from prior weeks. You must cite the reading according to APA format and provide a **WORKING** hyperlink. Site reputable sources, e.g.,:
 - Tubefilter/ Mashable/ Wired/ Digiday/ The Verge
 - Deadline Hollywood/Hollywood Reporter/ Variety
 - LA Times/ New York Times/ Wall Street Journal/ Washington Post
- **CASE STUDY** blog posts are posted after class. Compare and contrast the presentations.
- **FINAL** blog is a 3 paragraph argument essay based on the presentations, lectures, and readings; question will be provided in class; you must provide at least 10 references.

PLATFORM (GROUP PRESENTATION): You will be split into groups and each group is to describe the evolution of an SME platforms. Modeled after my history of YouTube, the group is to explain how their platform or app was launched, funded, and iteratively evolved to provide technological, content, and commercial affordances for creators to grow their brands.

- Groups will submit an outline and draft prezi for review.
- Each group will have 15 minutes.
- Grading will be based on the quality of research, design, and performance

CASE STUDIES (INDIVIDUAL): every student will conduct online research and original fieldwork, including an interview, and present a case study of a set of creators or an SME firm.

- Examples of a vertical of creators, e.g., Twitch gamers, Instagram beauty vloggers, LGBTQ, Chinese livestreamers, etc. Your case study should compare and contrast their creative, managerial, commercial, and community-building practices.
- An SME firm may be a talent agent, influencer advertising agency, a third party data/tech firm. Your case study should be organizational, identifying their value proposition, business models, management structure, and corporate culture..
- Interview: you must secure an interview with a creator or an SME professional at the firm. These names must be approved in advance. We will discuss interview strategies in class.
- Length: 20-30 minutes (depends on size of class and topics)
- Presentation must be in prezi. Each student will be required to submit a complete rough draft for review and revision. After presenting, you are to post your final prezi on the blog.
- Schedule and further instructions will be provide in class
- Grading will be based on conducting solid research, following directions, securing your interview, generating an engaging presentation, and presenting professionally.

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscса.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.