



TENTATIVE SYLLABUS
SOCIAL MEDIA Comm 321 (20506R)
Fall 2020

12:30-1:50 Tues/Thurs via ZOOM

NOTE: ACTIVITIES and DATES MAY CHANGE

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Welcome to Social Media! In this class, we will explore the strategic uses, current trends, and historic events in the domain of social media. We will spend time discussing social media marketing, social media in branding (in an array of sectors), growth hacking and the development of audiences, and the field of product development (how are apps, businesses, and websites built). I love to teach classes in an interactive manner, and I am looking forward to each and every one of you attending the class and participating in our classroom discussions! The class is designed for synchronous learning. If you believe that you will not be able to attend class, please contact me immediately so that we can discuss whether there is a way to accommodate your needs and/or if this is the right class for you. Please note the Pandemic guidelines (below) and note that this class is geared toward group interaction.

PANDEMIC NOTIFICATIONS (PLEASE READ):

- **Synchronous session recording notice**
Live class sessions will be recorded and made available to students through Blackboard (including transcriptions). Please remember that USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. As a student, you are responsible for the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/>). These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.
- **Going back to Campus**
Although we are starting the semester with online instruction only, conditions may improve. In such case, courses listed as hybrid will give opportunity to students to attend class in person.

This will happen only by following the strictest health guidelines and safety protocols. These are listed in the [Trojans Return](#) page. Please take the time to read this ahead so that you are prepared in case it is possible to return to in-person instruction.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS DURING DISTANCE LEARNING:

- **Participation**

Participation is part of your grade, and this class involves weekly synchronous in-class presentations. In the beginning of each class session, students will raise issues and share information about current social media events and trends. This participatory aspect of the class is vital to your learning of this evolving field. Please be aware that being present and participating in this discussion is a mandatory part of this class. If you are planning to be unavailable during class time, please contact me immediately so that we can work out an alternative plan, or consider enrolling in another class. This class is designed to be **synchronous and interactive**. For your information, USC's general guidelines on participation during the pandemic include the following statement: The current modality of teaching includes synchronous and asynchronous lessons, assignments, exercises, and evaluation processes, and each affords different types of participation. In a synchronous zoom environment, when proper, participation is synchronous. This may include talking, when appropriate, during a zoom meeting, or using the chat function to generate or participate in discussions. Blackboard offers different types of participation, including participating in forums and completing asynchronous assignments.

- **Attendance policy**

As this is a participation based class, attendance is necessary. If you anticipate any difficulty with attendance, please contact me immediately so that we can work out an alternative plan, or consider enrolling in another class. The following guidelines are noted, but this class does have **in-person, synchronous requirements for participation**. USC's guidelines suggest: Students are strongly encouraged to attend live sessions via Zoom. This is the best way to engage with the course and keep up to date with class activities and assignments. However, there will be no penalty for failing to attend live sessions, and students who miss live sessions will be able to keep up with the class by reviewing class recordings and engaging through asynchronous class activities and assignments. Note that university guidelines dictate that faculty should only maintain normal attendance, participation, and assessment expectations for students when the class time falls within reasonable learning hours in the student's time zone, defined as 7:00am to 10:00pm in the student's time zone.

- **RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER:** The distant nature of these learning environments may prompt us to forget that we are a community and that each of us and our ideas deserves respect. For this reason, it is imperative that you remember to **respect the opinion of others**, regardless of how much you disagree.

- **Zoom etiquette**

Although you are not obligated to turn your camera on, we highly recommend it. Please wear **appropriate clothing**. Please keep your **microphone off** during zoom class, except when you're asked to unmute for discussion or questions. Please use **appropriate backgrounds**.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Social Media: The class will be divided into three modules: Social Media and Marketing, Growth Hacking, and Product Development. The reason that we are focusing on these three topics is that they represent three critical components of the field of digital social media. As you will discover, regardless of your specific area of interest, if you pursue a career in research or practice in this realm, you are likely to collaborate and interact with scholars and/or professionals in each of these subspecialties. I want you to be conversant in each area so that you have the tools to be a vital team member or opinion leader in your future career.

Keep in mind that this is an introductory class. While most, if not all, of you are digital natives, this course focuses on the strategic underpinnings, theory, and business applications of the field, and for many of you, this will be a new perspective. Students will explore the sector of digital social media and online communities, with a focus on user experience, audience targeting, strategic content creation, product development, and business and revenue models for success. The course provides a basic set of knowledge, skills, and terminology needed to understand the advent, growth, and development of digital social media. Students learn to engage with, critique, and discuss digital social media, online communities, new product development, and audiences through timely readings, reputable guest lecturers, and lively discussions. Weekly discussions draw from the week's industry news, text books, and other readings, and topics and issues raised by students and guests.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Learn to be conversant in digital social media in professional contexts.
- Learn the strategies and tactics of using social and digital media professionally.
- Learn to analyze and understand the use of social and digital media by others (i.e., learn to be a knowledgeable consumer of digital and social media).
- Understand the basic process and strategy of (digital) product development.
- Embrace critical thinking when using or analyzing digital and social products and tools.
- Understand the human side of digital and social media, and develop an understanding (and appreciation for the importance) of user experience as the backbone of digital and social media

Textbooks:

1. Barker, Barker, Bormann, Roberts, & Zahay (2017). Social Media Marketing: A Strategic Approach (2nd Edition). Cengage Learning
2. Holiday, Ryan (2014). Growth Hacker Marketing. Penguin Books
3. Olsen, D. (2015). The Lean Playbook: How To Innovate With Minimum Viable Products and Rapid Customer Feedback. Wiley

You may also wish to read:

- Mary Meeker Report: <http://www.kpcb.com/internet-trends>
- Center for the Digital Future Report: <http://www.digitalcenter.org>
- Techcrunch.com
- Mashable.com

- DigitalTrends.com
- VentureBeat.com
- Wired.com
- TheNextWeb.com
- Engaget
- And FYI there are some good tutorials such as MakeUseOf.com, TechnologyGuide.com, TechRadar.com

GRADING Percentages will be calculated by taking the total points earned in the course and dividing by total possible points.

A: 92.6 – 100

A-: 90 – 92.5

B+: 87.6 – 89.9

B: 82.6 – 87.5

B-: 80 – 82.5

C+: 78 – 79.9

C: 72.6 – 77.9

C-: 70 – 72.5

D+: 67.6 – 69.9

D: 62.6 – 67.5

D-: 59.6 – 62.5

F: Under 59

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Respect: One of the goals of this course is for students to gain confidence when contributing to the class discussion. We begin each day with students raising timely social media issues and analyzing their importance. To create a positive learning environment in which students feel confident raising issues and questions, the class will focus on a positive and supportive environment, curating a safe space for expression. Listening, providing positive, supportive, and constructive feedback are expectations of the class. Students are expected to respect and encourage each other and to learn from the examples and best practices that others exhibit. Disrespectful comments or behaviors will not be tolerated. Please contact me immediately if you feel that the class atmosphere is not respectful toward you or your peers.

Academic Integrity: Your work in this class must be your own. Any attempt to represent others' work as your own will receive a failing grade on the assignment in question (at a minimum) and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. To learn more about academic integrity and what constitutes academic dishonesty, please see these links: <https://libraries.usc.edu/research/reference-tutorials> <http://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/graduate-students/academic-integrity>

Student Conduct: We will uphold the standards outlined by the Student Conduct code in SCampus (see <http://webapp.usc.edu/scampus>). Talk with me if you are confused or unsure if something could or would be considered cheating or plagiarism. See last page of syllabus for official statement.

Assignment Submission: All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard (<http://blackboard.usc.edu>) via Turnitin. If you are unable for any reason to submit your assignment on time to Blackboard for a technical reason, email me (knorth@usc.edu) your assignment before the deadline.

Deadlines: The due dates for your assignments are strict. Late assignments are not accepted. If you have an emergency, please contact me before the deadline and documentation is required.

Email: During normal business hours (M-F, 9am-6pm) I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours (probably sooner). If you email me outside of those times or if I give you some notice about limited email, it may take me longer to respond. On weekends, I may not respond until Monday. If it has been more than 24 hours and you think I may have missed your email, please send another.

Technology: Phones must be put away during class. Computers may be used if you like, but only for class-related material and note-taking. I may ask you to close all computers at any time, and if computers become distracting, I may change this policy. Computers must be put away during speeches and guest lectures.

Special Accommodations: Academic accommodations are made when students register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please deliver this documentation to me within the first week of the semester, or as soon as possible. DSP (<https://dsp.usc.edu/>) can be reached at ability@usc.edu and (213) 740-0776. See last page of syllabus for official statement.

English as a Second Language or Other Accommodations: Please let me know if you need special accommodations if English is not your primary language or if you are concerned about accommodations for any other reason.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Sexual Assault Policy and Resources. The University of Southern California is committed to fostering a safe campus environment for all members of the university community, free from sexual coercion, violence, and sexual intimidation. The university's sexual misconduct and sexual assault policies have been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated (the policy is available in SCampus, Part E: https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/files/2015/11/SCampus-Final-112015_v8.pdf). To learn more about your reporting options and your rights, or to speak with a counselor confidentially, contact the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center/Center for Women and Men at 213-740-4900, or contact Student Counseling Services at 213-740-7711. For more information and resources, including off-campus resources like the Rape Treatment Center, visit the USC Sexual Assault Resource Center website at <https://sarc.usc.edu/resources/>.

Finally, remember that you can contact a campus cruiser at 213-740-4911 for a safety escort.

Stress Management. Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge. Moreover, they offer drop-in workshops throughout the semester on managing stress and maintaining mindfulness. **Additional Academic Support.** A number of campus resources exist to support you academically. Contact the Center for Academic Support (<http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/>) at 213-740-0776 or study@usc.edu.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

10 Percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class participation• Weekly Q&A
10 Percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell Me Something I Don't Know
10 percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital Activity MEMO: At-home research, writing assignments, blogging, posting, sharing and joining: Each week you will explore 1 digital experience and write a brief memo summarizing your experience.
10 percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guest Lecturer Papers (there is a paper due after each speaker)
30 percent (10% each)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Midterm 1: Social Media Marketing (10%)• Midterm 2: Growth Hacking (10%)• Midterm 3: Product Development (10%)
30 percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Exam

All Papers and Presentations will be discussed in class. If you miss the in-class discussion and/or description of the assignment, it is incumbent upon you to find the information. It is your responsibility to acquire information that you miss if you do not attend class. All in-class presentations are to be accompanied by a written copy of your text. Turn in the written version to Blackboard.

Participation and Attendance: Class discussion and participation is a fundamental part of this class. Each session of class includes a discussion component at the beginning of class, and some classes have in-class experiential learning activities. We will learn more if we engage with each other and contribute to class discussions. I expect students to **attend all classes**, other than pre-approved excused absences (illness, religious observance, university-sanctioned activities) or emergencies. An absence will be considered excused if it falls under one of those categories (pre-approved or emergency) and is accompanied by documentation. Any more than two unexcused absences will result in a 1/3 deduction to your final grade (e.g., A to an A-, A- to a B+, B+ to a B,

etc...). Also, please be on time. If I notice persistent lateness, particularly if it is disruptive or during speeches, I will deduct points in this category.

COURSE SCHEDULE The assigned readings are meant to be read before the class under which they are listed. This syllabus and schedule may change to accommodate unexpected needs of the class as a whole and, thus, the course may change throughout the semester

CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to change)

**Module 1: THE BASICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA
AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING**

NOTE: THERE WILL BE A REFLECTION PAPER AFTER EACH GUEST LECTURER

Week 1 August 18-20: Role of Social Media Marketing, Strategies and Goals:

Readings:

Barker (SMM) Chapters 1-2 (1-41)

ASSIGNMENTS DUE:

- none

Week 2: August 25-27 Audience Targeting and Engagement (and a little about SEO)

Readings:

Barker (SMM) Chapters 3-4 (41-76)

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 1
2. Digital Activity of the Week 1

Week 3: September 1-3 Platforms, Social Networks, Microblogging, and more

Topics:

Readings:

Barker (SMM) Chapters 5-6 (77-112)

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 2
2. Digital Activity of the Week 2

Week 4: September 8-10 Content Creation

Readings:

Barker (SMM) Chapters 7 (113-140)

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 3
2. Digital Activity of the Week 3

Week 5: September 15-17 Video and Photo sites (and maybe a little about news)

Readings:

Barker (SMM) Chapters 8-9 (141-174)

ASSIGNMENT:

1. NO MEMOS THIS WEEK (MIDTERM)

September 17: TEST 1

Module 2: GROWTH HACKING

Week 6 September 22-24: Product Market Fit

Readings:

Holiday (Growth Hacking) Pages 1-30

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 4
2. Digital Activity of the Week 4

Week 7: September 29-October 1 Going Viral

Readings:

Holiday (Growth Hacking) Pages 31-70

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 5
2. Digital Activity of the Week 5

OCTOBER 1: TEST 2

Module 3: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Week 8: October 6-8 The Basics: Product Market Fit, Lean Product Process, Agile Approach

Readings:

Olsen (Lean Product) Chapters 1-3 Pages 3-30

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 6
2. Digital Activity of the Week 6

Week 9: October 13-15 Identifying NEEDS and Finding Your Value Proposition

Readings:

Olsen (Lean Product) Chapters 4-5 Pages 37-75

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 7
 2. Digital Activity of the Week 7
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Week 10: **October 20-22 THE MVP (Minimum Viable Product)**

Readings:

Olsen (Lean Product) Chapters 6-7

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 8
 2. Digital Activity of the Week 8
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Week 11: **October 27-29 UX (User Experience and Design), Hypothesis Testing, and Pivoting**

Readings:

Olsen (Lean Product) Chapters 8-10 Pages 111-180

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 9
 2. Digital Activity of the Week 9
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Week 12 **November 3-5 Overview of Agile, Metrics/Analytics**

Readings:

Olsen (Lean Product) Chapters 12-14 Pages 201-262

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Tell Me Something I don't know 10
 2. Digital Activity of the Week 10
-

Week 13: **November 10-12 Legal Issues (this date may change)**

ASSIGNMENT:

1. NO MEMOS THIS WEEK

November 23 TEST 3

FINALS WEEK: FINAL TAKE HOME TEST