

# NYU Prague

MCC-UE 9032 P01

## Social Media Practicum Spring 22 Course Format: Blended Time Zone: 15-16:15 CET

### Spring 22

You may be taking courses at multiple locations this semester. If you are enrolled in this course 100% **remotely** please make sure that you have completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures. **Please contact the site Academic Director ([vanda.thorne@nyu.edu](mailto:vanda.thorne@nyu.edu)) if you need more assistance.**

If you are attending **in person**, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations require additional physical distancing.

### Instructor Information

- Name: Jeremy Druker
- Email: [jrd7@nyu.edu](mailto:jrd7@nyu.edu)
- Office hours: By appointment.
- Cell phone: +420 728 334 738

### Course Information

- Course Number: MCC-UE 9032 P01
- Course Name: Social Media Practicum
- Meeting times: 15-16:15 CET
- [NYU Prague Academic Calendar](#)

### Course Overview and Goals

Welcome to the Social Media Practicum! I look forward to working with you as we examine “social media” from a cultural and societal perspective. Specifically, we will focus on how media technologies figure in practices of everyday life and in the construction of social relationships and identities. 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 concern 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.

Questions we will consider include:

- 1) What falls under the definition of “social media”?
- 2) What tools can we use to study the place of social media in society?
- 3) How can social media enable the formation of community?
- 4) Does the consumption of social media differ in Central and Eastern Europe, and if so, how?
- 5) How are constructions of youth, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality mediated through social media technologies?
- 6) Can social media technologies be a vehicle for political activism?
- 7) How are social media used in marketing and advertising?
- 8) What are the ethical issues associated with social media technologies?
- 9) Can the spread of disinformation on social media be curtailed?
- 10) Are social media improving or harming the state of democracy and journalism?

Students will receive information through lectures, readings, discussions, and from writing assignments. The class will be informal and interactive, with a heavy emphasis on class participation and presentations. A centerpiece of the course will be a capstone project based on design thinking (more below).

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

- Define and explain the definition of social media in several different contexts.
- Demonstrate improved communication and writing skills through feedback from the instructor on social media posts and other course contributions.
- Compare the differences in social media consumption between the “West” and East Central Europe, with many examples in mind.
- Understand the impact of social media and new technologies on individual development, including your own.
- Place daily news about social media in the larger context and analyze the implications.
- Identify the ways both good and bad actors are using new technologies to advance their goals.

## **Course Requirements**

### **1. 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 present two readings from the assigned list 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. Please note, however, that *all* students, not just the discussion facilitators, are expected to read and discuss the assigned reading each week.

## **2. Two 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, each between 500-700 words. One blog post should focus on an issue present in post-communist Central/Eastern Europe (not Germany, Austria, or Turkey!). Each student will be required to post according to the deadlines below, with a penalty of one grade for each week of lateness.

## **3. Capstone project**

Using the principles of human-centric design, students will design, test and create prototypes for social media applications that will address the shortcomings of social media that we, together, identify over the course of the semester. Through this multi-stage, creative process, students will acquire a better understanding of the inner workings of social media and their influence on individuals and improve their writing and social media skills by documenting the process on the class blog. Students will work in groups, with the size determined by course enrollment.

### **Design sprints**

There will be three stages of prototyping that will be evaluated: the initial discovery phase, which will include interviews with target groups, and then presentations of the early stages of the prototypes. After each of the first two stages, the groups should post on the class blog about their experiences in working through any obstacles during the process.

### **Interviews for capstone**

Students will interview their peers and potentially other target groups (either in-person or virtually) to learn more about their use of social media, especially their likes and dislikes. The one-hour interviews (at least two), together with a summary of conclusions, will be assessed based on their thoroughness and insights they provide for the project.

### **First Draft for capstone (class presentation)**

Outside of class, groups will use both the interviews and their own research/creativity to design the first version of their prototypes, which will be assessed based on their efforts to answer the following questions and provide a storyboard to visually illustrate the functions of the product:

- How it works;

- Target groups;
- Financial sustainability; and
- Marketing.

### **Second Draft for capstone (class presentation)**

Following the first presentation, students will test their apps with outside groups (potentially their interviewees but also others) to gather feedback. Based on these comments and the critique from the professor and classmates, students will make changes and present the next version of the app. Assignments will be assessed on their ability to respond to questions raised during the critique and testing.

### **Final capstone presentation (class presentation)**

The final presentations will be assessed (as above) on their ability to come up with compelling solutions to the problems identified with social media, as well as each group's ability to upgrade their products based on feedback.

## **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>
Class participation	20%
Two blog posts	20%
Interviews for capstone	10%
First draft for capstone	10%
Second draft for capstone	10%
Final capstone presentation	30%

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

Please see relevant rubrics at the time of assignment.

## Course Schedule

### Topics and Assignments

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Session 1 Tuesday, January 25	Class Introduction	No reading required	
Session 2 Thursday, January 27	Studying and Defining Social Media and Online Communities	Boyd, Ellison, 2007, pp. 210-230. Donath, Boyd, 2004, pp. 71-82.	
Session 3 Tuesday, February 1	Online Communities and Social Capital	Baym, 2010, selections. <a href="#">Social Capital primer</a>	

Session 4 Thursday, February 3	Introduction to Human-Centric Design and Social Media Project  In-class HCD exercise.	<a href="#">Free download</a> of IDEO.org, “The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design”	
Session 5 Tuesday, February 8	Minority Community-Building	A People’s History of Black Twitter, Parts 1-3, Jason Parham, <a href="#">Wired</a> magazine  <a href="#">Can Social Media Participation Enhance LGBTQ+ Youth Well-Being?</a> Development of the Social Media Benefits Scale, Shelley L. Craig, Andrew D. Eaton, Lauren B. McInroy, ...	
Session 6 Thursday, February 10	Introduction to WordPress (guest lecturer)	How to use WordPress, the class blogging platform. This lecture will introduce you to WordPress (if you don’t know it already), and show you how to post to the class blog.	
Session 7 Tuesday, February 15	Youth Development	Everyone should read, in its entirety: Gardner & Davis, 2013.	<b>First blog post due by midnight.</b>
Session 8 Thursday, February 17	Design learning: Interviewing and Inspiration	In-class interviewing exercise and discussion of assignment due March 1	
Session 9 Tuesday, February 22	Class debate: Were social media a positive or negative influence on your pre-teen and teen years?	Twenge, “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation” Cavanagh, “No, Smartphones are Not Destroying a Generation.”  Samuel, “Yes, Smartphones are Destroying a Generation, But Not of Kids.”	
Session 10,	Dating/Online Relationships	Shafir, 2015. Finkel, 2015. Feuer, 2015.	

Thursday February 24		McCarthy, 2012.	
Session 11, Tuesday, March 1	TikTok/Reddit: The Good and the Bad	TBD	<b>Completed interviews and summary due</b>
Session 12 Thursday, March 3	Excursion (TBD by current health situation)	No reading	
Session 13 Tuesday, March 8	Design learning: Ideation	Discussion and selection of greatest problems with social media today; team construction  Required reading:  Ideation section in IDEO handbook.	
Session 14 Thursday, March 10	Facebook and Democracy	Siva Vaidhyanathan, "Antisocial Media: How Facebook Disconnects Us and Undermines Democracy, excerpts.	
Tuesday, March 15	<b>SPRING BREAK - NO CLASSES</b>		
Thursday, March 17	<b>SPRING BREAK - NO CLASSES</b>		
Session 15 Tuesday, March 22	Bad Actors: Terrorists and Trolls	<u><a href="#">Mooney. Internet Trolls Really Are Horrible People.</a></u>  <u><a href="#">Manjoo. Web Trolls Winning as Incivility Increases.</a></u>  <u><a href="#">March. New research shows trolls don't just enjoy hurting others, they also feel good about themselves</a></u>  <b><u><a href="#">ISIS and the Lonely Young American</a></u></b>	
Session 16 Thursday, March 24	Online Disinformation: The Overall Threat and Czech Specifics	Wardle, Claire. " <u><a href="#">Fake News. It's Complicated.</a></u> " <i>First Draft</i> , 16 Feb. 2017.	<b>Second blog post due by midnight.</b>

		<a href="#">Debunking Handbook 2020</a>	
Session 17 Tuesday, March 29	Media Literacy and Disinformation (guest speaker)	<a href="#">Case Study of Czech Disinformation</a>	
Session 18 Thursday, March 31	First presentation of prototypes/critique		First draft of prototype
Session 19 Tuesday, April 5	First presentation of prototypes/critique		First draft of prototype
Session 20 Thursday, April 7	Citizen journalism (guest lecture)		
Session 21 Tuesday, April 12	Second presentation of prototypes/critique		Second draft of prototype
Session 22 Thursday, April 14	Second presentation of prototypes/critique		Second draft of prototype
Session 23 Tuesday April 19	Authoritarian Use of Social Media	<a href="#">Evgeny Morozov, "The Net Delusion," Introduction and Chapter One</a>  <a href="#">Peter Kreko, "The Authoritarian Capture of Social Media."</a>	
Session 24 Thursday, April 21	Guest speaker (online) about use of social media during the protests in Belarus	<a href="#">Yan Auseyushkin, The Telegram Effect</a>	
Session 25 Tuesday, April 26	Social Media's Impact on Journalism	TBD	
Session 26	Social Media Marketing	Clemons, 2009.	



Thursday, April 28		Mangold and Faulds, 2009.	
Session 27 Tuesday, May 3	<b>Final HCD presentations</b>		
Session 28 Thursday, May 5	<b>Final HCD presentations</b>		
<b>Reading Day</b> Tuesday, May 10	<b>NO CLASSES</b>		
Session 29 Thursday, May 12	<b>Course Wrap-Up</b>		

## Course Materials

### Required Textbooks & Materials:

#### Resources:

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

## Course Policies

### Attendance and Tardiness

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers, or online through NYU Brightspaces if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to Academic Director Vanda Thorne ([vt21@nyu.edu](mailto:vt21@nyu.edu)) to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academic Director Vanda Thorne ([vt21@nyu.edu](mailto:vt21@nyu.edu)) by email immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). **Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies.** Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academic Director, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

### **Late Submission of Work**

1. Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU SITE Staff), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.
2. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.
3. Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.
4. Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.
5. Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

### **Final Exams**

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between final exams, please bring it to the attention of the site Academic Director as soon as this is known to facilitate alternate arrangements. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

## **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**

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary)
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class. In online classes, consider using the chat function or “raise hand” function in order to add your voice to class discussions.

## **Inclusivity Policies and Priorities**

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

## **Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU SITE's Academics Office in writing via email one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

## **Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)**

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

## **Moses Accommodations Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 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. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Prague.

## **Bias Response**

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University

school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: [bias.response@nyu.edu](mailto:bias.response@nyu.edu)
- Phone: 212-998-2277