

111: Social Media and Journalism

Instructor: Richard Koci Hernandez

Room: LE CONTE HALL 3

Reader / TA: Muna Danish

Class meets: Mon, Tue, Wed — 11am-1pm (2 hours) and Thurs 11am–12:30pm (1.5 hours)

Instructor Contact: I prefer you use the messaging system within bCourses. If absolutely needed koci@berkeley.edu

Office hours: By appt. Mon-Thurs 10am-11am.

Office Location: In room B1 of North Gate Hall. (Use bcourses to contact professors or TA.)

Social Media Beats Google Doc:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LODFfsuteJX5tzD5kuxzHmGMz9uJqFSQcQsIRUvFhk/edit?usp=sharing> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Final Project Time Sign-up

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15SScm0oE9cywk-U760BexAmsGhxQTIYhnz3lUr0Tmms/edit?usp=sharing> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Final Project critiques:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeOFXbzXVlaoQ4B7nlqiXdowXdKONYihlTKfdJAL4KO9biAg/viewform?usp=sf_link (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course will help students better understand and use social media for journalistic purposes by focusing on how social networks, conversational media, and associated digital media tools and platforms can be used to develop new sources, establish beneficial conversations with end users, identify story ideas and trends, aggregate and curate work of others and promote their own work.

Students will maintain lively social media accounts and learn how to use social media tools, and be trained in social media search analytic tools to enable them to better understand and measure how news—and related journalistic values—have become part of the fabric of social media. Class sessions will be augmented by lectures from guest speakers.

Social media has entered a new age of relevance, making it of critical interest to journalists and communicators of all kinds. Ask any young person today to name his or her favorite sources of news. Instead of citing familiar, traditional journalistic organizations such as the New York Times, the San Francisco Chronicle, or CNN, most now say their primary source for news is not a journalistic organization at all, but rather social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter.

This course is designed to help students understand the impact the social media revolution is having on journalism; analyze the ways in which it is altering news consumption patterns; and learn methods to provide high quality content in this new environment.

The course will use lectures, class discussions, guest speakers and case analysis of various social media sites to explore these issues.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to help students — regardless of their area of specialization — to use social media for curation, conversation, and audience-building. Recognizing that news consumers are decreasingly drawn to news home pages and instead are flocking to social media for their news, by the conclusion of the course students will have developed knowledge of and familiarity with the key players in the fast-changing landscape of social media, and understand what kinds of form and content are most effective. Students will know how to best use social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and others to transmit content online and move viewers to action. Students will be alert and adaptable to new forms of social media as they emerge. They will also develop skills in the interactive nature of news in socially-based media, where readers continually interact with authors and where reader reactions serve as an iterative element in the evolution of content.

Using case studies, instructors will teach students how to—and how not to—create, organize and manage sophisticated content for social media that will

help a student's work stand out in a competitive and densely cluttered environment. And crucially, students will learn how to apply core journalistic values and the highest professional standards to this work. Student learning will be put to work in a final graded project that students will produce for social media.

READINGS

Various readings for the course will be assigned throughout the course in the form of online links or PDFs and will be available on bCourses. This course uses content from the following books, which are **highly recommended**, (but not required.)

- [Will the Real You Please Stand Up \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Kim Garst. (Covers being authentic online.)
- [The Art of Social Media \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Guy Kawasaki. (Covers Social Media workflows, being organized)
- [Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Seth Godin (Covers herd mentality, why people self-organize)
- [Contagious: Why Things Catch On \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Jonah Berger (Covers why things go viral)
- [The Tipping Point: How Little Things Make a Big Difference \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Malcom Gladwell (Covers the virality of ideas to spread)
- [Here Comes Everyone \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) by Clay Shirky (Covers more journalistic perspective of user generated content)

GRADING POLICY AND BREAKDOWN

All readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned. Major assignments will be assigned via bCourses where the appropriate due date and time will be listed on bCourses. Students are responsible for keeping tabs on the due dates. Late assignments will be docked a point value per the grading rubric listed.

If you know you will be absent on the day an assignment is due, you are expected to **turn that assignment in prior to your absence** to receive full credit. Lack of access to or technical difficulties with computers (including failure to publish or include email attachments) are unacceptable excuses for late or missed assignments. Notifying the instructor that an assignment will be late is not an excuse to turn in an assignment late.

Grading breakdown:

Assignments	20%
Social Media Checklist	20%
Readings	20%
Final Presentation	20%
Attendance	20%

Bcourses will automatically track your grade through the summer. This will reflect your final grade at the end of the course. If you think there were errors on any assignment grade, please notify the instructor immediately after receiving the grade.

The grading scheme is as follows:

A+	100% to 99.9%
A	< 99.9% to 95%
A-	< 95% to 90%
B+	< 90% to 87%
B	< 87% to 83%
B-	< 83% to 80%
C+	< 80% to 77%
C	< 77% to 73%
C-	< 73% to 70%
D+	< 70% to 67%
D	< 67% to 63%

D- < 63% to 60%

F < 60% to 0%

REQUIREMENTS

Each student will be required to maintain public social media accounts to implement the lessons from the classes. Often, this will include interacting with the public and responding to strangers. Be prepared to compose yourself professionally and with civility. There will be lessons on dealing with trolls and some other seedy elements of the web. This is an unfortunate reality of anyone working in communications in the digital age. The lessons will help you to develop techniques for rising above the crud and maintaining composure if such situations occur.

CLASS START TIME

This will follow "Berkeley Time." Please **arrive by 11:15am**.

Attendance will be taken by logging your presence on a Google Form and writing a code that will be written on the board. Do not mark any other student as present. Marking a fellow student as present will be considered cheating, since attendance is graded. It's not worth it. It is the responsibility of the student to be marked as present in a timely manner before class begins. Students failing to be marked as present before 11:15am will be considered late.

Four tardy classes equates to one unexcused absence and will be docked on their grade accordingly.

PICKING A BEAT

This course is based around the core concept of students choosing a beat and covering that beat via social media. A mid-term beat memo and a final presentation are significant portions of the grades.

What is beat reporting?

Students will choose a beat that aligns with their most passionate interest. The beat can fall under any of the traditional journalistic coverage areas like entertainment, sports, local news, fashion, food, business, etc. Beats will be chosen in class and subject to instructor/reader approval.

After a student has chosen a beat, there will be an assignment to create a strategy plan. The plan will include the following elements and a detailed assignment for this plan will be available in bCourses:

- Which social media platforms will you use to cover your beat?
- Why these platforms?
- Are you already an expert on your beat topic? If so explain how you became an expert and how many social media followers you have on each platform.
- If your chosen beat is brand new to you, explain why you chose this beat?
- What are your plans for engaging your beat community?
- What are your growth goals for your beat?
- Identify at least 10 experts in your beat.
- How will you measure the success or failure of coverage of your beat once the class is over?

There will be a mid-course check-in on the successes and challenges on covering your beat. A formal bCourses assignment/form will ask you to provide various analytics based on your coverage. For example, the mid-term beat memo, might include questions about how many posts involving your beat are you posting per week? How many new followers, retweets, shares or comments have you received, etc. Expect the memo to be a questionnaire style report with a small section about 250-500 word narrative on your progress. Also expect to incorporate simple charts and graphs to show your final beat progress, like follower or comment growth. Finally there will be a checklist provided via bCourses that will require you to complete anytime before the due date listed above. An example of items on the checklist (some graded, some not):

- Hold a Google Hangout or Skype with someone in your beat
- Upload a YouTube Video
- Write a Yelp Review/or Trip Advisor Review
- Create a Facebook page/Tumblr Account/or other brand location
- Experiment with one social media app you've never used before
- Upload at least 10 new images to Instagram
- Cover a live event via Twitter
- Write one Medium post about your beat
- Assess your audience reach by looking at Twitter Analytics, Facebook insights, or followers/reads on Medium

The final week of class we be devoted to each student presenting their findings in an Ignite style presentation.

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: This is a tentative schedule and subject to change as guest speakers sometimes have changes in their plans. We might also move some sessions around depending on class feedback.

Week 1 (Introduction)

- Monday (7/2) Introduction and course expectations**
Overview of how this class is structured, and the topics we will cover. Explain Beat assignment.
- Tuesday (7/3) Picking beats (Presentation [PDF](#))**
We will discuss what beats people are most interested in, and looking at example of how you might cover your beat. Discuss your social media strategy plan, and go over your checklist.
- Wednesday (7/4) Holiday: NO CLASS**
No class for the Fourth of July Holiday.
- Thursday (7/5) Finish picking beats**
We'll also address the questions: Who are the big social media players? How has social media evolved? In what ways is its relationship to news changing and why? What do these factors mean for you?

Week 2 (Social Media Tools)

- Monday (7/9) Learning about the different demographics of various networks online.**
- Tuesday (7/10) How to use social media for both distribution of stories, engagement.**
- Wednesday (7/11) Social Media Tools**
Go through social media tools for your beat reporting. (Issue Twitter Follower Assignment.)

Thursday **Social media for journalistic reporting.**
(7/12)

Week 3 (Design and Branding)

Monday **Design basics**
(7/16) Lessons on CRAP principle, designing principles.

Tuesday **Design Exercise**
(7/17) Wine label exercise. Learn some Adobe Illustrator.

Wednesday **Guest Speaker** TBD- branding, audience engagement.
(7/18)

Thursday **Guest Speaker** TBD
(7/19) Talk tools for social media editors, VR.

Week 4 (Social Impact)

Monday **Guest Speaker: Meghann Farnsworth, [Recode \(Links to an external site.\)](#)**
(7/23) **[Links to an external site.](#)**
Social media in the Valley.

Tuesday **Guest Speaker: Zainab Khan, NYTIMES [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)**
(7/24) **[Links to an external site.](#)**
The power of social media in movements.

Wednesday **Social Media Beat Check-in**
(7/25) We'll meet as groups to check in on how things are going with your beats.

Thursday **Learning how social media impacts social movements, galvanizes the public.**
(7/26)

Week 5 (Process)

Monday **Ethics, Dealing with Trolls**
(7/30) Ethical dilemmas. How to deal with trolls.

Tuesday **Social Media Verification**
(7/31) How to verify content online.

Wednesday **Social Photography**
(8/1) A study of Instagram, SnapChat, and other forms of social media sharing.

Thursday **Robert Rogers (Contra Costa District Coordinator)**
(8/2) A look at live video services like Facebook Live, Periscope.

Week 6 (Presentations)

Monday (8/6) **Presentations 1**

Tuesday **Presentations 2**
(8/7)

Wednesday **Presentations 3**
(8/8)

Thursday Presentations 4
(8/9)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Note: Simply notifying the TA of an absence is welcome, but does not automatically make it excused.

Only legitimate excused absences per California Education Code (CEC) include: Accommodation of [Religious Creed](#), approved extracurricular activities (only will be considered if announced on the first day of class since the entire schedule is listed), accommodation for disability, pregnancy and parenting, approved CEC situations like funeral services or jury duty, and lastly due to minor illness with approved note from the UHS or other medical professional.

To inform the instructors about an absence, please contact TA Samantha Clark on bCourses.

In any case, if a student has four absences — regardless if they are excused or not — they should setup a time to meet with the instructor when possible. While still excused, missing too many classes may require the student to defer taking the course until next year.

MAKING UP MISSED CLASSES

As quoted by the UC Berkeley guidelines on absences:

Students are responsible for material covered during missed classes whether or not they have been formally excused; therefore it is the student's responsibility to inform him/herself about the material missed....it is not the instructor's or the GSI's responsibility to tutor students in missed material. For this reason it is recommended that students absent from class for any reason make timely contact with several other students in the class to arrange for thorough briefing on the material they missed.

The tutors and instructor will make material available on bCourses as much as possible, and will attempt to help students when possible. However, it is the ultimate responsibility for students to make-up missed work on their own.

CLASSROOM DECORUM POLICY

Students must turn off the ringers on their cell phones before class begins. No calls may be taken during class; this is enormously disruptive. If it is an emergency, then the student must leave the room.

Laptops must be shut during the **lecture** portions of the class, but may be used during the exercise and workshop portions. The instructor will notify students when it is OK to use their laptops.

Academic Integrity

Any videos, photos, papers or reports submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor or GSI beforehand. Finally, you should keep in mind that as a member of the campus community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits. The consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty—including a formal discipline file, possible loss of future internship, scholarship, or employment opportunities, and denial of admission to graduate school—are simply not worth it.

Collaboration and Independence: Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do together with one's fellow students. We recommend this. However, homework assignments should be completed independently and materials turned in as homework should be the result of one's own independent work. Some assignments are meant to be done together in a group.

Cheating: Anyone caught cheating will receive a failing grade and will also be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct. In order to guarantee that you are not suspected of cheating, please do only your own work. Since attendance is graded, marking attendance for someone else is considered a form of cheating.

Plagiarism/Self-plagiarism: You must be original in composing the writing assignments in this class. To copy text or ideas from another source (including your own previously, or concurrently, submitted course work) without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see, for example:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html>

<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html>

Turnitin: UC Berkeley's honor code states "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." As a tool to promote academic integrity in this course, written work submitted via bCourses may be checked for originality using Turnitin. Turnitin compares student work to a database of books, journal articles, websites, and other student papers. This creates an opportunity for students to improve their academic writing skills, by ensuring that other sources have been properly cited and attributed. For more information about Turnitin at UC Berkeley, visit <http://ets.berkeley.edu/academic-integrity>.

[Policy on Academic Dishonesty/ Berkeley Campus Code of Student Conduct\(link is external\)](#)

[Resources on promoting Academic Integrity](#)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Please see me as soon as possible if you need particular accommodations, and we will work out the necessary arrangements. It is important that you setup a time to meet with the instructor in the first two weeks of the course to go over any accommodations that pertain to extra time given on assignments or attendance.

Scheduling Conflicts

Please notify me in writing by the second week of the term about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts (such as religious observances, graduate or medical school interviews, or team activities). I will try my best to help you with making accommodations, but cannot promise them in all cases. In the event there is no mutually-workable solution, you may be dropped from the class.

[Guidelines Concerning Conflicts with Academic Requirements](#)

[Accommodation of Religious Creed](#)