

#4558

Social Media Research and Analytics The Ohio State University

Course Instructor

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Include 4558 in Subject

Office Hours

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30am
Online via Canvas
Or by Appointment

Course Description

This course represents an introduction to analyzing social media data with an emphasis on the implications for communication strategy and market research. How do we know whether an online marketing campaign worked? What type of consumers are most likely to buy a given product? How does the perception of a company change after a crisis? Social media streams can provide valuable insights into brand strategy, market research, and audience analysis. The course is composed of two primary parts: (1) an overview of the approaches and challenges associated with doing social media research, and (2) an involved project in which you will apply the knowledge gained in the first half to a self-determined case study.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

The primary objectives of this course are to teach students how to obtain, monitor, and evaluate digital traces from online social platforms. When we are finished, you will be prepared to approach future industry and academic problems with an understanding of how social media data can help accomplish your goals. You will learn the advantages/disadvantages of using social media data, how to operate an established analytics platform, and how to complete a novel research project using social listening. Altogether, you will acquire the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to work with social media data to approach new problems.

Course Materials

Students are required to purchase one book that serves to compliment the in-class activities. Combining business and academic perspectives, Lutz Finger (LinkedIn) and Dr. Soumitra Dutta's (Cornell University) *Ask, Measure, Learn* will provide insights into the communication strategies for conducting robust analytics from an industry standpoint.

Finger, L. & Dutta, S. (2014). *Ask, Measure, Learn: Using Social Media Analytics to Understand and Influence Customer Behavior*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.

In addition to the class book, selected journal articles will be posted to the course Canvas/Carmen site, as well as use a number of platforms for the purpose of learning and conducting social media analytics over the semester:

1. Canvas (for class materials)
2. Top Hat (for in-class activities)
3. Crimson Hexagon (for data analytics)

Course Format

The course is composed of two weekly classes. On most days, classes will be composed of a Top Hat lecture paired with computer-based activities as individuals or within small groups.

Requirements (100 points)

(1) *Participation (15 pts.)*. A participation grade will be assigned at the end of the course based on your attendance and active participation in class activities. Note that attendance will be taken each lab. Students will be allowed **TWO** absences for personal matters during the semester. For each unexcused absence after that, you will lose 1 point for every missed class.

(2) *Platform Proposal (15 pts.)*. You will recommend implementation of a social media analytics platform to your imaginary company. Detailed instructions will be provided in-class (2 pages).

(3) *Analytics Report (15 pts.)*. You will complete an analytics assignment on your own to be submitted on Canvas. Detailed instructions will be provided in-class (2 pages).

(4) *Case Study Blueprint (15 pts.)*. On your own or in teams of two, you will identify and design a novel research proposal that will serve as the basis of your case study poster (2 pages).

(5) *Case Study Project (30 pts.)*. You (and your partner) will complete the project proposed in your Case Study Blueprint by employing social media data from Wayback Machine and Crimson Hexagon. After conducting your analysis, you will make a poster to represent your project and

its key findings. I will provide detailed instructions as the semester progresses. Toward the latter third of the semester, we will switch from daily activities to concentrate on your research projects and posters. As the largest share of your grade for the class, the poster will be scrutinized and used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of your research project.

(6) *Case Study Presentation (10 pts.)*. You will give a presentation of your research poster in front of the class. Make-up presentations will be arranged for excused or unavoidable circumstances only (e.g., deaths, personal/family illness, emergencies) with written verification. If you miss your presentation due to an unexcused absence, you will receive zero points.

Course Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to act responsibly and abide by the following policies:

All cell phones must be silenced during class. Students must refrain from reading the newspaper, texting, listening to headphones, e-mailing, or using the Internet during class unless it is part of the lecture. Students may be asked to leave class for such behaviors. Any form of audio or video recording is ***not*** allowed in class. Students are also not permitted to take pictures of the projection screen. The instructor does ***not*** give permission for the lecture sessions to be recorded (in either an audio or video format). Course resources will be posted on Carmen. However, you will need to attend classes regularly to complete the course requirements.

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated on any occasion. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>. Final papers and research proposals will be submitted to turnitin.com. Work that has been submitted to other courses will count as plagiarism even if you were the originator of that work.

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

Course Grading

At the end of the course, dividing your total number of points by 100 will yield your final course grade percentage. Letter grades will be assigned using the following grading scheme.

93 - 100 (A)
90 - 92.9 (A-)
87 - 89.9 (B+)
83 - 86.9 (B)
80 - 82.9 (B-)
77 - 79.9 (C+)
73 - 76.9 (C)
70 - 72.9 (C-)
67 - 69.9 (D+)
60 - 66.9 (D)
Below 60 (E)

Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this course. To be fair to all students in the class, there will *not* be opportunities for students to re-complete assignments in order to raise their grades. *It is the student’s responsibility* to ensure that he or she receives a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. *Exceptions will not be made.*

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. Events that transpire over the semester may require me to modify the syllabus. In the event that I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification in class. However, it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc.

By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described above.

Aug 23	Wednesday	Overview	Assignments
Aug 25	Friday	Approaching Class	
Aug 30	Wednesday	Approaching Data	
Sept 1	Friday	Developing Questions	
Sept 6	Wednesday	Choosing Sources	
Sept 8	Friday	Collecting Traces	
Sept 13	Wednesday	Piloting Python	
Sept 15	Friday	Pinging Twitter	Proposal Due
Sept 20	Wednesday	Measuring Metrics	
Sept 22	Friday	Analyzing Networks	
Sept 27	Wednesday	Analyzing Text	
Sept 29	Friday	Analyzing Location	
Oct 4	Wednesday	Analyzing Platforms	
Oct 6	Friday	Data Challenges	Report Due
Oct 11	Wednesday	Data Ethics	
Oct 13	Friday	No Class	
Oct 18	Wednesday	Blueprints	
Oct 20	Friday	Blueprints	
Oct 25	Wednesday	Outside Speaker	
Oct 27	Friday	Outside Speaker	
Nov 1	Wednesday	Case Studies	Blueprint Due
Nov 3	Friday	Case Studies	
Nov 8	Wednesday	Case Studies	
Nov 10	Friday	No Class	
Nov 15	Wednesday	Posters	
Nov 17	Friday	No Class	
Nov 22	Wednesday	No Class	
Nov 24	Friday	No Class	
Nov 29	Wednesday	Presentations	Posters Due
Dec 1	Friday	Presentations	
Dec 6	Wednesday	Presentations	