The University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Information and Media Studies
DC 3209G – Social Media & Organizations
Course Outline – Winter 2022

Covid & Online-ness

My section of this course has always been entirely online and mostly asynchronous. No exam, but three biggish assignments and a bunch of smaller stuff. We were online-only before Covid, and will likely be so when Covid lifts.

Instructor Information

Instructor	Dr. Michael Friesen (he / him/ his)
Office Location	none
Office Hours	as required; to be announced
Phone	610-299-1107
Email	mfries4@uwo.ca
Chat	As needed & at times to be announced

Course Information

Students will learn about how to use social media in a professional context on behalf of an organisation. The course occurs solely online, primarily using the UWO OWL e-learning platform. Online chats will occur on Zoom as required throughout the term; specific times for the first chat will be arranged within the first two weeks of class.

Prerequisites & Antirequisites

No prerequisites. However, students are advised that, as a third-year course within FIMS, a nominal level of proficiency in formal writing is expected. Beyond mechanics (spelling, grammar, and formatting), students are expected to be able to articulate a position using a professional, formal

tone and validate viewpoints with appropriate research. Basic skills in word processing, spreadsheets, and graphics are expected.

DC3209 and MIT3373 are mutual *antirequisites*: you should not take both. Please confer with a FIMS administrator if you have already taken either course or you intend to do so at a later date.

Course Objectives

This course provides an opportunity for students to develop both practical and conceptual understandings of social media within an organisational context. Policies, some legalities, technologies, and strategies will be explored specifically as they relate to the use of social media by organisations. Students who take this course will:

1. Establish and maintain a professional blog
2. Build a personal conceptual framework of social media tools as they relate to organisations
3. Discover economic issues relating to social media activities as a career and explore what such a career might require.
4. Analyse the effectiveness of social media platforms and social media tools for organizational purposes
5. Develop a social media strategy for a fledgling organization or a new project, product, or service

Course Materials

Except for offline fact-finding to be carried out by students, all course materials will be available online. All course materials are available as text; some include video & audio versions. Presentations will be kept to a minimum – see https://www.inc.com/geoffrey-james/harvard-just-discovered-that-powerpoint-is-worse-than-useless.html if you are curious as to why. Accessibility across platforms and devices is prioritized over cosmetic appeal. Speaking of accessibility, if you have concerns in this area, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Technical Requirements

Students will be required to have extensive access to a desktop or laptop computer with an internet connection and webcam/mic. A headset with a

microphone is recommended. Basic word processing and spreadsheet/graphing software is required, though the specifics are irrelevant as long as export to PDF is possible. Possible applications include Microsoft Word & Excel (Mac / Windows), Apple Pages & Numbers (Mac only), and LibreOffice (Mac / Windows / Linux). If you are worried about whether you have appropriate software, send an email to mfries4@uwo.ca and I will be happy to advise.

Students should be able to take screenshots and generate basic mockups using the free tools included with their respective operating systems. Adobe software is not required; tools like GIMP, Inkscape, and Scribus are usable alternatives to Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign, respectively. Serif Software also has excellent and low-cost alternatives to the Adobe suite.

Technical details and additional requirements should be reviewed in "Lesson 0" of the course's online OWL site. If technical issues require you to seek help, please do so sooner than later. Make sure you have basic functionality sorted out as soon as possible – do not wait until your first assignment is due before you realize that you don't know how to make a graph!

Academic Accommodation

Students who have ongoing medical or psychological conditions, or who have been diagnosed with a learning disability, and who may be entitled to some form of academic accommodation are assessed and managed through [Accessible Education](). The recommendations for accommodation are shared with instructors via the Extranet and require instructors to acknowledge these through the Extranet.

Methods of Evaluation

1. **Class Participation – 5%** of final grade: quantity and quality of otherwise non-graded work and minor assignments, including surveys, online presence, and class interactions.

2. **Forums, Social Media Blog, and Wiki Development - 30%** of grade. Students will establish a personal blog and record observations or reflections on the topics in social media and organisations, incorporating (but not necessarily limited to) what they have learned in class. Students must make at least three blog entries -- one at the end of each month for the duration of the course. The frequency and quality of contributions to class wiki pages and forum discussions will also be counted toward a final grade.

3. **Three major assignments** will have their specific topics and requirements formally posted on the OWL site at least 3 weeks prior to their respective due dates. The type of each major assignment will differ. Please pay careful attention to the specific requirements for each paper when the assignment is set!

   1. **Assignment 1 – 20%** of final grade, due on January 31: 1100 word maximum; analysis of relevant demographic trends as they pertain to a specific organisation's use of social media.

   2. **Assignment 2 – 20%** of final grade, due on February 28: 2-page maximum; analysis social media tools as appropriate for two very different types of organisations.

   3. **Assignment 3 – 25%** of final grade, due on April 8: 1500 word maximum. Students will develop a proposal to establish a social media campaign for an organisation, product, or project that does not yet have a social media presence or has only a marginal social media presence. This may be an organisation/product of the student's choosing, or an organisation/product may be provided to the student. Student choices of organisation for this assignment must be submitted no later than 7 days before the due date.

For the sake of simplicity, each point in the course is 1% of your final grade; there are 100 points available throughout the course, and most students will get about 74 of them.

Note: A late penalty of 4% per calendar day may be assessed for all assignments. Due to grade submission requirements, the final assignment cannot be accepted more than four days late.

Academic Consideration

Students who miss work because of an illness or compassionate grounds in one of two ways though a Self Reported Absence (if they meet the criteria for an SRA) or through the Academic Counselling office in their faculty of registration, by providing appropriate documentation (Student Medical Certificate or other valid documentation). Students in FIMS can access FIMS Undergraduate Student Services (UGSS) by emailing fims@uwo.ca. Recommendations for Academic Consideration from counselling units, as well as SRAs, are managed through the Extranet.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

It will be necessary for students to make extensive use of electronic devices in the course of this class. Along with computers and their peripherals, students will be expected – on occasion – to use telephones to make calls to speak with people. They will be expected to take extensive and accurate notes with appropriate attribution for conversations that they have with research participants.

Regarding "Note Sharing" Websites: I do not authorize anybody to upload notes from my course materials to note-sharing websites, including (but not limited to) OneClass or Course Hero. I reserve copyright to all course materials except that which was created by others. All materials not explicitly attributed to others should be assumed to be my work.

Privacy

To the greatest degree possible in an online course, your privacy will be protected. We will be using the Zoom web conferencing system integrated into OWL, and nearly all course materials will be hosted strictly at UWO. I try to minimize the use of services that generate revenue by selling information about you.

For analysis and grading purposes, I am able to view information about which course resources you've viewed.

A more thorough discussion of privacy is available in the Overview tab of this course's OWL site.

Indigenous Land Recognition

Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Luaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to our society.

Notes & Observations

1. Depending on your comfort level with academic and journalistic writing styles, it may be a *Very Good Idea* for you to seek help from the excellent people at the Student Development Centre and the Writing Centre.
2. I am willing to preview draft copies of your work in advance of deadlines *up to four days* before any of the three major assignment is dues. This is not a full and thorough grading, but rather a "see if you're on the right track" kind of check.
3. When in doubt, send me a message (from within OWL) or an email.

Lessons, in Approximate Order of Delivery

NOTE: Due to the rapid and ongoing evolution of social media, additional or alternative topics may be introduced or substituted for existing material as circumstances dictate. Some of these lessons are very short;

others are the length of a book chapter. I try to keep the total course reading load under 60,000 words. An increasing number of lessons will be provided in audiovisual format.

How to take an online course (MIT3373/DC3209 Version)
Class style guide
Parler games?
Setting the stage
A typology of social media
Intimacy
Basics of OWL Wiki editing
General Notes on Assignments
Blog value and formality
The presence
B2…?
Pirates and privateers on the social media seas
To boost or not to boost?
The technologies of social media
The resourcererer's appendix
How to use images safely
Decoding URLs for fun and privacy
The social media operative's tools of the trade
Goodbye G+
Beginning analytics
A critique of data visualization
The bison problem
A small lesson on brand assets
The editorial calendar
How to find organisations
How to interview
How to create mockups
Influencers
A very short lesson on search engine optimisation
The economics of work

Reviews and the organisation
When to post
There are places you *shouldn't not* be
Sign-ups, passwords, and raging buses
Join together with the band
A short lesson on email addresses
A very short lesson on names

See also in a nearby document: Notes from the Dean's Office

Rights and Responsibilities

The conditions governing a student's ability to pursue their undergraduate education at Western are ratified by Senate and can be found on the Academic Policies section of the University Secretariat: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/rights_responsibilities.html

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism

Students must write their essays and assignments, including take-home exams, in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software Turnitin under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- during exam periods,
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are NOT met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate or equivalent documentation, if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact the FIMS Undergraduate Student Services Office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see Policy on Academic Consideration For Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

In the event of a Covid-19 resurgence, it is possible that different procedures may need to be put in place on short notice.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Academic Calendar.

Grading at FIMS

- Normally, first year courses required for entry into an MIT or MPI module (MIT 1020E and MIT 1025F/G) are expected to have a course average between 68-72%.
- Normally, second year required courses (MIT 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500) are expected to have a course average between 70 and 75%.
- Normally, third year required courses (MIT 3000, 3100) are expected to have a course average between 72 and 77%.

Elective courses and 4th year seminars have no recommended course averages.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/

SUPPORT SERVICES – LINKS

Office of the Registrar:
www.registrar.uwo.ca
Mental Health Support:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html
Accessible Education:
http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html
Accessibility Information:
www.accessibility.uwo.ca/
Writing Support Centre:
http://writing.uwo.ca/
Learning Skills Services:
https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/
Academic Learning and Support for Online Learning:
https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/types/academic-and-learning-support.html
Indigenous Services:
https://indigenous.uwo.ca/
Western International:
https://international.uwo.ca/
Career Centre:
http://careerexperience.uwo.ca/

Appendix A: Suggested Grade Ranges in MIT, MPI and MTP

Guidelines to the MIT Grade Range

These guidelines are benchmarks, and are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. As well, competency in English language usage (including spelling and grammar) may be taken into account in the assignment of grades by individual instructors. Note that the 70-79 grade range is broken into two divisions, as this is the grade range into which a large number of students fall.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The report shows sparkling originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the writing and background research is exemplary.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The report shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical analysis of the topic; it gets to the heart of the matter with comments and/or questions. It is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing makes the report immediately understandable. Mastery of complex material and ideas is demonstrated. The report is of appropriate length, while preserving the priorities and emphasis of the material, so that the result is meaningful, not simplistic.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The report shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The topic is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. The analysis is organized around focal points and the argument is easily followed. The report demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material.

70-74 (Good, B)

The report shows an attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The topic is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. The analysis is organized around focal points. The report is generally well written and well argued.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The report demonstrates adequate comprehension of the topic. The report is on topic and is a reasonable summary of material covered in the course, but goes no further. Facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the report.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The report shows less than adequate comprehension of the topic and of the material covered by the course. The report is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the report.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The report demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. The material is disorganized and unintelligible. The report clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment.

Appendix B: Guidelines of Academic Appeals for FIMS Students

Grounds for Appeal:
The Faculty of Information and Media Studies does not view the appeals process as an opportunity for students to solicit a second opinion on a grade assigned to a particular piece of work. Appeals must pertain to the final grade in a course, and will only be entertained if sufficient grounds for appeal can be met, including: medical or compassionate circumstances, a defect in the evaluation process, bias, inaccuracy or unfairness.

Stages in the Appeals Process:
The first stage of the process is a discussion of the disputed grade with the appropriate Teaching Assistant (if applicable), and subsequently, the course Instructor. For grades assigned to individual assignments, essays, lab reports, projects and tests completed throughout the term, the student first must appeal to the Teaching Assistant or Instructor of the course, within three weeks of the date on which the Instructor or Teaching Assistant returned the assignments to the class. The Appeals Committee will not hear any further appeals about the final grade in any course unless this first step has been taken.

If completion of the first stage has not resolved the matter, the student may appeal the final grade in the course to the FIMS Appeals Committee. Appeals of final grades must be **within the time frame indicated in the Undergraduate Calendar.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is submitted within the deadline. The student shall submit a formal letter to the FIMS Appeals Committee outlining the grounds for the appeal, the remedy sought and relevant materials including the information about when and with whom (Teaching Assistant and/or Instructor) the student met, as described in Stage 1. If the appeal involves a request for work to be regraded, the original marked work and a clean copy (if possible) must be included. If the appeal is commenced once the deadline has passed, it will not be considered either by the Appeals Committee or by the Associate Dean.

The FIMS Appeals Committee has the discretion to determine whether the grounds for appeal have been met.
If the Committee deems that the reasons for the appeal are not legitimate, the Associate Dean will be informed. The appeal will be terminated and the student will be informed.

If the Committee decides that the grounds for appeal have been met, the following steps will be taken:
1. the course Instructor will be shown the appeal letter and offered an opportunity to make a written response;
2..if work is to be regraded, a reader will be appointed who is competent in the area in question and was not involved in the assignment of the original mark. The reader will consider the work in question and will arrive at an independent evaluation. If there is a large discrepancy between the original mark and the regraded mark, a second reader may be appointed by the Committee. **If the appointed reader(s) arrive at a grade within five marks of the original, the original grade will stand.**

The FIMS Appeals Committee will review the evidence and will make a recommendation on the case to the Associate Dean Undergraduate.
The Associate Dean Undergraduate will consider the recommendation from the Appeals Committee, and will make a decision. The student and the instructor will be notified promptly and in writing by the Associate Dean of the decision and of the change in grade, if any. Within the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, the Associate Dean's decision on the matter is final.
Further appeals are possible under certain circumstances to the Senate Review Board Academic (for Undergraduate students) or to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (for Graduate students) but the student should carefully consult the guidelines regarding such Appeals.