COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines digital media from a social and cultural perspective and focuses on how media technologies (re)configure practices of everyday life. We will approach digital media from a broad definition to encompass social networking sites, mobile technologies and applications, online communities, games, and virtual worlds. The course incorporates the perspectives of various stakeholders including citizens, consumers, industries, policymakers, and governments. This class primarily takes an American perspective but welcomes intercultural and international perspectives as well. In addition to studying and analyzing social and digital media, we will also be actively communicating through and participating in the platforms and networks we study. Students will have the opportunity to simultaneously conduct analytical research as well as create and participate in social media practices.

OBJECTIVES
✓ Offer students the conceptual and analytical tools necessary to examine the real and potential influences of social media
✓ Provide students with a working knowledge of the development, organization, and operation of different digital media technologies and industries
✓ Highlight the social choices students face as citizens, consumers, producers, and media professionals in their own encounters with digital technologies and applications
✓ Provide students with opportunities to critically engage with social and digital media for the purposes of learning, collaborating, and research

By the end of this course students will be able to:
✓ Describe how social media enables the formation of community
✓ Analyze how identity is performed, complicated, complimented, and challenged in/with/through digital media
✓ Assess the commercial uses of digital media technologies
✓ Critique debates about ownership, labor, privacy, intellectual property, regulation, civic engagement, and ethics in a digital age

CLASS MEETS TUESDAY & THURSDAY 2:00 – 3:20
RTFP 180F

Dr. Jacqueline Vickery, Ph.D.
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Hours: Tues./Thurs. 12:30-1:45
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REQUIRED TEXTS
1. The Social Media Reader by Michael Mandiberg (Ed.); paperback or e-book
2. It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens by danah boyd; hardcover or free e-book
3. All other readings will be made available on Blackboard
ASSIGNMENTS

DEBATES = 300 POINTS
- Oral Debate = 150
- Written Prep = 100
- Audience Participation = 25 X 2 = 50

ESSAYS & REFLECTIONS = 400 POINTS
- Tech & Society Essay = 100
- Identity Project = 50
- Privacy Essay = 100
- Industry Essay = 100

READING QUIZZES = 100 POINTS
- 10 quizzes worth 10 points each

EXAM = 125 POINTS

FINAL PAPER OR PROJECT = 125 POINTS
- Individual research paper
- OR Creative project as a group (3-4 people)

1000 TOTAL POINTS

A = 900-1000  B = 800-899  C = 700-799
D = 600-699  F = fewer than 600

Late Assignments: You will lose a full letter grade on the assignment for every day your assignment is late. Assignments more than 3 days late will NOT be accepted; this means you will receive an automatic “0” for the assignment. Assignments are considered late if they are not turned in by the dates and times provided on the syllabus.

Extra Credit: Your team will earn 5 extra points for winning the debate (as voted on by the class). No extra credit opportunities will be offered on an individual basis, so do not ask. If you are struggling with the course materials, then come see me for additional guidance and resources. Do not wait until the end of the semester to try to salvage your grade.

Attendance Policy: I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Everyone is granted one “free” absence during the semester, no questions asked. Each additional absence will result in a loss of 5 points from your overall grade. Additionally, you will lose points for arriving late or leaving early. If you experience extenuating circumstances during the semester (e.g. extended illness, death of a close family member, etc.) talk to me ASAP.

This class uses the Twitter hashtag #RTVFDM. I encourage you to use it to connect with me (@JacVick) and your peers so we can communicate and share relevant information. If you’re unfamiliar with Twitter, come see me for a brief tutorial.

I have a “Bring Your Own Device” policy for this class. I encourage you to bring your laptop or mobile device to class as we will occasionally use them for in-class assignments. If you prefer to take notes on a laptop, I ask that you sit in the back or on the sides so as to minimize distractions to your peers. Technology can and should enhance the learning environment, thus I trust that you will only use it responsibly in my class.
Week 6: Identity in a Networked Society
9/30: “Chapter 1: Identity” – boyd (IC)
10/2: “Chapter 6: Inequality” – boyd (IC)

Week 7: Social & Informational Privacy
10/7: “Chapter 2: Privacy” – boyd (IC)
*10/9: “Privacy in the Age of Big Data” – Tene & Polonetsky

Week 8: Governmental Privacy
10/16: In-Class Debate

Week 9: Media Industries in the Digital Age Part 1
10/21: “The Long Tail” – Anderson (SMR)
*Watch episode of Flipping the Block
*10/23: No class, Dr. Vickery in South Korea for a conference

Week 10: Changing Media Industries Part 2: Film & TV
10/28: “Immersive TV” – Strover & Moner
*10/30: “Business as Unusual” – Perren

Week 11: Changing Media Industries Part 3: Music
11/6: In-Class Debate

Week 12: Changing Industries Part 4: Journalism & Civic Engagement
11/11: From IndyMedia to Demand Media – Anderson (SMR)
*11/13: Unethical Journalism in Ferguson – Harris; Will the Revolution be Tweeted or Facebooked? – Harlow & Guo

Week 13: Social Media Industries & Economics
11/18: “Corrupt Personalization” – Sandvig
11/20: “Business Models of Popular SNS” – Cha
*Watch: Terms & Conditions May Apply

Week 14: Social Media Beyond America
11/25: “Role of New Media for Democratization in Arab World” – Sabadello
11/27: Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 15: In-Class Presentations
*12/2 & 12/4: Presentations
*12/5: Final Paper or Project Due by 5PM

Week 16: Finals Week
*12/11: Final Exam @ 1:30 PM

Reading Abbreviations
SMR = Social Media Reader (Mandiberg)
IC = It’s Complicated (boyd)
All other readings on Blackboard


