



ABILENE
CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY

JMC 367: Social Media

Fall 2014

MWF 10-10:50 a.m., DM 320

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Office hours: MTWR 3-4:30 p.m. and by appointment

Course description

(3-0-3). A study of social media in society and the place of those tools in professional communication.

Required materials

Berger, J. (2013). *Contagious: Why Things Catch On*. New York: Simon & Schuster. ISBN: 9781451686579.

List: \$26 (\$16.27 new on Amazon)

Kerpen, D. (2011). *Likeable Social Media*. Chicago: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 9780071762342.

List: \$22 (\$11.81 new on Amazon)

Piskorski, M.J. (2014). *A Social Strategy: How We Profit From Social Media*. Princeton. ISBN: 9780691153391.

List: \$29.95 (\$22.19 new on Amazon)

Class blog at acujmcsocial.wordpress.com

Course goals

The goal of this course is to help students understand the nature of online communication, use current social media tools to share organizations' messages, and discuss the place of social media in an organization's communication strategy.

By the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to effectively:	Assessment
explain how social media affect society.	• Class discussion • Exams
understand advantages and disadvantages of social media tools in communicating various messages.	• Class discussion • Exams • How-to presentation • Class contributions
evaluate the effectiveness of social media messages and online campaigns.	• Social media audit • Exams • Class contributions
use social media tools for professional purposes.	• How-to presentation • Blog • Class discussion
understand ethical and legal concerns of social media use.	• Class discussion • Exams

Course audience

This course is designed as a menu option for all majors in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Departmental mission

Our mission is to engage students in critical and creative thinking in the classroom, in the laboratory and through mentoring relationships, leading them to become exceptional, ethical and agile communicators in a rapidly changing media environment, embracing technology, valuing diversity and embodying Christ-centered service.

College mission

The mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is to educate students for worldwide Christian service and leadership through programs of study and other learning experiences that blend a liberal arts education with professional and career education.

University mission

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

Christian perspective

The Internet puts the power of mass communication in every individual's hands. Christian communicators accept the responsibilities of accurate, thorough, ethical and attractive content that are incumbent upon every communicator. In addition, Christians have the opportunity to represent Christ in their careers and to argue for media's good attributes among Christians who focus only on negative media effects.

Multicultural elements

A Christian honors the differences God created in each of us. The Internet by its nature has the ability to connect users worldwide, creating the potential for a multicultural experience any time a user accesses the World Wide Web. Good Web strategy targets a particular audience, and practitioners who recognize differences in the way people communicate will be particularly effective. Good content online is tailored to a particular audience but remains accessible for users of other cultures and abilities.

Racial and sexual harassment statement

Racial and sexual harassment is a violation of the code of conduct as described in Section 2-02 of the ACU Student Guide and will not be tolerated during class or class-related activities. Harassment is any action, including a joke or suggestion that creates an intimidating, hostile or degrading environment and would have such an effect on a reasonable person of the alleged victim's status. Violations of this section will be referred to Campus Life.

Disability statement

Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodations for any recognized disability must submit requests in writing to the instructor by the end of the second week of the semester. This documentation must come in writing from ACU's Alpha Academic Services, which can be contacted at Ext. 2667. *The ability to consistently meet deadlines is an essential requirement of most media and media related professions. Thus, in JMC courses where meeting deadlines is an inherent element of instruction, extended time for some types of testing or other assignments may not always be an option.*

Use of technology in class

It would be difficult to study and produce social media content without computers and mobile devices, so your laptops and mobile devices will serve us well this semester. However, please remain focused on class activities during class. Computers and phones provide the distractions of the Web, social media, games, and texting. Avoid use of computers and mobile devices during class unless instructed to engage with technology. Students who must be reminded of this policy may face a grade penalty on the next in-class assignment.

Attendance

The university attendance policy will be enforced. As a general rule, you should attend every class. A student with five or more absences will be penalized one letter grade at the end of the semester. A student who misses nine or more classes for any reason may be dropped. Lab attendance counts toward the total.

Please review the JMC Attendance and Grade Policies on the JMC website (<http://www.acu.edu/academics/cas/jmc/majors/requirements.html>). Students are responsible for anything missed when they are gone. This includes assignment deadlines. **The instructor does not accept late work.** The only *possible* exceptions would be well-documented emergencies, such as your hospitalization.

Academic integrity

Your work should be your own. Your creative energy and ability is God's gift, and misrepresenting your work dishonors God, yourself, your instructor, and all media professionals. Your career stands on your reputation in media professions, and we will act on that principle in this class. Examples of unacceptable behavior include:

- Presenting another person's writing as your own.
- Cheating on assignments, quizzes or tests by copying answers.
- Unauthorized collaboration between students on assignments, quizzes or tests.
- Using material you wrote previously, either for another class or independently, and submitting it for a class assignment.

This list is not exhaustive but is meant to remind students of common temptations in the context of this course. Academic dishonesty is grounds for an F in this course. If you have any question about whether a behavior or practice is acceptable for a given assignment, you should ask ahead of time. Ignorance is not an excuse.

Students should review the department's Academic Integrity statement and the university's academic integrity policy for specific information about infractions, penalties and appeals processes:

<http://www.acu.edu/academics/cas/jmc/about/policies/integrity.html>

<http://www.acu.edu/academics/provost/documents/academic-integrity-policy.pdf>

Class format and student responsibilities

Most class sessions will include lecture and class discussion. The class works best when all students have completed readings ahead of time and regularly participate in discussion. The **class contributions** assignment below will help you engage in discussion. I will write a blog entry for each of our class meetings to summarize important points and direct you to additional resources and readings. For several weeks, you will also post to the **blog**, which will give you practice in talking about timely developments in your career field. Two **exams** provide a traditional way to demonstrate recall, comprehension, and application of readings, lectures, and class discussion. The **how-to presentation** is a hands-on assignment that will allow you to demonstrate a social media tool. The **social media audit** will allow you to study one company and evaluate how it uses its social media tools.

Tests, assignments and grading

Exams. Two tests, a midterm on **Oct. 15** and a cumulative final exam on **Dec. 9**, will each be worth 15% of the final grade. These tests together count for 30% of the final grade.

Social media audit. Students will examine the social media content of a Fortune 500 company or nonprofit organization. You will evaluate how the organization uses social media and make suggestions for better use of social media. More specifics about this assignment will be given later. You must have instructor approval for the organizations you study, and it may not be an organization with which you have a prior relationship. This project accounts for 25% of the final grade.

Blog. Students will write a series of blog posts about social media use in their fields of strategic communication, multimedia production, or journalism. The posts will be compiled into a class blog, and you will also comment on other students' posts. More specifics about this assignment will be given later. This project accounts for 25% of the final grade.

How-to presentation. Each student will walk the class through the process of completing a specific social media task. Example presentation topics include:

- How to buy a Facebook ad.
- How to use Facebook analytics.
- How to promote a tweet.
- How to create a YouTube channel.
- How to create a LinkedIn community.

Students will submit three ideas for the presentation by **Sept. 1**. You may not use any of the ideas listed here. The instructor will compile the ideas into a spreadsheet to remove duplicates, and you will choose topics in class on **Sept. 3** in the order in which you emailed topic ideas. Your presentation must include a full demonstration of the task you selected. Presentation dates will be assigned. Your presentation counts for 10% of the final grade.

Class contributions. Our class discussions will be enriched by specific examples and context for situations we cover. I will regularly ask for volunteers and assign students to find an example, look up additional information about a case, prepare discussion questions, or report back about an experiment. These opportunities will come up during class, and we will assign them as we go. I will make a note to ask you for the information in the next class, and you'll **receive a point by offering full information or completing the task.**

We will work through these contributions in rounds; that is, everyone in the class will receive an assignment before a student is allowed to earn another point. It is to your advantage to volunteer for these opportunities as they arise rather than waiting to be assigned a question. If you are absent on a day when your name is the only one left in the current round, the next round will begin and you will not earn a point.

We'll also have some "lightning rounds" when everyone in the class will receive an assignment that will count for a point or two.

Your grade for this component will be figured by your number of points (complete tasks) divided by the number of possible tasks (rounds). Your participation counts for 10% of the final grade.

Thus, your grade is based on the following:

Exams	30%
Social media audit	25%
Blog	25%
How-to presentation	10%
Class contributions	10%

The following grading scale will be used in this class.

A	92-100
B	83-91
C	74-82
D	65-73
F	Below 65

Course Schedule

This schedule provides a guide for the semester. It will change based on student interests and current events. I reserve the right to alter the schedule as necessary as the course progresses. Any such changes will be announced in class.

The readings listed should be completed by the time you come to class that day. Additional readings may be assigned and will be posted to the blog.

Date	Topic	Readings and assignments
M Aug. 25	Course intro	Pete's Challenge
W Aug. 27	Why things catch on	Berger Intro-1
F Aug. 29	Emotion	Berger 2-3
M Sept. 1	STEPPS	Berger 4-5; How-to topics due
W Sept. 3	Pick how-to topics	Berger 6-Epilogue
F Sept. 5	Twitter lightning round	
M Sept. 8	Types of social platforms	Piskorski 2; Scavenger hunt due
W Sept. 10	Blogging	
F Sept. 12	Blogging	
M Sept. 15	Microblogging (Twitter)	Piskorski 4
W Sept. 17	Microblogging (Twitter)	
F Sept. 19	How-to presentations 1	
M Sept. 22	Summit lightning round	First day to post blog content
W Sept. 24	Social networks (Facebook)	Piskorski 5
F Sept. 26	Social networks (Facebook)	
M Sept. 29	How-to presentations 2	
W Oct. 1	Guest speaker	
F Oct. 3	How-to presentations 3	
M Oct. 6	User-generated content (YouTube)	
W Oct. 8	Mobile devices/online games	
F Oct. 10	TweetDeck and Hootsuite	
M Oct. 13	Guest speaker	
W Oct. 15	Midterm exam	
F Oct. 17	Fall break	
M Oct. 20	Likeable social media	Kerpen 1-3
W Oct. 22	Responding to crisis	Kerpen 5-7
F Oct. 24	Responding to crisis	Kerpen 8-11
M Oct. 27	Responding to crisis	Kerpen 14-17

W Oct. 29	Social strategies	Piskorski 8
F Oct. 31	Strategy: American Express	Piskorski 11 Last day to post blog content
M Nov. 3	Strategy: Nike	Piskorski 12
W Nov. 5	Guest speaker	
F Nov. 7	Creating a campaign	
M Nov. 10	Developing a measurement plan	
W Nov. 12	Measurement	
F Nov. 14	Managing online identity	
M Nov. 17	Developing social media policies	
W Nov. 19	Social media and society	
F Nov. 21	Privacy	<u>The Web means the end of forgetting</u>
M Nov. 24	Social media regulation/FTC	
W Nov. 26	Thanksgiving break	
F Nov. 28	Thanksgiving break	
M Dec. 1	Company strategies	Social media audit due
W Dec. 3	Case study	
F Dec. 5	Wrap up and review	
Final exam: Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2-3:45 p.m.		