Course Description
Social media has been described as “the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into publishers.” More simply, it is “any tool or service that uses the Internet to facilitate conversations.”

Social media is not a goal in itself. Instead it’s a way (actually, many ways) of achieving marketing, journalism and other communication objectives. Think of it as a road to where you’re going, or a vehicle for getting there, rather than as a destination.

In less than a decade, technology-enabled channels of user-generated content have emerged to empower individuals and institutions to become their own media, producing and distributing digital content anytime, from anywhere. This summer, Google+ arrived on the scene, allowing users more targeted distribution of information they share.

The course will explore how vehicles including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are dramatically altering the ways we live, work, learn, shop and develop relationships. The course will especially emphasize the business uses of these tools.

Instructor
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What outcomes can students expect from Comm 660R 860R?
There’s an expression: You are who Google says you are. It reflects the growing truth that reputations are often established and maintained online.

In this course, you’ll gain or extend a working knowledge of Twitter, Hootsuite, Google Profile, WordPress and LinkedIn to build your professional brand online. If you do the assignments well, you’ll positively shape your search engine results and have an Internet portfolio to share with potential employers.

Your critical thinking will be developed through reading, writing, discussion and presentation. We’ll analyze the opportunities and dilemmas faced by individuals and professional communicators in this emerging sphere.

As a student in this course, you are expected to:
• Meet all deadlines. More than 40% of your grade will be allocated by the middle of the semester, so you won’t be able to salvage your grade with a burst of energy at the end.
• Attend and participate in each week’s class.
• Act as you would in a professional setting, treating others with respect.
• Practice personal integrity and academic honesty, abiding by the WSU student code of conduct, http://www.webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch8_05.htm.
Required Book


Other Required Reading

Other required reading is listed in this syllabus and may be posted in the Course Documents section on Blackboard. If you encounter a non-working link, please let me know.

Basis for the final grade

- Social media postings: 50% (allocated around Oct. 15 and the end of the semester).
- Tests 20% (take home tests tentatively due Oct. 5 and Nov. 16)
- Class participation/attendance 15% (allocated around Oct. 15 and the end of the semester). Two absences will result in a 10% reduction in the overall course grade; three or more absences in a 15% reduction.
- Special assignments described below: 15%.

Graduate student special assignment

Each graduate student, with the instructor’s approval, will select a serious contemporary book related to social media, not a “how-to” book. The grad student will prepare a 15-minute class presentation and 2,500-word blog post on the major lessons from the book. The blog post is due Oct. 26 and presentations will begin that evening and continue the following week. For ideas, check library list at http://bit.ly/comm660smbooks or these lists, http://windmillnetworking.com/2010/12/02/top-15-recommended-social-media-books-of-2010/ or http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-380529.html or http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2010/10/25/11-social-media-and-technology-books-you-have-to-read/

In addition, grad students will often have longer weekly writing assignments and are expected to take leadership roles in class discussions and in the questioning of guest speakers.

Undergraduate student special assignment

Each undergraduate student, with the instructor’s approval, will select a website to report on. Each student will publish a 2,000-word blog post describing the site’s target audience, features and benefits, an analysis of why it is successful and how the user experience could be improved. The blog post is due Oct. 26 and some of you will be called on that evening and the following week to show your site and discuss briefly in class. For ideas, you can find ranked lists of websites by scanning this code: or visiting http://www.alex.com/topsites

Assignment format

Many written assignments will be posted to your social media accounts; others, as noted, will be emailed to lou.heldman@wichita.edu. None will be turned in on paper. I’m looking for clear writing that flows naturally from clear thinking. Please include working hyperlinks.

Twitter #hashtag: wsusm
All Twitter posts for the course must include the hashtag, #wsusm (for WSU social media). No Twitter assignments can be credited that don’t include the hashtag.

The schedule below is subject to change. Communication about the class will be conducted on Blackboard and through WSU email.

Assignments are purposely concentrated prior to Thanksgiving so that most of your work will be done here before final papers or projects are due in other courses. There is no final exam.

Week 1, Aug. 24: Social Media course overview; introduction to library guide and Twitter Course overview. Introductions to four leading thinkers about social media – Danah Boyd, Charlene Li, Jay Rosen and Brian Solis. Using library resources and course guide on Blackboard (Melissa Mallon). Introduction to Twitter, including establishing individual accounts, use of class hashtag, #wsusm.

Assignments before next class
1. Read pages 1-23 in Engage!, the Solis book.
2. Read Jay Rosen, “The People Formerly Known as the Audience.” Be sure to browse the comments, too.
4. Read Danah Boyd’s speech, “Networked Privacy.”
5. Undergraduates write 1,000 words, graduates write 1,500 words reflecting on what you’ve read in the above assignments, your thoughts about how social media should be defined and where it’s headed. This can include your own experiences, but be sure to incorporate your thoughts on Solis, Rosen, Li and Boyd. This should be emailed to lou.heldman@wichita.edu no later than noon Tuesday, Aug. 30. In a few weeks this will be your WordPress blog post #1.

Optional: Whether you’re new to Twitter or a knowledgeable veteran, you may want to check out (http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/) for information on making the best use of the service.

Week 2, Aug. 31: Preparing for ESC Connect (Comm Week)

Discussion of the reading assignments, your essays and Twitter account.

We’ll also talk about your ESC Connect (Comm Week) assignments. You will be assigned to a team to develop and execute a social media marketing plan for ESC Connect events Oct. 19-20. The team plan will be for use of the ESC web page, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Assignments before next class
1. Read pages 25-29 and 51-61 in Engage!
2. Your Twitter account should include your business-appropriate photo, a very brief professional bio and your first five tweets related to social media. Don’t forget the #wsusm hashtag. These can be your own thoughts, retweets or links.

3. By next class, be following all Twitter accounts for the class, plus at least 20 other local accounts and least 20 national accounts. Scan the QR codes below to find suggestions for people and organizations to follow.

Local:  
http://listorious.com/kansasdotcom/wichita  
http://listorious.com/mashable/social-media

National:  


5. Look at the LinkedIn profile of J.D. Patton

Week 3, Sept. 7: Establishing your professional presence online: Blogging

Introduction to WordPress blogs (J.D. Patton, Armstrong Shank).

Introduction to Pew Research findings on use of social networking sites.  

Assignments before next class
1. Read pages 62-95 in Engage!
2. Post 3 tweets about social media.
3. Complete setting up your blog on WordPress, using your own name, photo and bio. Link your blog to your Twitter account. It’s optional, but you may want to tie to your personal Facebook or other accounts.
4. Post your Aug. 30 writing assignment (WordPress blog post #1) on your new blog. Make sure to include a good headline and add at least one image or video.
5. Check out Suzuki of Wichita’s main website to prepare for next week’s class at the dealership.
6. Look at the LinkedIn profile of Tom White Jr.

Week 4, Sept. 14: Business field trip: Integrating social media into marketing strategy.

We will meet tonight at Suzuki of Wichita from 6 to 8 p.m. Our host is General Manager Tom White Jr., who will discuss the dealership’s extensive use of SM.

The dealership is located at 11610 E. Kellogg, just east of Greenwich, on the north side of the road. Take the first left off Kellogg east of Greenwich to reach the entrance. Attendance is required. Please contact Lou if you don’t have transportation.

Assignments before next class
1. Read pages 97-125 in Engage!
2. All students write 1,000 words on your WordPress blog, reflecting on Suzuki of Wichita’s use
of social media. What do you think other businesses can learn? What do you think Suzuki of Wichita can be doing better? This will be WordPress blog post #2.
3. Post a substantive comment of at least 100 words on a classmate’s WordPress post #1.
4. Post 3 tweets about social media.
5. Look at the LinkedIn profile of Ryan E. Cole

**Week 5, Sept. 21: Establishing your professional presence online: You are who Google says you are.**

Introduction to HootSuite, Google Profiles and Google+ (Ryan Cole, Juggle Media). You will be able to post to Twitter, Facebook, WordPress and LinkedIn through HootSuite.

We’ll talk about the test.

I’ll also talk about your blog/presentation assignments. The undergraduate assignments must be posted on blogs by Oct. 19; the grad assignments must be posted on blogs by Oct. 26 and grad presentations will start that evening.

**Assignments before next class (ALL EXCEPT TEST can be by Oct. 5)**

1. Take-home test, with your answers emailed to lou.heldman@wichita.edu by noon, Tuesday, Sept. 27. The test will be worth 10% of your semester grade.
2. Read pages 127-156 in *Engage!*
3. Your Hootsuite account should be up and running with at least your Twitter account and WordPress blog attached to it. Optional, but recommended: add your Facebook account.
4. Post 3 tweets about social media.

**Week 6, Sept. 28: Team meetings on ESC Connect (Comm Week) plan**

There is no formal meeting this week, but I expect each team to meet and develop its social media plan to market ESC Connect. The purpose of the plan is to encourage attendance at Comm Week events assigned to the team. The team plan will be for use of the ESC web page, Facebook and Twitter accounts to promote specific events. Captains have authority and responsibility for the team final products, and will be consulted on individual grades.

**Assignments before next class**
By noon Tuesday, October 4, the captain of each team will email to lou.heldman@wichita.edu:
1. A package for the ESC website for each event you’ve been assigned. The package should include, at minimum, a strong descriptive headline, up to 150 words of copy that will capture readers’ interest and promote attendance at the event(s) you’ve been assigned and photos, graphics or video.
2. At least three Facebook posts promoting the event(s).
3. At least four tweets promoting your event(s).
4. Look at the LinkedIn profile of Brandi Koskie
Week 7, Oct. 5: Living and working on the Internet
We’ll meet a true integrated communicator and new media explorer, Brandi Koskie.

We’ll also talk about your team efforts for ESC Connect (Comm Week).

Assignments before next class

1. Read pages 157-178 in Engage!
2. All students write 750 words on your WordPress blog, reflecting your views on the Internet life/work of Brandi Koskie and whether you could see yourself doing something similar. This will be WordPress blog post #3.
3. Post a substantive comment of at least 100 words on a classmate’s WordPress blog post #2. Make this a different classmate than before.
   Follow links on that page to Major Trends and Key Findings.

Week 8, Oct. 12: The role of social media in global news; introduction to LinkedIn

We’ll look at social media and the traditional news media, including how social media is changing consumer expectations about the urgency and completeness of news. We'll discuss the role of social media in coverage of events such as the Haitian earthquake, Japanese tsunami, Arab Spring and Bin Laden death. What does the rise of social media mean to traditional news media companies, and to news consumers?

We’ll also talk about establishing and using LinkedIn accounts for professional networking.

Assignments before next class

1. Undergraduates write 1,000 words, graduates write 1,500 words reflecting on what you’ve read and discussed about the state of the news media and your beliefs about its future. You may write broadly about the media, or focus on a segment such as newspapers, broadcast or online. This will be WordPress blog post #4.
2. Post a substantive comment of at least 100 words on a classmate’s WordPress blog post #3. Make this a different classmate than before.
3. Set up your LinkedIn account with bio and photo.
4. Request to connect with at least 20 people on LinkedIn, focusing on those who may be able to help you in your career.

Optional: Whether you’re new to LinkedIn or a knowledgeable veteran, you may want to check out this short video for information on making the best use of the service, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNi9RVrXlhM&feature=related. Scan the QR code below to watch the video on your mobile device:
Week 9, Oct. 19 Comm Week – Attend Distinguished Alumni event, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Ulrich Museum. No class, but see assignments.

Assignments before next class

1. Students must attend the Distinguished Alumni event during regular class time next week, plus at least one other ESC Connect (Comm Week) event. Provide at least 5 “live” tweets from the second event, or post them within one hour of that event.
2. Read 179-207 in Engage!
3. The graduate 2,500-word blog item and 15-minute presentation must be posted by Oct. 26. This will be WordPress blog post #5.
The undergraduate 2,000-word blog post must be posted by Oct. 26. This will be WordPress blog post #5.

Week 10, October 26: Graduate presentations and undergraduates called upon informally

Assignments before next class

1. Begin following these Wichita news organizations on Twitter: kansasdotcom (Wichita Eagle), KSN, KAKE, KWCH, KFDI and KNSS.
2. All students write a 750-word blog item on which Wichita news organization you believe does the best job on Twitter and why. This will be WordPress blog post #5.
3. Post a substantive comment of at least 100 words on a classmate’s WordPress post #4.
Make this a different classmate than before.
4. Post 3 tweets about social media.

Week 11, November 2: Graduate presentations and undergraduates called upon informally

Assignments before next class

1. Read 209-227 in Engage!

Week 12, Nov. 9: Facebook
We’ll discuss the Danah Boyd essay, the Kirkpatrick chapter and several other aspects of Facebook, including its usefulness to marketers and efforts to become the only network its users need.
Assignments before next class
1. Read 229-243 in Engage!
2. Graduate students write 750 words, undergraduates write 1,250 words (yes, that’s right!) on your WordPress blog as an open letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. Give him your best ideas for improving the user experience on Facebook over the next three years. This will be WordPress blog post #6.
3. Post a substantive comment of at least 100 words on a classmate’s WordPress post #5. Make this a different classmate than before.
4. Have at least 20 professional connections on LinkedIn, not including classmates, professors or family members.

Week 13, Nov. 16: Review for test and peer review of your social media accounts

We’ll review the Solis book reading through page 243 and have peer reviews of your Twitter accounts, WordPress blogs and LinkedIn accounts.

Assignments before next class
1. Take-home test, with your answers emailed to lou.heldman@wichita.edu by noon, Tuesday, Nov. 22. The test will be worth 10% of your semester grade.
2. Improve your Twitter account, WordPress blog and LinkedIn account with help from peer reviews. These will be evaluated by Lou around Dec. 8 and be worth 25% of your semester grade, allocated 5% for Twitter account, 15% for blog and 5% for LinkedIn account.

Nov. 23: No class or assignments, Happy Thanksgiving

Week 14, Nov. 30: Creating an online social media portfolio

How to leverage your social media efforts in a job search.

Week 15: Dec. 7: The future of social media and your future in it

Summing up where social media is today and where it may be headed.

Privacy
This elective course deals with branding, including establishing your professional brand online. Some assignments require posting your photo, your name and the type of biographical information that might be included in a job application, resume or portfolio.

Disabilities
If you have a physical, psychiatric/emotional, or learning disability that may impact your ability to carry out assigned course work, please contact the Office of Disability Services. The office is located in Grace Wilkie Annex, room 150, 978-3309 (voice/tty). Disability Services will review your concerns and determine, with you, what academic accommodations are appropriate.