Social Media Research

ENG 6624 – 0001
Dr. Mel Stanfill
Fall 2022

Office: Trevor Colbourn Hall Room 236-D   Wednesdays 6-8:50pm
Office Hours: By appointment   Trevor Colbourn Hall 351
Contact: mel.stanfill@ucf.edu   3 Units
          or via Webcourses

Course Description

Fundamentals of humanist research in social media. Students read canonical and contemporary social media research and learn to collect and analyze social media data. PR: Graduate standing or C.I.

Course Objectives

In this course, students will:
- Become familiar with core terms and concepts in social media research.
- Survey a variety of methods for conducting social media research.
- Learn tools to collect and analyze social media data.
- Engage in scholarly conversation about the course texts and concepts they take up, in the process improving interpretation, writing, design, and argumentation skills.

Required Texts

There are no required books to purchase for this course.

Recommended

Markham, Annette, and Nancy K. Baym, eds. Internet Inquiry: Conversations About Method. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008.

Assignments

100 points   **10x Weekly Questions**
In 10 weeks of their choice, students will write three discussion questions about the required readings. This is due 3 hours before class time to allow me to compile them.

250 points   Lab 1   **September 21**
Students will use either textual or visual analysis to interpret social media data and write up a brief findings report.

250 points   Lab 2   **October 19**
Students will either plan an interview/survey study or conduct interface analysis and write up a brief report.

250 points   Lab 3   **November 16**
Students will use either computational or network analysis to interpret social media data and write up a brief findings report.

150 points   Final Reflection   **December 7**
At the end of the semester, students will reflect on the different methods explored during the semester and discuss their strengths and weaknesses in the context of their own research.

1000 points Total

Policies

Grading and Assignment Policies

A	=	94-100	B-	=	80-83	D+	=	68-69
A-	=	90-93	C+	=	78-79	D	=	64-67
B+	=	88-89	C	=	74-77	D-	=	60-63
B	=	84-87	C-	=	70-73	F	=	0-59

- All assignments are **submitted via Webcourses**.
  - Faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. To demonstrate that you began this course, please complete the **Academic Activity Verification** by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. The Academic Activity Verification is required even if you do not receive financial aid.
- Grades will be reported via Webcourses.
- **No late work will be accepted without an extension** requested before the original deadline. Extensions are always available. You do not need to give me a reason. We will work out an alternative deadline. But you have to take responsibility to tell me.
  - Struggling with keeping up with work in general? Let's talk about it. You are never required to tell me personal information, but I can't help you if I don't know that you're struggling, and getting out in front of a problem gives us more options.

Academic Integrity

- **All work that you submit for this class must be your own**, and it must be written exclusively for this course.
  - Also, any sources consulted for your writing must be properly documented. "Rewriting," in which a student consults a source, changes a few words, and presents the ideas as their own, is plagiarism.
  - Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment and may also lead to an "F" for the entire course.
  - Plagiarism and cheating subjects a student to referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Course Accessibility

- The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.
  - This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request.
  - Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons, Bldg. F7, Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, sas@ucf.edu, before requesting accommodations.
- Accommodations may need to be added or adjusted should this course shift from an on-campus to a remote format.
  - Students with disabilities should speak with their instructor and should contact sas@ucf.edu to discuss specific accommodations for this or other courses.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students Statement

If you are a deployed active-duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Statement Regarding COVID-19

- While the acute crisis phase of the pandemic is past, and many of the mitigation measures have been discontinued, there continues to be a high rate of COVID-19 transmission in our community.
  - In light of this, **I will continue to wear a mask** for the foreseeable future, and **I encourage you to do the same**.
  - This is for your own protection, the protection of those around you who may be at higher risk from COVID complications, and because every new case presents a chance for a new variant that will be more harmful. While masks are not required, it is, simply, a very good idea.
- Similarly, while some have declared the pandemic over, **I recognize and understand that it has ongoing impacts**, including physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, academically, and professionally.
  - **I will work with you** on challenges you may be encountering and to provide support to help you succeed.

- **If the instructor falls ill** during the semester, there may be temporary changes to this course, including having a backup instructor take over the course or going remote for a short time.
  - Please look for announcements or mail in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email for any temporary alterations to this course.
- **Students should contact their instructor(s)** as soon as possible if they miss class for any illness to discuss reasonable adjustments that might need to be made. When possible, students should contact their instructor(s) before missing class.
  - Students should not come to campus if they are ill, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.

Classroom Behavior
- The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission.
  - UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events.
  - Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style.
  - The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.
- Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation.
  - If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.
- For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:
  - Title IX – OIE – http://oie.ucf.edu/ & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
  - Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/ & sas@ucf.edu
  - Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events – www.diversity.ucf.edu
  - Student Bias Grievances – Just Knights response team – http://jkrt.sdes.ucf.edu/
  - UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – http://compliance.ucf.edu/ & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
  - Ombuds Office – http://www.ombuds.ucf.edu

In-Class Recording Statement
- Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use.

- A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject.
- Recording classroom activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations is prohibited.
- Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member.
- **This class does not have any lecture content, and therefore is not subject to this policy.** Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct as described in the Golden Rule.

Syllabus Amendment

If any changes to the syllabus become necessary, such as due to the ongoing pandemic, hurricane, or other extenuating circumstances, they will be communicated via Webcourses.

Weekly Schedule

August 24 – Introduction to Social Media Research

Sweeney, Miriam E. 2012. "How to Read for Grad School."
http://miriamsweeney.net/2012/06/20/readforgradschool/.

Baym, Nancy K., and Annette Markham. "Introduction: Making Smart Choices on Shifting Ground." In Internet Inquiry: Conversations About Method, edited by Annette Markham and Nancy K. Baym, vii–xix. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008.

Orgad, Shani. "How Can Researchers Make Sense of the Issues Involved in Collecting and Interpreting Online and Offline Data?" In Internet Inquiry: Conversations About Method, edited by Annette Markham and Nancy K. Baym, 33–53. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008.

Baym, Nancy K. "What Constitutes Quality in Qualitative Internet Research?" In Internet Inquiry: Conversations About Method, edited by Annette Markham and Nancy K. Baym, 173–89. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008.

boyd, danah, and Nicole B. Ellison. "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 13, no. 1 (2008): 210–30.

Baym, Nancy K., and danah boyd. "Socially Mediated Publicness: An Introduction." Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 56, no. 3 (2012): 320–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2012.705200.

August 31– Ethics

franzke, aline shakti, Anja Bechmann, Michael Zimmer, Charles M. Ess, and the Association of Internet Researchers. "Internet Research: Ethical Guidelines 3.0," 2020. pp. 1-31 https://aoir.org/reports/ethics3.pdf.

Markham, Annette. "The Methods, Politics, and Ethics of Representation in Online Ethnography." In The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 3rd edition., 793–820. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc, 2005.

Markham, Annette. "Fabrication as Ethical Practice." *Information, Communication & Society* 15, no. 3 (2012): 334–53. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2011.641993.

Fiesler, Casey, and Nicholas Proferes. "'Participant' Perceptions of Twitter Research Ethics." *Social Media + Society* 4, no. 1 (2018): 2056305118763366. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118763366.

Locatelli, Elisabetta. 2020. Academy/Industry partnership and corporate data: ethical considerations, IRE 3.0 Companion 6.2, Association of Internet Researchers, pp. 50-63. https://aoir.org/reports/ethics3.pdf

September 7 – Textual Analysis

Bingham, Christopher M. "Talking about Twitch: Dropped Frames and a Normative Theory of New Media Production." *Convergence* 26, no. 2 (2020): 269–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856517736974.

Dutton, Nathan, Mia Consalvo, and Todd Harper. "Digital Pitchforks and Virtual Torches: Fan Responses to the Mass Effect News Debacle." *Convergence* 17, no. 3 (2011): 287–305. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856511407802.

Hoffmann, Anna Lauren, Nicholas Proferes, and Michael Zimmer. "'Making the World More Open and Connected': Mark Zuckerberg and the Discursive Construction of Facebook and Its Users." *New Media & Society* 20, no. 1 (2018): 199–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816660784.

Massanari, Adrienne L. "'Come for the Period Comics. Stay for the Cultural Awareness': Reclaiming the Troll Identity through Feminist Humor on Reddit's /r/TrollXChromosomes." *Feminist Media Studies* 19, no. 1 (2019): 19–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2017.1414863.

Navar-Gill, Annemarie. "From Strategic Retweets to Group Hangs: Writers' Room Twitter Accounts and the Productive Ecosystem of TV Social Media Fans." *Television & New*

Media 19, no. 5 (2018): 415–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476417728376.

September 14 – Visual Analysis

Gilliland, Elizabeth. "Racebending Fandoms and Digital Futurism." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 22 (2016). https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2016.0702.

Ging, Debbie, and Sarah Garvey. "'Written in These Scars Are the Stories I Can't Explain': A Content Analysis of pro-Ana and Thinspiration Image Sharing on Instagram." *New Media & Society* 20, no. 3 (2018): 1181–1200. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816687288.

Content warning: Anorexia and self-harm images.

Hobbs, Renee, and Silke Grafe. "YouTube Pranking across Cultures." *First Monday*, 20, no. 5-6 (2015). https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v20i7.5981.

Mason, Corinne Lysandra. "Tinder and Humanitarian Hook-Ups: The Erotics of Social Media Racism." *Feminist Media Studies* 16, no. 5 (2016): 822–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2015.1137339.

Pearce, Warren, Suay M. Özkula, Amanda K. Greene, Lauren Teeling, Jennifer S. Bansard, Janna Joceli Omena, and Elaine Teixeira Rabello. "Visual Cross-Platform Analysis: Digital Methods to Research Social Media Images." *Information, Communication & Society* 23, no. 2 (2020): 161–80. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1486871.

September 21 – Ethnography, Ethnographic Observation, Participant Observation

Barta, Kristen, and Gina Neff. "Technologies for Sharing: Lessons from Quantified Self about the Political Economy of Platforms." *Information, Communication & Society* 19, no. 4 (2016): 518–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1118520.

Bennett, Lucy. "Discourses of Order and Rationality: Drooling R.E.M. Fans as 'Matter out of Place.'" *Continuum* 27, no. 2 (2013): 214–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2013.766313.

Clark, Lynn Schofield. "Participants on the Margins: Examining the Role That Shared Artifacts of Engagement in the Ferguson Protests Played Among Minoritized Political Newcomers on Snapchat, Facebook, and Twitter." *International Journal of Communication* 10, (2016): 26. https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/3843/1536

Kendall, Lori. "Shout Into the Wind, and It Shouts Back: Identity and Interactional Tensions on LiveJournal." *First Monday* 12, no. 9 (2007). https://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2004/1879.

Liu, Tingting. "Neoliberal Ethos, State Censorship and Sexual Culture: A Chinese Dating/Hook-up App." *Continuum* 30, no. 5 (2016): 557–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2016.1210794.

Lab 1 due

September 28 – Surveys

Acquisti, Alessandro, and Ralph Gross. "Imagined Communities: Awareness, Information Sharing, and Privacy on the Facebook." In *Privacy Enhancing Technologies*, edited by George Danezis and Philippe Golle, 36–58. Lecture Notes in Computer Science. Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2006.

Andrejevic, Mark. "Watching Television without Pity: The Productivity of Online Fans." *Television and New Media* 9, no. 1 (2008): 24–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476407307241.

Bayer, Joseph B., Nicole B. Ellison, Sarita Y. Schoenebeck, and Emily B. Falk. "Sharing the Small Moments: Ephemeral Social Interaction on Snapchat." *Information, Communication & Society* 19, no. 7 (2016): 956–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1084349.

Billings, Andrew C., Fei Qiao, Lindsey Conlin, and Tie Nie. "Permanently Desiring the Temporary? Snapchat, Social Media, and the Shifting Motivations of Sports Fans." *Communication & Sport* 5, no. 1 (2017): 10–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479515588760.

boyd, danah, and Eszter Hargittai. "Facebook Privacy Settings: Who Cares?" *First Monday* 15, no. 8 (2010): n.p.

October 5 – Interviews

Brubaker, Jed R, Mike Ananny, and Kate Crawford. "Departing Glances: A Sociotechnical Account of 'Leaving' Grindr." *New Media & Society* 18, no. 3 (2016): 373–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814542311.

De Kosnik, Abigail. *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2016. (CORE) Chapter 3. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucf/reader.action?docID=5966612&ppg=143

Fiesler, Casey, Shannon Morrison, and Amy S. Bruckman. "An Archive of Their Own: A Case Study of Feminist HCI and Values in Design." In *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2574–85. CHI '16. New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1145/2858036.2858409.

Fox, Jesse, and Katie M. Warber. "Queer Identity Management and Political Self-Expression on Social Networking Sites: A Co-Cultural Approach to the Spiral of Silence." *Journal of Communication* 65, no. 1 (2015): 79–100. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12137.

Penney, Joel, and Caroline Dadas. "(Re)Tweeting in the Service of Protest: Digital Composition and Circulation in the Occupy Wall Street Movement." *New Media & Society* 16, no. 1 (2014): 74–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444813479593.

October 12 – Interface Analysis

Crawford, Kate, and Tarleton Gillespie. "What Is a Flag for? Social Media Reporting Tools and the Vocabulary of Complaint." *New Media & Society* 18, no. 3 (2016): 410–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814543163.

Friz, Amanda, and Robert W Gehl. "Pinning the Feminine User: Gender Scripts in Pinterest's Sign-up Interface." *Media, Culture & Society* 38, no. 5 (2016): 686–703. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715620925.

Schwartz, Raz, and Germaine R Halegoua. "The Spatial Self: Location-Based Identity Performance on Social Media." *New Media & Society* 17, no. 10 (2015): 1643–60. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814531364.

Stanfill, Mel. "The Interface as Discourse: The Production of Norms through Web Design." *New Media & Society* 17, no. 7 (2015): 1059–74. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814520873.

Stephens, Sonia H. "Using Interface Rhetoric to Understand Audience Agency in Natural History Apps." *Technical Communication* 65, no. 3 (2018): 280–92.

October 19 – Platform Analysis

Bivens, Rena. "The Gender Binary Will Not Be Deprogrammed: Ten Years of Coding Gender on Facebook." *New Media & Society* 19, no. 6 (2017): 880–98. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444815621527.

Consalvo, Mia. "Cyber-Slaying Media Fans: Code, Digital Poaching, and Corporate Control of the Internet." *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 27, no. 1 (2003): 67–86.

Gerlitz, Carolin, and Anne Helmond. "The Like Economy: Social Buttons and the Data-Intensive Web." *New Media & Society* 15, no. 8 (2013): 1348–65. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812472322.

Johnson, Shannon Fay. "Fan Fiction Metadata Creation and Utilization within Fan Fiction Archives: Three Primary Models." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 17 (2014). https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2014.0578.

Papacharissi, Zizi. "The Virtual Geographies of Social Networks: A Comparative Analysis of Facebook, LinkedIn and ASmallWorld." *New Media & Society* 11, no. 1–2 (2009): 199–220. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444808099577.

Lab 2 due

October 26 – Computational Analysis

Bruns, Axel, and Yuxian Eugene Liang. "Tools and Methods for Capturing Twitter Data during Natural Disasters." *First Monday* 17, no. 4 (2012). https://firstmonday.org/article/view/3937/3193.

De Kosnik, Abigail. *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2016. (CORE) Conclusion. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucf/reader.action?docID=5966612&ppg=327

Hochman, Nadav, and Lev Manovich. "Zooming into an Instagram City: Reading the Local through Social Media." *First Monday* 18, no. 7 (2013). http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/4711.

Koltsova, Olessia, and Sergei Koltcov. "Mapping the Public Agenda with Topic Modeling: The Case of the Russian Livejournal." *Policy & Internet* 5, no. 2 (2013): 207–27. https://doi.org/10.1002/1944-2866.POI331.

Light, Ben, Peta Mitchell, and Patrik Wikström. "Big Data, Method and the Ethics of Location: A Case Study of a Hookup App for Men Who Have Sex with Men." *Social Media + Society* 4, no. 2 (2018): 2056305118768299. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118768299.

November 2 – Network Analysis

boyd, danah, and Jeffrey Heer. "Profiles as Conversation: Networked Identity Performance on Friendster." In *Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, 3:59c. Los Alamitos, CA, USA: IEEE Computer Society, 2006. http://doi.ieeecomputersociety.org/10.1109/HICSS.2006.394.

Highfield, Tim, and Tama Leaver. "A Methodology for Mapping Instagram Hashtags." *First Monday* 20, no. 1 (2015). http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5563.

Jackson, Sarah J., and Brooke Foucault Welles. "Hijacking #myNYPD: Social Media Dissent and Networked Counterpublics." *Journal of Communication* 65, no. 6 (2015): 932–52. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12185.

Lewis, Rebecca. "Alternative Influence: Broadcasting the Reactionary Right on YouTube." Data & Society, September 18, 2018. https://datasociety.net/output/alternative-influence/.

Starbird, Kate, Ahmer Arif, Tom Wilson, Katherine Van Koevering, Katya Yefimova, and Daniel Scarnecchia. "Ecosystem or Echo-System? Exploring Content Sharing across Alternative Media Domains." In *Twelfth International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, 2018. https://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM18/paper/view/17836.

November 9 - Combining Methods 1

Brock, Jr., André. *Distributed Blackness: African American Cybercultures*. New York: NYU Press, 2020. (CORE) Chapter 3

Carah, Nicholas, and Amy Dobson. "Algorithmic Hotness: Young Women's 'Promotion' and 'Reconnaissance' Work via Social Media Body Images." *Social Media + Society* 2, no. 4 (2016): 2056305116672885. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116672885.

David, Gaby, and Carolina Cambre. "Screened Intimacies: Tinder and the Swipe Logic." *Social Media + Society* 2, no. 2 (2016): 2056305116641976. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116641976.

De Kosnik, Abigail. *Rogue Archives: Digital Cultural Memory and Media Fandom*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2016. (CORE) Ch 5

Marwick, Alice, Mary L. Gray, and Mike Ananny. "'Dolphins Are Just Gay Sharks' Glee and the Queer Case of Transmedia As Text and Object." *Television & New Media* 15, no. 7 (2014): 627–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476413478493.

November 16 – Combining Methods 2

Duguay, Stefanie. "Dressing up Tinderella: Interrogating Authenticity Claims on the Mobile Dating App Tinder." *Information, Communication & Society* 20, no. 3 (2017): 351–67. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1168471.

Geiger, R. Stuart. "Bots, Bespoke, Code and the Materiality of Software Platforms." *Information, Communication & Society* 17, no. 3 (2014): 342–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.873069.

Highfield, Tim, Stephen Harrington, and Axel Bruns. "Twitter as a Technology for Audiencing and Fandom." *Information, Communication & Society* 16, no. 3 (2013): 315–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.756053.

Shifman, Limor. "An Anatomy of a YouTube Meme." *New Media & Society* 14, no. 2 (2012): 187–203. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811412160.

Young, Alyson Leigh, and Anabel Quan-Haase. "Privacy Protection Strategies on Facebook." *Information, Communication & Society* 16, no. 4 (2013): 479–500. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.777757.

Lab 3 due

November 23 – No Class – Thanksgiving Wednesday

November 30 – Recap
No new reading. Bring in 3-5 readings from the semester that best reflect the approach you would like to take in your own research.

December 7
Reflection due