

Soc C167 – Virtual Communities and Social Media
University of California, Berkeley
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00am-9:30am
245 Li Ka Shing
Instructor: Edwin Lin, Fall 2018

Instructor: Edwin Lin

Email: edklin@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: 487 Barrows Hall, Tuesdays 10am-1pm or by appointment

Sign-up for regular OH at <http://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/icwie>

Reader's information will be posted on bCourses.

Overview of Course Content:

With the explosion of virtual communities and social media, technology and its effect on society has become a daily reality, invading all areas and aspects of our social lives. This ranges from pop culture, sports, and entertainment to political participation, sexual intimacy, and family. Everyone taking this course has some exposure to virtual communities and social media—even if one is unaware of the extent and depth of this exposure in their lives. As a result, this course is not about discovering new ideas and never-before-seen concepts, but rather providing some tools and perspectives to understand aspects of society that we are somewhat familiar with. Put another way, this course seeks to understand a growing aspect of our society through a different lens of understanding.

Explicitly, the goals of this course are: 1) to provide a survey of subfields in social media research, 2) to expose you to what social science research looks like in these subfields, and 3) to provide a space for you to reflect and personally interact with what virtual communities and social media means in your own life.

Email Policy:

I am usually very good about answering emails, but please leave at least 2 days for me to get to you, especially over the weekend (I may not get to you until Monday/Tuesday). Also, please keep emails to questions that are relatively easy to answer, such as questions about logistics, instructions, office hours, etc. For questions about class content or your papers, please see me in office hours or talk to me before/after class.

Office Hours:

Please sign up for office hours if you know in advance that you'd like to come in. Information is above. If you do not sign up, you are still welcome to drop in, but I do sometimes step out of the office when there is no appointment to run a quick errand. Also, if the door to my office is closed during office hours, feel free to knock (loudly). I try not to run late with my appointments but it does happen—if you notice me running late and have time constraints with your assigned time, please feel free to politely interrupt and let me know. You may visit me in office hours for any concern, big or small, course related or life related!

Grade Breakdown:

Disconnect Paper	15%
Take Home Midterm	25%
Virtual Community Paper	25%
Final	35%

*****If English is not your first language**, or you have trouble writing in English, there are resources on campus to help in writing your papers. I have posted some such resources on bCourses under “Files” and “Writing Resources.” You can also check out the Student Learning Center (SLC) at their website <http://slc.berkeley.edu> for more information.

Also, if you are part of the **Disabled Students’ Program (DSP)** and require any special accommodations, please talk to me and/or send me an email within the next two weeks to make early arrangements for any such accommodations.

Grading Scale for the Class:

A+ (98-100)	C (73-77)
A (93-97)	C- (70-72)
A- (90-92)	D+ (68-69)
B+ (88-89)	D (63-67)
B (83-87)	D- (60-62)
B- (80-82)	F (everything below 60)
C+ (78-79)	

LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED! The paper assignments will all be “handed out” and completed through the bCourses website. There is a one-hour grace period where you can still submit your assignment even though it will be considered late. Late assignments, are penalized a full grade (e.g. an A becomes a B). If you miss this grace period, you will be unable to submit your assignment and you will be given a 0 on it. Please be sure to turn things in on time and before the stated due date/time.

*NOTE: The reason I have a strict policy on late assignments is because I am concerned about unknowingly participating in a system that privileges certain racial, cultural, socioeconomic, family background influences that may account for one student asking for an extension while others keep silent about their circumstances. In a class this large, and without GSIs, I simply must impose a strict “no late assignments” policy.

- PLEASE submit your assignments early! Do not wait for the last minute. BCourses is known to sometimes have errors in submission (I suspect due to too many students submitting at the same time), so please save us all some stress and extra work and submit things at least an hour in advance of the due date and time.
- **If you encounter an error in submission**, please take a screenshot of the error that includes the date and time of the error (your computer’s date/time clock is good enough) and email me your assignment with the screenshot attached. In order for your assignment to be accepted, **I must receive this email before the submission due date.**

Disconnect Paper:

During the first month of the semester (make arrangements as necessary), for 36 hours you are to disconnect completely from any form of virtual community or social media. This means no text messages, emails, Internet, chat messengers, online spaces, online apps, online games, etc. You will write a short paper about this experience and one key positive or negative effect of virtual communities and social media in response to the first four weeks’ readings. See assignment on bCourses for more detailed information about this assignment.

Virtual Community Paper:

During this semester, you will be asked to spend at least five weeks (five hours a week) investing and interacting with a virtual community. This can certainly be a community that you are already a part of, but the interaction must be distinct, involved, deliberate, and intentional—driven for research and social discovery purposes. In other words, you must reach out to the community in a proactive and initiative-taking way to incite a response and deepen your interaction with and understanding of it. If you have any questions about what an appropriate virtual community/online space is, please talk to me in office hours. In the final paper, you will be asked to make an argument relating this experience to themes and course content. See assignment on bCourses for more detailed information about this assignment.

Midterm:

Your midterm exam will be a take-home exam. It will cover topics from the first eight weeks of class. It will focus primarily on short answer questions that have objective answers. More information to come as the semester moves along.

Final Exam:

Your final exam will be a take-home exam. It will be in essay format requiring you to answer questions that synthesize and evaluate material in the course. It will also require you to cite readings as examples of your argument. More information as the semester moves along.

Re-grade Policy:

If you want a re-grade, please follow the following steps. You have two weeks to initiate the beginning of this process (meaning you have one week to contact your reader). I do not do re-grades after this two week cut-off (to avoid people asking for re-grades at the end of the semester).

1. Meet with your reader (online or in-person) to discuss why you got the grade you got.
2. Write a cover letter to your reader that explains how you understand the reader's perspective and why you still have an issue with the grade (what you thought was mis-graded). I realize that you hopefully also discussed this in person, but we would like to have something written down, also in case for future reference.
3. Your reader will regrade your paper (the entire thing) and whatever grade you get becomes final grade (either higher or lower)
4. If for some reason you are still unsatisfied, you may refer the issue to me. I will need to see the cover letter and will discuss with the reader after reading your work. I should warn you, however, in general (on average from what I have seen), I may be a tougher grader than the reader. Whatever grade I end up giving is the final say on the matter.

Keep in mind, your readers read **many** papers. They probably have a sense for how your paper compares to other people's in the class. But reading many papers could also allow for mistakes, so while that is possible, please have **sober judgment** over your own work and really consider the reader's perspective. Regardless of how much time or effort you put into the assignment, if it simply did not meet the requirements, you may still have gotten a lower grade (keep in mind, your reader has no idea how much time you spent on the assignment and isn't evaluating effort, but what is written on the rubrics).

Reading List and Semester Schedule

Tips About the Readings:

Most of the readings are provided as a particular view of a topic. They should not be read as “truth,” but rather with some skepticism and analytical criticism—consider whether or not and to what extent you are convinced by the authors’ interpretation and view.

Overall, read for understanding, overarching meanings, and the big picture. Do not worry too much about specific statistics—although they may become useful in constructing your arguments for the midterm, virtual community paper, and final exam, you can always review them then.

Finally, the readings are organized in a particular way. The first 4 weeks are mostly theory-based readings and broad themes that we will see again and again. Then, weeks 5-8 are more specific to subfields and contexts, but still are looking at broad-based ideas that can be applied in multiple contexts. And finally weeks 9-13 look at certain cases and subfields as examples of some of the themes, theories, and ideas in a specific context.

Thursday, August 23 Introduction: Syllabus and Logistics

WEEK ONE

Tuesday, August 28

Introduction: Virtual Communities and Social Media

- Wellman, B., & Gulia, M. (1997). Net Surfers Don’t Ride Alone: Virtual Communities As Communities. *Communities and Cyberspace*, Edited by Peter Kollock and Marc Smith. New York: Routledge.
- Baym, Nancy. (2010). *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity (pp. 1-49).

Thursday, August 30

Actor Network Theory

- Law, John. 1992. “Notes on the Theory of the Actor-Network: Ordering, Strategy, and Heterogeneity,” *Systems Practice*. 5 (4): 379-393.

WEEK TWO

Tuesday, September 4

Theories of Technology and Society

- Feenberg, Andrew. (1999). *Questioning Technology*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-17.
- Orlikowski, Wanda. 1992. “The Duality of Technology: Rethinking the Concept of Technology in Organizations,” *Organization Science*, 3 (3): 398-412.

Disconnect Paper Handed Out

Thursday, September 6

Theories of Media Studies

- Meyrowitz, Joshua. “Medium Theory,” in *Communication Theory Today*. 50-77.

Virtual Community Paper Handed Out

WEEK THREE

Tuesday, September 11

Social Network Analysis

- Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.

Thursday, September 13

Utopian Views

- Rheingold, H. (1993). A slice of life in my virtual community. In L. M. Harasim (Ed.), *Global Networks: Computers and International Communication* (pp. 37-80). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Tufekci, Z. (2010). Who Acquired Friends Through Social Media and Why? "Rich Get Richer" versus "Seek and Ye Shall Find."

WEEK FOUR

Tuesday, September 18

Dystopian Views

- Kross, E., Verduyn, P., et. al. (2013). Facebook Use Predicts Declines in Subjective Well-Being in Young Adults. *PLoS ONE*. 8(8).
- Carr, N. (2008). Is Google Making Us Stupid? What the Internet is doing to our brains. *The Atlantic*. July/August, (<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868>)
- Przybylski, A., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C., Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*. 29. 1841-1848.

Thursday, September 20

Alone Together: Psychology and Technology

- Turkle, Sherry. "Introduction," in *Alone Together*. New York: Basic Books, 2011.

*****Disconnect Paper Due Friday, September 21, before 11:59pm*****

WEEK FIVE

Tuesday, September 25

Culture and Technology

- Castells, Manuel. "The Impact of the Internet on Society: A Global Perspective," *Change: 19 Key Essays on How Internet is Changing Our Lives*. Openmind, <https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/article/the-impact-of-the-internet-on-society-a-global-perspective/?fullscreen=true>

- Thursday, September 27** Privacy, Surveillance, and Information Capital
- Zuboff, Shoshana. "Big other: surveillance capitalism and the prospects of an information civilization," *Journal of Information Technology*. 2015. 30: 75-89.

WEEK SIX

- Tuesday, October 2** Social Capital
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital. *Journal of Democracy*. 6(1): 65-78.
 - Hampton, K. N. and Wellman, B. (2003). Neighboring in Netville: How the Internet Supports Community and Social Capital in a Wired Suburb. *City and Community*. 2(4): 277-311.

- Thursday, October 4** Social Networking Sites
- Steinfield, C., Ellison, N. B, and Lampe, C. (2008). Social Capital, self-esteem, and use of online social network sites: a longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 29: 434-445.

WEEK SEVEN

- Tuesday, October 9** Geography and Technology
- Takhteyev, Yuri, Anatoliy Gruzd, and Barry Wellman. "Geography of Twitter networks," *Social Networks* 34 (2012): 73-81
 - Leetaru, Kalev, Shaowen Wang, Guofeng Cao, Anand Padmanabhan, & Eric Shook. "Mapping the global Twitter heartbeat: The geography of Twitter." *First Monday* [Online], 18.5 (2013): n. pag. Web. 3 Aug. 2016. (Skim for important findings)

- Thursday, October 11** Mobile Life in Offline Spaces
- Humphreys, L. (2005). Cellphones in public: social interactions in a wireless era. *New Media & Society*, 7(6), 810-833.
 - Hampton, K. N., Livio, O.. and Goulet, L. S. (2010). The Social Life of Wireless Urban Spaces: Internet Use, Social Networks, and the Public Realm. *Journal of Communication*, 60(4): 701-722.

WEEK EIGHT

- Tuesday, October 16** Midterm Review!
Take-Home Midterm Handed Out via bCourses

Thursday, October 18

Wearables: Technology and the Body

- Barfield, Woodrow. "Wearable Computers and Augmented Reality," in *Fundamentals of Wearable Computers and Augmented Reality, 2nd Edition*. Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2016.
- Wasik, Bill. "Why Wearable Tech Will Be as Big as the Smartphone." *Wired.com*, December 17, 2013.
<http://www.wired.com/2013/12/wearable-computers/>

*****Take-Home Midterm Due Monday, October 22, before 11:59pm*****

WEEK NINE

Tuesday, October 23

Internet Dating and Presentation of Self

- Ellison, N., Heino, R., and Gibbs, J. (2006). Managing Impressions Online: Self-Presentation Processes in the Online Dating Environment. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. 11: 415-441.
- Whitty, Monica T. (2008) "Revealing the 'real' me, searching for the 'actual' you: Presentations of self on an internet dating site." *Computers in Human Behavior*. 24: 1707-1723.

Thursday, October 25

Intimacy Online?

- Hobbs, Mitchell, Stephen Owen, and Livia Gerber. (2017) "Liquid Love? Dating apps, sex, relationships and the digital transformation of intimacy." *Journal of Sociology*. 53(2): 271-284.

WEEK TEN

Tuesday, October 30

Youth and Children: Sexting, Cyberbullying, and Moral Panic

- Draper, N. R. A. (2012). Is your teen at risk? Discourses of adolescent sexting in United States television news. *Journal of Children and Media*. 6(2): 221-236.
- Marwick, Alice E. "To catch a predator? The MySpace moral panic," *First Monday*. 13(6) June 2008.

Thursday, November 1

Networked Teens

- Boyd, Danah. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale University Press, 2014: 1-28.

WEEK ELEVEN

Tuesday, November 6

Elections, Voting, and Political Awareness

- Kim, Yonghwan, Hsuan-Ting Chen, and Homero Gil de Zuniga. (2013). Stumbling Upon News on the Internet: Effects of Incidental News Exposure and Relative Entertainment Use on Political Engagement. *Computers in Human Behavior*. 29: 2607-2614.
- Hargittai, Eszter and Aaron Shaw (2013). Digitally Savvy Citizenship: The Role of Internet Skills and Engagement in Young Adults' Political Participation around the 2008 Presidential Election. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*. 57: 115-134.

Thursday, November 8

Revolutions, Movements, and Political Influence

- Gladwell, Malcolm (2010, October 4). Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not be Tweeted. *The New Yorker*.
- Tufekci, Zeynep and Christopher Wilson. (2012). Social Media and the Decision to Participate in Political Protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*. 62: 363-379.

WEEK TWELVE

Tuesday, November 13

Gaming: Violence, Addiction, and Virtual Communities

- Anderson, C., and Dill, K. (2000). Video Games and Aggressive Thoughts, Feelings and Behavior in the Laboratory and in Life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(4): 772-790.
- Steinkuehler & Williams (2006). Where Everybody Knows Your (Screen) Name: Online Games as "Third Places".
- Golub, A. and Lingley, K. (2008). "Just Like the Qing Empire" Internet Addiction, MMOGs, and Moral Crisis in Contemporary China. *Games and Culture*. 3(1): 59-75.

Thursday, November 15

Gaming: Competitive eSports

- Hamilton, William A., Oliver Garretson, and Andruid Kerne. "Streaming on Twitch: fostering participatory communities of play within live mixed media," *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, New York: ACM, 2014, pp. 1315-1324.
- Taylor, T. L. *Raising the Stakes: E-sports and the professionalization of computer gaming*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012.

*****Virtual Community Paper due Friday, November 16, before 11:59pm*****

WEEK THIRTEEN

Tuesday, November 20

Shortened class—explain take-home final
Take-Home Final Exam Handed Out

Thursday, November 22

Thanksgiving – No Classes

WEEK FOURTEEN

Tuesday, November 27

Education and Online Classrooms

- Roehl, A., Reddy, S. L., and Shannon, G. J. (2013). The Flipped Classroom: An Opportunity to Engage Millennial Students Through Active Learning Strategies. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*. 105(2): 44-49.

Thursday, November 29

Final Review and Evaluations

*****Final Exam due Friday, December 14 before 11:59pm submitted via bCourses!*****