

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Soci-2112-FDE 2019

Friendship@Facebook.com: Social Media, the Individual, and Community

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Course Outline

This course of study examines the nature and consequences of new forms of social media and social networking. More specifically, the course offers a critical analysis of the impact that new types of digitized communications (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Skype, text messaging, blogging, email, mobile phones, the internet, and so on) are having on social interactions and personal relationships. To this end, the course introduces numerous analytical concepts and theories which are used to deepen our understanding of how social media are shaping our everyday lives and personal connections. Topics include a brief history of the internet, the digital divide, theories of technology such as Technological Determinism and Social Construction of Technology, the face-to-face vs. mediated-communications debate, the role of gender and culture in digitized media, social media and community development, social media and the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships, and others. The course of study gives special attention to Twitter and Facebook.

Readings

The following books are required reading. They are important sources of information for written assignments and video analyses. Please refer to the Course Schedule for reading dates.

Required Books:

Baym, Nancy. 2015. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age, 2nd Edition*. Polity Press. ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-7034-8(pb)

Murthy, Dhiraj. 2018. *Twitter: Social Communication in the Twitter Age, 2nd Edition*. Polity Press. ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-1250-8(pb)

Grading Scheme

Assignment #1 Parts 1 & 2.....	20%
Assignment #2.....	30%
Assignment #3.....	30%
Assignment #4.....	20%

Written Assignments

Please refer to the course site for descriptions of the written assignments.

Video Material

The course of study includes 3 videos which address various issues of relevance to the course. The videos are readily available online at no cost. You are urged to view the videos at the appropriate point in the course (see the Course Schedule for recommended viewing times). You may post comments about the videos --preferably ones which reflect key course concepts introduced and discussed in the readings-- in the Discussions area of our course site. You are encouraged to read and respond to the comments of others, always in a courteous

fashion. Access to the Discussions area of our site is gained by simply clicking the Discussions link on the navigation bar at the top of the site page.

Discussions Forum

Our course site features a Discussions tool (tab located on the navigator bar at top of page) where you can interact with classmates, discuss course concepts and issues, and seek clarification of course content (learning objectives, review questions, etc.). If you have an issue of a private nature, please do not use the Discussions forum but rather email me directly: brian.mcmillan@lakeheadu.ca

***Please Note:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities and/or medical conditions to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please contact Student Accessibility Services <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

Thunder Bay - SAS -- SC0003, 343-8047 or sas@lakeheadu.ca
Orillia - SAS - OA 1030, [705-330-4008 ext 2103](tel:705-330-4008)) or oraccess@lakeheadu.ca

Course Schedule

- Sept. 3 - 15:** New Forms of Personal Connection (Baym, ch. 1)
What is Twitter? (Murthy, ch. 1)
Video: see Course Contents
- Sept. 16 - 29:** Making New Media Make Sense (Baym, ch. 2)
Contextualizing Twitter (Murthy, ch. 2)
- Monday Sept. 30:** Assignment #2 Deadline: 11:59 p.m. EST
- Oct. 1 - 6:** Communication in Digital Spaces (Baym, ch. 3)
Theorizing Twitter (Murthy, ch. 3, pp. 33-45 only)
- Oct. 7 - 13:** Communities and Networks (Baym, ch. 4)
Theorizing Twitter (Murthy, ch. 3, pp. 45-54 only)
Video: see Course Contents
- Oct. 14 - 18:** Fall Break
- Monday Oct. 21:** Assignment #1/Part 1 Deadline: 11:59 p.m. EST
- Oct. 22 - 27:** Twitter and Journalism (Murthy, ch. 4)
Twitter and Disasters (Murthy, ch. 5)
- Oct. 28 - Nov. 3:** Twitter and Activism (Murthy, ch. 6)
Twitter and Health (Murthy, ch. 7)
- Monday Nov. 4:** Assignment #3 Deadline: 11:59 p.m. EST
- Nov. 5 - 17:** New Relationships, New Selves? (Baym, ch. 5)
Digital Media in Everyday Relationships (Baym, ch. 6)
Video: see Course Contents

Nov. 18 - Dec. 2: Celebrities and Branding (Murthy, ch. 8)
Conclusion: The Myth of Cyberspace (Baym, pp. 174-79)
Conclusion (Murthy, ch. 8)

Friday Nov. 29: Assignment #4 Supplementary Readings Posted: 9:00 a.m. EST

Monday Dec. 2: Assignment #1/Part 2 Deadline: 11:59 p.m. EST

Friday Dec. 6: Assignment #4 Deadline: 11:59 p.m. EST

End