

# NYU Prague

## MCC-UE9032P01

### Culture and Social Media Technologies

### Fall 2018

#### Instructor Information

- Jeremy Druker
- Email: jrd7@nyu.edu
- Office hours: upon request

#### Course Information

- MCC-UE9032P01
- Culture and Social Media Technologies
- Tuesdays and Thursdays (3:00pm-4:20pm)
  - Masaryk - BB

#### Course Overview and Goals

This course will examine “social media” from a cultural perspective, with a focus on how media technologies figure in practices of everyday life and in the construction of social relationships and identities. This course is based closely on one offered in New York by Professor Laura Portwood-Stacer, but we will examine many of the issues in the context of Central and Eastern Europe and compare the “Western” experience of social media with the situation in the post-communist world.

Although many of our readings will deal with Social Network Sites (SNSs), we will attempt to form an expansive definition of what constitutes “social media.” We will also work from an expansive definition of “technology,” considering the term in a cultural sense to include various practices and tools used to communicate in everyday life. The course will also look closely at the impact of social media on journalism and activism, including a dissection of the recent debates on the power of social media to transform these fields.

Questions we will consider include: What falls under the definition of “social media”? What tools can we use to study the place of social media in culture? How can social media enable the formation of community? Does the consumption of social media differ in Central and Eastern Europe, and if so, how? How are constructions of youth, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality mediated through social media technologies? Can social media technologies be a vehicle for political activism? How are social media used in marketing and advertising? What are the ethical issues associated with social media technologies? Is it possible to refuse social media? Are social media improving or harming the state of journalism?

The course will be in the form of discussions around the required readings, plus several guest lecturers from among social media experts in Prague.

#### Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- They will have transformed from mere social media users/consumers into practitioners familiar with this phenomenon in a much broader and theoretical sense.

- They will understand the differences in social media consumption between the “West” and East Central Europe, with many examples in mind.
- They will have improved their communication and writing skills through feedback from the instructor on social media posts and other course contributions.

## Course Requirements

### Class Participation

You are expected to do the required reading before class and to be an active participant during the class debates/presentations indicated below. If students do not keep up with the reading, the instructor may initiate reading quizzes at the beginning of selected classes. As part of the participation grade, each student will be asked to find and present two readings related to course sessions according to her/his choice over the course of the semester, with one presentation before the midterm. You should present a summary of the reading not lasting more than five minutes, and then your own interpretation of the main findings of the reading and their relevance to the main topic of that particular session. Each presentation will be worth 10% of the final participation grade. Please note, however, that **all students, not just the discussion facilitators, are expected to read and discuss the assigned reading each week.**

### Blog Posts

These posts will require you to make connections between course readings/theories and your own observations/experiences of social media. You are also encouraged to post responses to other students' blog posts. You will be required to post a total of two blog posts. Of these posts, at least one should deal with aspects of social media related to Central and Eastern Europe. Each student will be required to post according to the deadlines below, with a penalty of one grade for each week of lateness.

### Midterm presentations

Each student will present on a topic related to one of the class sessions in the first half of the class. Presentations will last a maximum of 15 minutes.

### Research Paper

You will conduct research on a specific topic of your choosing related to social media, with at least part of your paper analyzing the situation in Central and Eastern Europe. Your research may either be a review of literature or an empirical study (we will discuss this more in class). You will write up your study in an 8-10 pages paper that will be due the week before the final exam period.

### Research Presentation

You will create a multimedia presentation of your research, which you will share with the class as well as post online. You may choose to make a video, an audio podcast, and/or a slide presentation. The presentation should 1) explain the topic you researched, 2) describe the methods you used to conduct your research, 3) summarize your findings, and 4) point to directions for further research on the topic.

### Class Twitter Feed Participation

We will hold an ongoing conversation about our observations of social media in contemporary culture in the form of a class twitter feed. You should create a new twitter account specifically for this course. Tweets should be personal thoughts/insights/questions, responses to readings or lectures, and/or links to relevant material on the web, and should include the course hashtag (to be decided). Each student will be required to start tweeting at least three times a week, starting in the course's third week, with a penalty of one grade for each week of lateness.

## Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

<b>Assignments/Activities</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
Participation	25
Midterm presentation	20
Research paper	20
Research paper presentation	5
Blog Posts	20 (10 each)
Twitter participation	10

## Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>A</b>	92.5% and higher
<b>A-</b>	90.0 – 92.49%
<b>B+</b>	87.5% - 89.99%
<b>B</b>	82.5% - 87.49%
<b>B-</b>	80% - 82.49%
<b>C+</b>	77.5% - 79.99%
<b>C</b>	72.5% - 77.49%
<b>C-</b>	70% - 72.49%
<b>D+</b>	67.5% - 69.99%
<b>D</b>	62.5% - 67.49%
<b>D-</b>	60% - 62.49%
<b>F</b>	59.99% and lower

## Assessment Expectations

## Course Schedule

### Topics and Assignments

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Session 1 Tuesday, September 4	<b>Introduction, class requirements</b>	No reading	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 2 Thursday, September 6	<b>Studying Social Media</b>	<p>Boyd, d. m. &amp; Ellison, N. B. <a href="#">Social network sites</a>: Definition, history, and scholarship. <i>Studying Social Media</i>  <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x</a></p> <p>Baym, <i>Personal Connections in the Digital Age</i> (selections) NYU Classes</p> <p>Donath &amp; boyd, "<a href="#">Public Displays of Connection</a>"  <a href="https://search.proquest.com/docview/215202769?accountid=12768">https://search.proquest.com/docview/215202769?accountid=12768</a></p> <p>Sandvig, <a href="#">The Oversharer</a> (and Other Social Media Experiments)  <a href="http://socialmediacollective.org/2011/07/29/the-oversharer-and-other-social-media-experiments/">http://socialmediacollective.org/2011/07/29/the-oversharer-and-other-social-media-experiments/</a></p>	<b>SIGN UP FOR READING PRESENTATIONS</b>
Session 3 Tuesday, September 11	<b>Online Communities and Social Capital</b>	<p>Stevens Aubrey, J. Chattopadhyay, S. and Rill, L.A., "<a href="#">Are Facebook Friends Like Face-to-Face Friends: Investigating Relations Between the Use of Social Networking Websites and Social Capital</a>"  <a href="http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/2/3/2/1/8/p232185_index.html">http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/2/3/2/1/8/p232185_index.html</a></p> <p>"<a href="#">My Friends are my Audience</a>": Mass-mediation of Personal Content and Relations in Facebook  <a href="http://obs.obercom.pt/index.php/obs/article/view/739">http://obs.obercom.pt/index.php/obs/article/view/739</a></p>	
Session 4 Thursday, September 13	<b>Youth Development</b>	<p>Stevens Aubrey, J. Chattopadhyay, S. Be sure to have read by this date: Gardner, H. and Davis, K.: <a href="#">The app generation</a>: how today's youth navigate identity, intimacy, and imagination in a digital world  <a href="https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm7dh">https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vm7dh</a></p>	
Session 5 Tuesday, September 18	<b>Class debate: Were social media a positive or negative influence on your pre-teen and teen years?</b>	<p>Twenge, "<a href="#">Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation</a>"  <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/">https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/</a></p> <p>Cavanagh, "<a href="#">No. Smartphones are Not Destroying a Generation.</a>"  <a href="https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/once-more-feeling/201708/no-smartphones-are-not-destroying-generation">https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/once-more-feeling/201708/no-smartphones-are-not-destroying-generation</a></p> <p>Samuel, "<a href="#">Yes, Smartphones are Destroying a Generation, But Not of Kids.</a>" <a href="https://daily.jstor.org/yes-">https://daily.jstor.org/yes-</a></p>	<b>Prepare 3 speaking points for debate.</b>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		smartphones-are-destroying-a-generation-but-not-of-kids/	
Session 6 Thursday, September 20	<b>Gender/Sexuality</b>	Gudelunas, " <a href="http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?ty=as&amp;v=2.1&amp;u=nysl_me_newyorku&amp;it=Dlourl&amp;s=RELEVANCE&amp;p=HRCA&amp;qt=SN~1095-5143~~VO~16~~SP~347~~IU~4&amp;lm=DA~120120000&amp;sw=w">There's an App for That</a> " http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?ty=as&v=2.1&u=nysl_me_newyorku&it=Dlourl&s=RELEVANCE&p=HRCA&qt=SN~1095-5143~~VO~16~~SP~347~~IU~4&lm=DA~120120000&sw=w	
Session 7 Tuesday, September 25	<b>Introduction to WordPress and Twitter</b>	This lecture will introduce you to Twitter and WordPress (if you don't know them already), and show you how to post to the class blog.	
Session 8 Thursday, September 27	<b>Dating/Online Relationships</b>	<a href="http://www.buzzfeed.com/doree/if-youre-over-30-and-single-you-should-be-using-tinder">If You're Over 30 And Single, You Should Be Using Tinder</a> , http://www.buzzfeed.com/doree/if-youre-over-30-and-single-you-should-be-using-tinder <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/opinion/sunday/in-defense-of-tinder.html?_r=0">E.J.Finkel: In Defense of Tinder</a> http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/opinion/sunday/in-defense-of-tinder.html?_r=0 <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/15/nyregion/on-tinder-taking-a-swipe-at-love-or-sex-or-something-in-new-york.html?_r=0">On Tinder, Taking a Swipe at Love, or Sex, or Something, in New York</a> http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/15/nyregion/on-tinder-taking-a-swipe-at-love-or-sex-or-something-in-new-york.html?_r=0 <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/online-dating-has-its-pros-and-cons-meta-analysis-says/2012/02/04/gIQADnpysQ_story.html">E.McCarthy: Online dating has its pros and cons, meta-analysis says</a> https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/online-dating-has-its-pros-and-cons-meta-analysis-says/2012/02/04/gIQADnpysQ_story.html	First blog post due!
Session 9 Tuesday, October 2	<b>Race</b>	<a href="https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=957405">Boyd, "How Race and Class Shaped Facebook, Myspace"</a> https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=957405 <a href="https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/sihan/2010/09/10/how-black-people-use-twitter-by-farhad-manjoo-slate-magazine/">Manjoo, "How Black People Use Twitter"</a> https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/sihan/2010/09/10/how-black-people-use-twitter-by-farhad-manjoo-slate-magazine/ <a href="#">Stephen, "How Black Lives Matter Uses Social Media to Fight the Power   WIRED"</a>	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<p><a href="https://www.wired.com/2015/10/how-black-lives-matter-uses-social-media-to-fight-the-power/">https://www.wired.com/2015/10/how-black-lives-matter-uses-social-media-to-fight-the-power/</a>  <i>Freelon, McIlwain, Clark, <a href="#">“Beyond the Hashtags”</a></i>  <a href="http://archive.cmsimpact.org/sites/default/files/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf">http://archive.cmsimpact.org/sites/default/files/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf</a>  <a href="#">Hashtags in the ‘Real’ World: How #BlackLivesMatter Changed Activism</a>  <a href="https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2016/april/charlton-mcilwain-on-black-lives-matter.html">https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2016/april/charlton-mcilwain-on-black-lives-matter.html</a></p>	
Session 10 Thursday, October 4			
Session 11 Tuesday, October 9	<b>Student Midterm Presentations</b>		
Session 12 Thursday, October 11	<b>Student Midterm Presentations</b>		
Fall Break October 13-21	Fall Break		
Session 13 Tuesday, October 23	<b>Individual Discussions about paper topics and movie</b>	Filmmaker Brian Knappenberger explores the life and work of programming prodigy and information activist Aaron Swartz.	
Session 14 Thursday, October 25	<b>Online Hate Speech</b>	<p><b>Guest lecturer: Jaroslav Valuch</b>  Jaroslav is Czech expert in social media activism and communication with crisis-affected populations. He has worked with dozens of initiatives from all over the world. Recently he led a Czech governmental campaign against hate crimes and hate speech.</p>	
Session 15 Tuesday, October 30	<b>The Debate Over the Power of Social Media for Change</b>	<p><a href="#">Gladwell, “Why the revolution will not be tweeted.”</a> <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell">http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell</a></p> <p>Shirky, <a href="#">“The Political Power of Social Media,”</a>  <a href="http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media">http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media</a></p> <p>Tufekci, <a href="#">“New Media and the People-Powered Uprisings,”</a>  <a href="http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/guest/27122/?p1=A3">http://www.technologyreview.com/blog/guest/27122/?p1=A3</a></p>	

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Session 16 Thursday, November 1	<b>Student Presentations of Social Media Activism Case Studies</b>		Come to class with two examples of social media activism
Session 17 Tuesday, November 6	<b>Gamification</b>	Guest Speaker from the Prague Civil Society Center	
Session 18 Thursday, November 8	<b>Class Postponed</b>		Second Blog Post Due!
Make-up Day Friday, November 9 (9am-5pm)	<b>Make-up day for missed classes</b>		
Session 19 Tuesday, November 13	<b>Is Social Media Good for Democracy?</b>	Evgeny Morozov, " <a href="https://tropicaline.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/netdelusion.pdf">The Net Delusion</a> ," Introduction and Chapter One <a href="https://tropicaline.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/netdelusion.pdf">https://tropicaline.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/netdelusion.pdf</a>	
Session 20 Thursday, November 15	<b>Trolling and What to Do About it</b>	<a href="#">Mooney, Internet Trolls Really Are Horrible People.</a> <a href="#">Manjoo, Web Trolls Winning as Incivility Increases.</a> <a href="#">Ellen Pao, "Former Reddit CEO Ellen Pao: The trolls are winning the battle for the Internet.</a> <a href="#">Michelle Goldberg, Feminist writers are so besieged by online abuse that some have begun to retire.</a>	
Session 21 Tuesday, November 20	<b>Social Media and Terrorism</b>	Please read this overview and the excerpt summaries that follows <a href="#">Journalist's Resource:</a> <a href="http://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/social-media/social-media-violent-extremism-isis-online-speech-research-review">http://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/social-media/social-media-violent-extremism-isis-online-speech-research-review</a> <a href="#">ISIS and the Lonely Young American</a> <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/28/world/americas/isis-online-recruiting-american.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/28/world/americas/isis-online-recruiting-american.html</a>	
Session 22 Thursday, November 22	<b>Social Media's Impact on Journalism</b>	Nieman Reports, <a href="#">Truth in the Age of Social Media</a> , pages 1-31, <a href="http://niemanreports.org/issues/summer-2012/">http://niemanreports.org/issues/summer-2012/</a>	
Session 23 Tuesday, November 27	<b>Visit to RFE/RL</b>	Background reading in RFE/RL, TBA	
Session 24 Thursday, November 29	<b>Solutions Journalism</b>	TBA	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 25 Tuesday, December 4	<b>Online Disinformation: The Overall Threat and Czech Specifics</b>	<a href="#">Pomerantsev, Peter. Russia and the Menace of Unreality, The Atlantic.</a> <a href="#">Silverman, Craig. How Teens In The Balkans Are Duping Trump Supporters With Fake News.</a> <a href="#">Wardle, Claire. Fake news. It's complicated.</a> <a href="#">Smoleňová, Ivana. The Pro-Russian Disinformation Campaign in the Czech Republic and Slovakia</a> , pages 3-4, 11-12.	
Session 26 Thursday, December 6	<b>Student Presentations: Disinformation</b>		Each student should come to class with one example each of disinformation, propaganda, and misinformation to present.
Session 27 Tuesday, December 11	<b>Social Media Marketing</b>	Clemons, " <a href="#">The complex problem</a> of monetizing virtual electronic social networks" <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167923609001298?via%3Dihub">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167923609001298?via%3Dihub</a> Mangold & Faulds, " <a href="#">Social media</a> : The new hybrid element of the promotion mix" <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0007681309000329">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0007681309000329</a> Kozinets, "How online communities are growing in power" NYU Classes	
Session 28 Thursday, December 13 (last day of classes)	<b>Social Media Marketing Guest Speaker</b>	Guest Speaker (TBA)	
Session 29 Tuesday, December 18	<b>Final presentations</b>		
Session 30 Thursday, December 20	<b>Final presentations</b>		

## Course Materials

### Required Textbooks & Materials

Gardner, H. and Davis, K.: [The app generation](#): how today's youth navigate identity, intimacy, and imagination in a digital world; New Haven, Yale University Press, 2013. The text is available in the library as a separate reader for this class. (on line Library.nyu.edu <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3421304>)



## Supplemental Text (not required to purchase, copies available in NYU P Library)

- Several readers can be found in the library.

## Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)
- **NYU Prague library:** [Tritius Catalog](https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN) (https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN)

## Course Policies

### Attendance and Tardiness

Absences only for medical reasons and for religious observance will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor's note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). To be excused for religious observance, you must contact the instructor and the Academic Director via e-mail one week in advance of the holiday. Your absence is excused for the holiday only and does not include days of travel associated with the holiday. Unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% percent deduction from your final course grade for every week of classes missed.

**Please note that Friday, November 9 (9am – 5pm) is reserved as a make-up day for missed classes. Do not schedule any trips for this day.**

### Late Submission of Work

Late submissions without an excuse will be severely penalized.

### Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

**Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.**

The College of Arts and Science's Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

**“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else's idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).**

**Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”**

**“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)**

### Classroom Etiquette

No mobile phones, no computers, no tablets, no food.

**Disability Disclosure Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.