We acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hәn̓q̓әmin̓әm̓ speaking Musqueam people.

iSchool Mission: Through innovative research, education and design, our mission is to enhance humanity's capacity to engage information in effective, creative and diverse ways.

INFO 250: Networks, Crowds, and Communities – Course Syllabus (3)

Program: Bachelor of Media Studies (BMS) & Minor in Informatics
Year: Winter Session 2021/22, Term 2
Course Schedule: Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.
Location: The Leon and Thea Koerner University Centre (UCEN) 107
Instructor: Dr. Richard Arias-Hernandez (He/Him/His)
Instructor's office hours: On Zoom by email appointment
E-mail address: richard.arias@ubc.ca
Teaching Assistant: Tara Rogic (She/Her/Hers)
TA's office hours: On Zoom by email appointment
E-mail address: tara.rogic@ubc.ca
Learning Management Site: https://canvas.ubc.ca

Course Goal: The goal of this course is to provide concepts, tools, strategies, and methods to explore the contemporary landscape of social media, social networking, online communities, network organization, connectivity & communications. The course introduces students to social media strategy, social media analytics, and social media research.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify, explain, and apply basic concepts and principles of social networks and media
2. Design, implement, and evaluate social media strategies to achieve organizational and communicational goals
3. Conduct basic, conceptual and technologically-mediated social network analysis
4. Conduct basic content analysis of social media data
5. Relate social media production, use, and analysis to the broader field of media studies (e.g., media industries, media audiences, representation, framing, co-construction of social media & society, etc.)
6. Critically create, analyze, and evaluate social media

Course Topics:

- Social media strategy
- Tools for social media strategy
- Social media listening and monitoring
- Tools for listening, monitoring, and managing social media communications
- Social media analytics: social network analysis & content analysis
- Tools for social media analytics
- Critical analysis of social media and society

Prerequisites: Year 1 Core Courses for BMS Students. At least Year 2 standing for undergraduate students enrolled in the Minor in Informatics, or other UBC students.

Format of the course: Face-to-face and/or online synchronous components include lectures, guest talks, class exercises and group activities. Asynchronous components include discussion fora, technology laboratories, online tutorials, exercises/homework. The main experiential learning component of this class is a term-long, Community Engaged Learning (CEL) project that requires meetings with classmates, community partner (non-profit), and teaching team. These meeting will be face-to-face or online depending on evolving pandemic restrictions. This is a time-intensive course, you can safely assume and plan to dedicate 6 hours outside the classroom for class preparation, plus 3 hours of class time, every week.

Required Reading:

Chapters from books:
- Easley, D., & Kleinberg, J. (2010). *Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning About a Highly Connected World* (1st Edition). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Selected Chapters. Open content, available online at: http://www.cs.cornell.edu/home/kleinber/networks%2Dbook/
- Fuchs, C. (2014). Social Media: A Critical Introduction. Sage Publications: London. Selected Chapters. Available as an eBook at UBC Library.
- Khan, Gohar F. (2018). Creating Value with Social Media Analytics. Seattle: CreateSpace. Selections will be provided by instructor on Canvas.
- Kerpen, Dave (2019). Likeable Social Media. Third Edition. New York: McGraw Hill. Selected Chapters. Available as an eBook at UBC Library.
- Mahoney, M.L. and Tang, T (2017). Strategic Social Media: From Marketing to Social Change, First Edition. John Wiley & Sons. Selected Chapters. Available as an eBook from UBC Library.

Online Learning Platforms:
- HubSpot Academy: https://app.hubspot.com/academy Free online courses and certification. Requires to sign up for an account. Enrol in the "Social Media Marketing Certification" Course: https://app.hubspot.com/academy/21218758/tracks/29/
- Hootsuite Academy: https://education.hootsuite.com/ Most courses are not free, but the Hootsuite Platform Certification course is: https://education.hootsuite.com/collections/hootsuite-platform-training. Requires to sign up for an account.

Articles:
- Aires. S. (2020). Laboured Identity: An Analysis of User Branding Practices on Instagram. tripleC 18 (1): 494-507, 2020. Available at: https://www.triple-c.at/index.php/tripleC/article/view/1142

- Aral, S. (2020). Debunking Election & Social Media Myths. WIRED, Oct.23rd, 2020. YouTube video available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsaoI8Nrivg&feature=youtu.be
- Georgacopoulos, C. (2020). The Threat of Qanon: How Do Disinformation Campaigns Are Seeking to Infiltrate Mainstream Political Discourse. Lousiana State University. Available at: https://faculty.lsu.edu/fakenews/elections/thethreatofqanon.php
- Hootsuite (2016). Social Media Marketing Strategy: Eight Steps to Develop your Social Media Presence. Available at: https://hootsuite.com/resources/guide/social-media-strategy-guide
- Jansen, B.J. et al (2009). Twitter Power: Tweets as Electronic Word of Mouth. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60 (11), 2169-2188. DOI 10.1002/asi.21149. Available online through UBC Library.
- Liffreing, I. (2020). How Brands are riding the coattails of Doggface's fame. AdAge, December 15, 2020. Available at: https://adage.com/article/digital/how-brands-are-riding-coattails-doggfaces-fame/2301321
- Newton, Casey (2019). The Trauma Floor: The secret lives of Facebook moderators in America. The Verge. February 15, 2019. Available at: https://www.theverge.com/2019/2/25/18229714/cognizant-facebook-content-moderator-interviews-trauma-working-conditions-arizona
- Pennycook, G. and Rand, D. (2020). The Right Way to Fight Fake News. New York Times. March 24, 2020. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/24/opinion/fake-news-social-media.html?searchResultPosition=1
- Pew Research Center (2019). Social Media Fact Sheet. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/
- Roose, K. (2019). The Making of a Youtube Radical. New York Times, June 8, 2019. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/08/technology/youtube-radical.html

Course Assignments:

Assignment	% of Grade	Learning Outcome	Due Date
CEL Project Plan (Group)	10	2	February 1st
Strategy Experiment (Pairs or Individual)	10	2	February 8th
Monitoring – Content Analysis (Individual)	10	4	March 1st
Netlytic Analysis **or** Critical Film Analysis (Individual)	10	1, 3, 5	March 15th **or** 29th
CEL – Video of process & reflection (Group)	20	5, 6	April 5th
CEL – Blog article & online showcase (Group)	20	2	April 5th
Participation / Class Exercises (Individual)	20	5, 6	Throughout

CEL (Community Engaged Learning) Term Project: Students in teams of 3-4 students will conduct a term-long project with a community partner on social media strategy and analytics. This project accounts for 50% of your grade split in three deliverables: CEL Project Plan, CEL Video of process & reflection, and CEL Blog article and online showcase. Your project may include some or all of the following aspects:

- Social Media Strategy aspects:
  - Social Media Strategy Cycle: You will be expected to analyze the current communication goals and uses of social media by the community partner. You will document current shortcomings in the use of social media as a communication channel and will produce a series of recommendations to improve the strategic use of social media to achieve the organization's goals and increase the impact of their social media communication among

its different audiences. You will rely on proven facts from literature that inform on actions and strategies that work to increase the communicational impact of social media. You will test the effective use of social media by designing, implementing and evaluating a social media strategy to promote an event, a campaign, a product, or to develop a news channel for the organization.

- Social Media Content Creation: Within a content strategy (e.g., a campaign), you will determine in collaboration with your community partner what content needs to be created (images, video, text, hashtags, etc.), create an editorial and production calendar to create and publish content on your community partner's social media channels, get the produced content from the community partners, work on post-production to produce high-quality and high-impact content, and coordinate with your community partner to publish the content in their social media handles. The impact of your content will be evaluated as part of the impact of the overall social media strategy in terms of engagement, likeability, and accomplishment of the communicational and strategic goals set by your client.

- Social Media Analytics Aspects:
  - Social Network Analysis. You will be expected to apply basic social network analysis (SNA) to analyze structural aspects of the online community/social media audience of your community partner. You will be expected to target a social media channel, extract data on relationships (e.g., replies, mentions, etc.) between users, and use this data to identify, analyze, and visualize the structure of a social network to identify organic influencers, sub-communities, and prolific contributors. You will report on the findings on your analysis and on the implications of the social network structure for using this medium to divulge information, identify influencers, or maintain online communities.
  - Social Media Content Analysis. You will be expected to apply a form of content analysis to a sample of social media data from your community partner. You will have to define a research question that can be answered with the results of the content analysis of social media data. You will harvest the required social media content and get your data ready to be analyzed in an appropriate format. According to your research question, you will devise a simple coding scheme to analyze your social media data and each of your team members will apply this scheme thoroughly to the same content. You will compare results and resolve divergent results. Finally, you will report on your findings and provide an answer to your initial research question.

Course Schedule:

Session	Topic	Reading	Lab/Assignment
1 Jan. 11th	Introduction	Mahoney & Tang (2017), Chp. 1	
2 Jan. 18th	Social media strategy (1): Methodology	Hootsuite (2016) Mahoney & Tang (2017), Chp. 11	HubSpot Module: Developing a Social Media Strategy

Session	Topic	Reading	Lab/Assignment
3 Jan. 25th	Social media strategy (2): Content and engagement	Mahoney & Tang (2017), Chp. 5 & 7	HubSpot Modules: Building a Content Strategy for Social Media & Using Social Media to Build 1-1 Relationships
4 Feb. 1st	Social media strategy (3): Impact and evaluation	Khan (2018), Ch. 1	HubSpot Modules: Social Media Ads & Measuring your social ROI **Assignment due: CEL Project Plan**
5 Feb. 8th	Social media listening and monitoring	Dave (2019), Ch. 1	HubSpot Module: Social Media Listening and Monitoring Hootsuite Lab **Assignment due: Strategy Experiment**
6 Feb.15th	Social media analytics (1): Content analysis	Jansen et al. (2009)	Harvesting and Content Analysis Tools Lab
Midterm Break: Feb. 21st – 25th			
7 Mar. 1st	Social media analytics (2): Social network analysis concepts	Easley & Kleinberg (2010), 2.1-2.2 & 2.4	Gephi Lab **Assignment due: Monitoring-Content Analysis**
8 Mar. 8th	Social media analytics (3): Social network analysis metrics	Khan (2018), Chp. 5	Netlytic Lab
9 Mar.15th	Critical analysis of social media and society (1): Power and Inequality	Fuchs (2014), Chp. 1 Aral (2020)	**Assignment due [1 of 2]: Netlytic Analysis**
10 Mar.22nd	Critical analysis of social media and society (2): Economics and culture	Aires. S. (2020) Newton (2019) Liffreing (2020)	
11 Mar.29th	Critical analysis of social media and society (3): Dis- and misinformation	Roose, K. (2019) Georgacopoulos, C. (2020) Pennycook & Rand (2020)	**Assignment due [1 of 2]: Critical film analysis of social media & society**
12 Apr.5th	Online showcase of CEL Projects		**Assignment due: CEL Video, Blog Article & Online Showcase**

Evaluation: all assignments will be marked according to UBC grading policy.

Required Materials and cost: All reading material or software used in class has been carefully chosen or provided by the instructor on Canvas to make sure it is available for free to students.

Academic Concession: If you miss marked coursework (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in class) and are an Arts student, review the Faculty of Arts' academic concession page and then complete Arts Academic Advising's online academic concession form, so that an advisor can evaluate

your concession case. If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult your Faculty's webpage on academic concession, and then contact me where appropriate.

Policies and Resources to Support Student Success: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

Academic Integrity: The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline. Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959 (§7)

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the Centre for Accessibility (previously known as Access & Diversity). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with Policy LR7: Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Joint Senate and Board Policy). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.