Schedule: Class meets Wednesdays, 4:00 – 7:00pm
Location: 1265 NQ
Instructor: Dr. Nicole Ellison
   Office: 3384 North Quad
   Phone: 734-647-1430
   Email: *enicole@umich.edu*
   Office Hours: Wednesday and Thurs 1-2, and by appointment

Course Description

This course will introduce doctoral students to relevant theories and scholarship examining the social, psychological, and interpersonal aspects of social media use, using relevant theories in fields such as communication, social psychology, and sociology. We will be reading both classic and new research in this area. Topics include: computer-mediated communication theory; self-presentation and online identity; motivations for social media use, interpersonal relationship initiation and maintenance; cultural aspects of social media platform production and management, and the psychological implications of social media use. The course will be structured as a discussion-focused learning experience.

Course goals

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an overview of critical concepts for understanding the ways in which social technologies – especially but not limited to social media – reshape social interactions, and the implications of this for relationship development, self-presentation, identity work, and other important processes. The reading list covers both foundational work and state of the art scholarship in this vibrant and emerging arena of scholarship.

Reading

There is a fair amount of reading included in this course, which you will need to engage with in order to contribute to class discussions. That said, it's acceptable to skim sometimes when you are certain a particular article is not going to be particularly useful for your research focus. But I hope will not often be the case. And it will be apparent when it is.

Unless otherwise noted, all readings are in Canvas. If you can't find or are having trouble with a file, please let me know immediately so I can fix it. The books you should purchase, check out, or borrow are:

- Baym, N. K. (2018). *Playing to the Crowd: Musicians, Audiences, and the Intimate Work of Connection*. NYU Press.
- Gillespie, T. (2018). *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, content moderation, and the hidden decisions that shape social media*. Yale University Press.
- Humphreys, L. (2018). *The qualified self: Social media and the accounting of everyday life*. MIT Press.

Weekly Responses (30%)

Each week's readings share a focus, which will vary week to week. **Throughout the semester you should upload six (6) two-page (double-spaced) reaction papers to canvas.** In your paper, you will respond to the readings, addressing questions such as: What did you find particularly interesting, counter-intuitive, or troubling about this work? What research question(s), methods, or future research was suggested by the readings in your opinion? What alternative explanations should the author(s) have considered? How does this work speak to (or ignore) other work we've discussed this semester? What concepts are particularly useful for your own work? There is not a standard structure for these papers. You should use them as a platform for working through and synthesizing your thoughts about the readings and topic area, and we may organize class discussions around the ideas you raise. I am NOT looking for a summary of the readings or for you to "prove" that you have done the reading – that is my assumption. I am looking for reactions, responses, and ideas sparked by the readings. This is an exercise designed to encourage intellectual engagement, not a strategy to determine who has done the readings.

In addition to your two-page paper, please pose 2-3 discussion questions (1 – 3 sentences each) informed by the readings and your own engagement with them. These questions can focus on any aspect such as the findings, the method, the theory, and should provide interpretation, critique, or an extension of the work.

These response papers should be posted to Canvas no later than Tuesday at 5pm. If possible, I encourage you to read your peers' contributions before class on Wednesday, especially if it is a topic that is closely related to your own work.

Some questions for our discussions that may inform your paper:
- What is the topic/area/research question(s)?
- What are the mechanisms or theoretical frameworks guiding the project's focus, conclusions, or design?
- What are the study's methods (and how do they relate to the research questions and theoretical framework)?
- What is the disciplinary framework the author(s) are working within or in conversation with?
- What are the publishing norms shaping this paper? How does it differ from other papers we have read?
- What studies, academic communities, or other authors is this piece in conversation with?

Deadline: Tuesday (day before class), 5pm.

Participation: 10%

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and the ideas they represent in thoughtful ways. Note that, as with most communication, quality counts more than quantity. Dominating class discussions or saying something just to hit a participation metric is not the goal

here; providing insights, building on others' ideas, respectfully disagreeing, and contributing to the discussion in meaningful ways is.

Discussion presentation/topic leader (20%)
You will pick one week on which you would like to lead a portion of the session's presentation and discussion. For your selected topic you will:

Prepare a brief (~15 minute) overview presentation that introduces the topic and expands on the assigned readings, such as by providing more background or context for the papers, describing additional research not covered in class, considering the theoretical, ethical, or design implications of the work, societal issues and concerns on the topic, or even demonstrating new related platforms or tools inspired by or related to the papers or topic. Your goal is to highlight important aspects of the readings or topic and to go a bit deeper, connecting them back to other concepts from class or your own reading and expanding the concepts covered.

During a portion of the class, I will ask you to help lead the discussion by addressing key points of interest from the questions submitted that week and pulling them into the day's discussion. Synthesize or select from the discussion questions submitted and propose a set of 3-4 questions that can be used to guide conversation. **Please email these with a short note to me by Wednesday at 12 for quick feedback (if needed).**

Research paper: 40%
More information about the research paper and presentation will be provided at a later date. I am happy to work with you to find a topic and approach that supports your long-term research goals. The final paper should be approximately 15 pages.

On Oct. 17, you will turn in a short description of your paper and present the idea to the class in order to receive feedback. This should include your idea/thesis and a rationale for why this topic is important to study. Group work (max group size: 3) is allowed, though group projects must reflect the substantive work of all parties and the length of the paper should reflect the larger set of authors. I do not recommend group work for first or second year students.

On the Dec. 12, we will meet to discuss papers, so please prepare a short presentation that includes and overview of your topic, research question, literature review, and findings or arguments (if applicable). Please note this meeting replaces a final exam and it takes place after classes have concluded. Let me know as soon as possible if you can't attend on Dec. 12, 4pm.

Classroom Civility
In this course, it is important that people and ideas are treated with respect, and that class time is used productively. The classroom should be a safe space for open discussion of ideas. Debates and disagreements may arise, but please be respectful of the diverse opinions and experiences presented in the classroom.

Harassment will not be tolerated. Harassment consists of abusive behavior directed toward an individual or group because of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical or mental disability. Please contact me if anything in the course has made you uncomfortable.

Please avoid behaviors that make it difficult to accomplish our mutual objectives (e.g., side conversations, showing disrespect to classmates, coming to class late or leaving early, etc.). We will use technology sometimes for various class-related activities, and you may use a laptop or tablet to take notes. Please **do not use them for other purposes such as email**. Be respectful to yourself, to your instructor, and to your classmates in your use of your technology in a learning environment.

Please read the following Guidelines for Dialogue, developed by the Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan, 2012. We will adhere to these principles whenever possible.

We will do our best to:

1. Maintain confidentiality. We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.
2. Commit to learning from each other. We will listen to other and not talk at each other. We acknowledge differences among us in backgrounds, skills, interests, identities and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.
3. Not demean, devalue, or "put down" people for their experiences, lack of experiences, or difference in interpretation of those experiences.
4. Trust that people are always doing the best they can. We will give each other the benefit of the doubt. We will assume we are all trying our hardest and that our intentions are good even when the impact is not.
5. Challenge the idea and not the person. If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
6. Speak our discomfort. If something is bothering us, we will share this with the group. Often our emotional reactions to this process offer the most valuable learning opportunities.
7. Step Up, Step Back. We will be mindful of taking up much more space than others. On the same note, empower ourselves to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.
8. Not to freeze people in time. We are all works in progress. We will be willing to change and make space for others to do so. Therefore we will not assume that one comment or one opinion made at one time captures the whole of a person's character.

Academic Integrity
Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School's policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763 3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing
The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (732) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs , or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources .

For a more comprehensive listing of the broad range of mental health services available on campus, please visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/

Reading Schedule
The readings may be adjusted. Any adjustments will be announced via canvas.

Week 1 (Sept 5): Overview and Definitional Work

Prep work for day one: BEFORE YOU DO THE READINGS, write a 1-page short paper that describes (1) your working definition of "social media" and (2) your response to the following question: "What are the most interesting and important research questions related to social media at this time (to you)?" [Note this does not count as one of the 6 reaction papers and will not be graded.] Upload to canvas by 2pm.

Ellison, N. B. & boyd, d. (2013). Sociality through Social Network Sites. In Dutton, W. H. (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Internet Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 151-172.

Kane, G. C., Alavi, M., Labianca, G., Borgatti, S. P., & Center, L. (2014). What's different about social media networks: A framework and research agenda. *MISQ, 38*(1), 274-304.

Carr, C. T., & Hayes, R. A. (2015). Social media: Defining, developing, and divining. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, *23*(1), 46-65.

Note: if you haven't read boyd & Ellison (2007), please do so before reading Ellison & boyd, 2014.

Week 2 (Sept 12): Affordances

Treem, J., & Leonardi, P. (2012). Social media use in organizations: Exploring the affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, and association. *Communication Yearbook, 36*, 143-189.

Nagy, P., & Neff, G. (2015). Imagined affordance: Reconstructing a keyword for communication theory. *Social Media+ Society*, *1*(2), 2056305115603385

Davis, J. L., & Chouinard, J. B. (2016). Theorizing affordances: From request to refuse. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, *36*(4), 241–248. doi:10.1177/0270467617714944

Evans, S. K., Pearce, K. E., Vitak, J., & Treem, J. W. (2016). Explicating affordances: A conceptual framework for understanding affordances in communication research. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *22*(1), 35-52.

Fox, J. & McEwan, B. (2017) Distinguishing technologies for social interaction: The perceived social affordances of communication channels scale, *Communication Monographs, 84*:3, 298-318, DOI: 10.1080/03637751.2017.1332418

Recommended: Hutchby, I. (2001). Technologies, texts and affordances. *Sociology, 35*(2), 441-456.

Week 3 (Sept 19): Interpersonal Relationships

Walther, J. B. (1996). Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal, interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interaction. *Communication Research, 23*, 3-43. doi: 10.1177/009365096023001001

Vitak, J., & Ellison, N. (2018). Personal Relationships and Technology in the Digital Age. In A. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships* (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology, pp. 481-493). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316417867.037

Parks, M. R. (2017). Embracing the challenges and opportunities of mixed-media relationships. *Human Communication Research, 43*(4), 505-517. doi:10.1111/hcre.12125

Walther, J. B. (2017). The merger of mass and interpersonal communication via new media: Integrating metaconstructs. *Human Communication Research, 43*(4), 559-572.

Papacharissi, Z. (2018). Introduction. In Papacharissi, Z. (Ed.). *A Networked Self and Love*. New York: Routledge.

Recommended: O'Sullivan, P. B., & Carr, C. T. (2017). Masspersonal communication: A model bridging the mass-interpersonal divide. *New Media & Society*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816686104

Week 4 (Sept 26): Self Presentation

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Anchor Books. (Introduction, Ch. 1. Ch. 3)

Hogan, B. (2010). The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society, 30*, 377-386. doi: 10.1177/0270467610385893

Ellison, N. B., Hancock, J. T. & Toma, C. L. (2012). Profile as Promise: A Framework for Conceptualizing Veracity in Online Dating Self-Presentations. *New Media & Society, 14* (1), 45-62.

Sundar, S.S. et al., (2018, March 18). Why it's so hard to #DeleteFacebook: Constant psychological boosts keep you hooked. The Conversation. Online: https://theconversation.com/why-its-so-hard-to-deletefacebook-constant-psychological-boosts-keep-you-hooked-92976

Recommended:
Walther, J. B., & Parks, M. R. (2002). Cues filtered out, cues filtered in: Computer-mediated communication and relationships. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication* (3rd ed., pp. 529-563). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Recommended: Bazarova, N. N., Taft, J. G., Choi, Y. H., & Cosley, D. (2012). Managing impressions and relationships on Facebook: Self-presentational and relational concerns revealed through the analysis of language style. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *32*(2), 121–141.

Week 5 (Oct 3) What/why we share (2):   Media accounting and Identity work

Humphreys, L. (2018). *The qualified self: Social media and the accounting of everyday life*. MIT Press. (Skim or skip chapters 4 and 5)

Week 6 (Oct 10) : Privacy and Audience

Litt, E. (2012). Knock, knock. Who's there? The imagined audience. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media.*, *56*_(3), 330–345. http://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2012.705195

Bernstein, M. S., Bakshy, E., Burke, M., & Karrer, B. (2013, April). Quantifying the invisible audience in social networks. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 21-30). ACM.

DeAndrea, D. C. (2014). Advancing Warranting Theory. *Communication Theory, 24*(2), 186-204. doi: 10.1111/comt.12033

Duffy, B. E., & Chan, N. K. (2018). "You never really know who's looking": Imagined surveillance across social media platforms. *New Media & Society*, 1461444818791318.

Week 7 (Oct. 17): Well-Being and other outcomes

<mark>One-pager on paper idea due.</mark>

Verduyn, P., Lee, D. S., Park, J., Shablack, H., Orvell, A., Bayer, J., … Kross, E. (2015). Passive Facebook usage undermines affective well-being: Experimental and longitudinal evidence. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *144*(2), 480–488. https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0000057

Burke, M., & Kraut, R. E. (2016). The relationship between Facebook use and well-being depends on communication type and tie strength. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 21*(4), 265–281. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12162

Toma, C. (2016). Taking the Good with the Bad: Effects of Facebook Self-Presentation on Emotional Well-Being. *The Routledge Handbook of Media Use and Well-Being: International Perspectives on Theory and Research on Positive Media Effects*. Routledge. Available: https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/lib/umichigan/reader.action?docID=4568562&query=
Ellison, N., Gray, R., Lampe, C. & Fiore, A. (2013). Social capital and resource requests on Facebook. *New Media & Society*.

Ginsberg, D. & Burke, M. (2017). "Hard Questions: Is Spending Time on Social Media Bad for Us?" https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2017/12/hard-questions-is-spending-time-on-social-media-bad-for-us/

Recommended: Ellison, N. B. and J. Vitak (2015). Social Network Site Affordances and Their Relationship to Social Capital Processes. *The Handbook of the Psychology of Communication Technology*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd: 203-227.

Week 8 (Oct. 24): Why we click: Likes and other one-click feedback

Trieu, P. & Ellison, N. B. (2018). Channel navigation in interpersonal communication: Contemporary practices and proposed future research directions. In Papacharissi, Z. (Ed.). *A Networked Self and Love*. New York: Routledge.

Sumner, E. M., Ruge-Jones, L., & Alcorn, D. (2018). A functional approach to the Facebook Like button: An exploration of meaning, interpersonal functionality, and potential alternative response buttons. *New Media & Society*, *20*(4), 1451-1469.

Scissors, L., Burke, M., & Wengrovitz, S. (2016). What's in a Like?: Attitudes and behaviors around receiving Likes on Facebook. In *Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing* (pp. 1501-1510).

Sherman, L. E., Payton, A. A., Hernandez, L. M., Greenfield, P. M., & Dapretto, M. (2016). The power of the like in adolescence: Effects of peer influence on neural and behavioral responses to social media. *Psychological science*, *27*(7), 1027-1035.

Week 9 (Oct 31): Algorithms [Note: We may want to meet earlier for those who want to trick or treat with their families]

[Video] "The Trouble with Bias" NIPS 2017 Keynote by Kate Crawford, online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMym_BKWQzk

Gillespie, T. (2014). The relevance of algorithms. In T. Gillespie, P. Boczkowski, & K. Foot (Eds.), *Media technologies: Essays on communication, materiality, and society* (pp. 167–194). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kitchin, R. (2017). Thinking critically about and researching algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, *20*(1), 14-29.
http://futuredata.stanford.edu/classes/cs345s/handouts/kitchin.pdf

DeVito, M. A., Birnholtz, J., Hancock, J. T., French, M., & Liu, S. (2018, April). How People Form Folk Theories of Social Media Feeds and What It Means for How We Study Self-Presentation. In *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (p. 120). ACM.

Recommended: Bucher, T. (2017). The algorithmic imaginary: exploring the ordinary affects of Facebook algorithms. *Information, Communication & Society*, *20*(1), 30-44.

Recommended: Rader, E., & Gray, R. (2015, April). Understanding user beliefs about algorithmic curation in the Facebook news feed. In *Proceedings of the 33rd annual ACM conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 173-182). ACM.

Week 10 (Nov 7) Mobile Communication. Guest Instructor: Scott Campbell (NE at CSCW)

Ling, R. (1997). "One can talk about common manners!" The use of mobile telephones in inappropriate situations. In L. Haddon (Ed.), *Themes in mobile telephony: Final Report of the COST 248 Home and Work group.*

Campbell, S. W. (in press). From frontier to field: Old and new theoretical directions in Mobile Communication Studies. *Communication Theory*.

Schrock, A. R. (2016). Exploring the relationship between mobile Facebook and social capital: What is the "mobile difference" for parents of young children? *Social Media + Society (2)*3, 1-11. doi: 10.1177/2056305116662163

Saker, M, & Frith, J. (in press). From hybrid space to dislocated space: Mobile virtual reality (MVR) and a third stage of mobile media theory. *Communication Theory*.

Boase, J., & Ling, R. (2013). Measuring mobile phone use: Self-report versus log data. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *18*(4), 508-519.

Week 11 (Nov. 14)   **Methodological Challenges**

Kramer, A. D. I., Guillory, J. E., & Hancock, J. T. (2014). Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 111(24), 8788–8790. http://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1320040111

Rains, S. A., & Brunner, S. R. (2015). What can we learn about social network sites by studying Facebook? A call and recommendations for research on social network sites. *New Media & Society*, *17*(1), 114-131.

Brooks,C. F. (2018, May 4). In a Big Data World, Scholars Need New Guidelines for Research. *Scientific American*. https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/in-a-big-data-world-scholars-need-new-guidelines-for-research/

Farrell, H. (2017, Dec. 19). How Facebook Stymies Social Science. *Chronicle of Higher Education.* Online: https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Facebook-Stymies-Social/242090

Hargittai, E. (2018). Potential Biases in Big Data**:** Omitted Voices on Social Media. Social Science Computer Review. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0894439318788322?journalCode=ssce –

*For more details on the controversy about the Kramer et al. (2014) study, see: http://laboratorium.net/archive/2014/06/30/the_facebook_emotional_manipulation_study_source

Recommended:
Ledbetter, A. M. (2015). Media multiplexity theory: Technology use and interpersonal tie strength. In D. O. Braithwaite & P. Schrodt (Eds.), *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple perspectives* (2nd ed.; pp. 363-376). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Week 12 (Nov 21): Class cancelled due to Thanksgiving recess. Enjoy the holiday!

Week 13 (Nov 28): "Custodians of the Internet": Moderation and Other Challenges

Gillespie, T. (2018). *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, content moderation, and the hidden decisions that shape social media.* Yale University Press. [Try to read the whole book, but skim or skip parts that are less relevant to your particular project. Do attend carefully to the opening and closing chapters.]

Week 14 (Dec. 5): Social media and emotional labor

Baym, N. K. (2018). *Playing to the Crowd: Musicians, Audiences, and the Intimate Work of Connection*. NYU Press. [Try to read the whole book, but skim or skip parts that are less relevant to your particular project.]

Be prepared to discuss your paper and receive feedback.

Wednesday, Dec 12: Presentations and Final Paper due