



## CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

<b>Course title:</b>	Social Media's Revolutionary Impact on Journalism and Society
<b>Course code:</b>	JOUR 3004 PRAG
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	Business, Arts and Sciences, Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. semester credits:</b>	3.00
<b>Contact hours:</b>	45.00
<b>Term:</b>	Fall 2023

### Course Description

This course examines the tremendous impact of social media on many walks of life, with a special emphasis on how social media have been transforming the profession of journalist and how the public now consumes news and information. It also offers a look beyond the field of journalism to consider how social media and online communities are profoundly affecting the ways in which young people form their identities and then how those identities develop later in life. Special sessions tackle the influence of social media on the construction of identity, and on the relationship and community building. Many of these issues are discussed in the context of Central and Eastern Europe and the "Western" experience of social media is compared to the situation in the post-communist world. The course addresses many questions related to social media, including the definition of "social media", the role of social media in the formation of community, the role of social media as a uniting or dividing factor, the differences in the consumption of social media in Central and Eastern Europe, the role of social media technologies in constructions of youth, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality, the effect of social media improving on the state of journalism, changes in the role of the journalist with the advance of social media, and others.

### Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Analyze and assess the transformation of the journalist profession as a result of social media and online communities;
- Compare social media consumption in the "West" and East Central Europe;
- Improve their writing and social media skills through writing tasks, discussions and other assignments;
- Acquire a critical insight into social media, which will shift their perspective from mere social media users/consumers into practitioners familiar with this phenomenon in a much broader and theoretical sense.

### Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites, just a healthy curiosity in how social media is rapidly transforming the world around us and interest in journalism.

### Methods of Instruction

Students will receive information through lectures, readings, discussions, and from writing assignments. The class will be informal and interactive, with a heavy emphasis on class participation and presentations.

### Assessment and Final Grade

1.	Midterm Presentation	20%
2.	Class Blog Posts	20%
3.	Final Research Presentation	10%
4.	Final Research Paper	25%
5.	Class Participation	25%
	TOTAL	100%

### Course Requirements

## **Midterm Presentation**

Each student group will present on a topic related to one of the class sessions in the first half of the class. Presentations will last a maximum of 15 minutes, and each member of the group should participate.

## **Class Blog Posts**

These posts will require you to make connections between course readings/theories and your own observations/experiences of social media. You are also encouraged to post responses to other students' blog posts. You will be required to post a total of two blog posts, each between 500-700 words. Each student will be required to post according to the deadlines below, with a penalty of one grade for each week of lateness.

## **Final Research Presentation**

You will create a multimedia presentation of your research, which you will share with the class as well as post online. You may choose to make a video, an audio podcast, and/or a slide presentation. The presentation should 1) explain the topic you researched, 2) describe the methods you used to conduct your research, 3) summarize your findings, and 4) point to directions for further research on the topic.

## **Final Research Paper**

You will conduct research on a specific topic of your choosing related to social media, with at least part of your paper analyzing the situation in Central and Eastern Europe. Your research may either be a review of literature or an empirical study (we will discuss this more in class). You will write up your study in a paper ranging from 2,000-2,500 words that will be due the week before the final exam period.

## **Class Participation**

You are expected to do the required reading before class and to be an active participant during the class debates/presentations indicated below. If students do not keep up with the reading, the instructor may initiate reading quizzes at the beginning of selected classes. As part of the participation grade, each student will be asked to present two readings from the assigned list according to her/his choice over the course of the semester, with one presentation before the midterm. You should present a summary of the reading not lasting more than five minutes, and then your own interpretation of the main findings of the reading and their relevance to the main topic of that particular session. Each presentation will be worth 10% of the final participation grade. Please note, however, that **all students, not just the discussion facilitators, are expected to read and discuss the assigned reading each week.**

**Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.**

### CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

## **Attendance**

To encourage engaged learning, regular class attendance is required throughout the program. This includes any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as internship, service-learning, or other required field placement.

An excused absence in a CIEE course will only be considered if approved by a CIEE Center Director/Academic Director (not the Instructor), and:

- it is a self-certified absence for illness (only once per course, requires formal request before or within 24 hours, cannot miss assessment worth more than 5% of final course grade)
- a doctor's note from a local medical professional is provided
- evidence of a family emergency is provided
- it is a pre-approved observance of religious holiday

Unexcused absences include personal travel and/or travel delays, as well as missing more than 25% of a single class period (including tardiness and early departure). Assessments missed due to unexcused absences will be marked as zero. Students with over 10% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff. Students with over 20% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff, receive a formal warning letter (shared with their home institution) and lose 10% of the final course point total (e.g., a final A grade of 93% will be lowered to a B grade of 83%).

For more detail, please consult your CIEE Academic Manual.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive and inclusive teaching and learning environment. All students are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness, respect, and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in grade penalties or disciplinary action. See the CIEE Student Academic Manual for further information on academic integrity.

***N.B. Course schedule and co-curriculars are subject to change. The final duration and distribution of content and assignments will be determined and presented to students at the onset of the course.***

### **Weekly Schedule**

#### **Week 1**

Class: 1.1 Class Introduction

Class: 1.2 Studying and Defining Social Media and Online Communities

#### Reading:

Boyd, Ellison, 2007, pp. 210-230.

Baym, 2010, selections.

Donath, Boyd, 2004, pp. 71-82.

Sandvig, The Oversharer (and Other Social Media Experiments), 2011.

Assignment: First blog post due

#### **Week 2**

Class: 2.1 Online Communities and Social Capital

#### Reading:

Everyone should read, in its entirety: Gardner & Davis by Week 3: Gardner & Davis, 2013.

Stevens, Chattopadhyay & Rill, 2008.

Class: 2.2 Introduction to WordPress

How to use WordPress, the class blogging platform. This lecture will introduce you to WordPress (if you don't know it already), and show you how to post to the class blog.

### **Week 3**

Class: 3.1 Youth Development

Be sure to have read by this date: Gardner & Davis, 2013.

Class: 3.2 Class Debate

**Were social media a positive or negative influence on your pre-teen and teen years?**

Twenge, "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation"

Cavanagh, "No, Smartphones are Not Destroying a Generation."

Samuel, "Yes, Smartphones are Destroying a Generation, But Not of Kids."

**First blog post due**

### **Week 4**

Class: 4.1 Gender/Sexuality

Gudelunas, 2012

### **Week 5**

Class: 5.1 Dating/Online Relationships

Shafir, 2015.

Finkel, 2015.

Feuer, 2015.

McCarthy, 2012.

Class: 5.2 Race

Boyd, 2007.

Manjoo, 2010.

Freelon, McIlwain, Clark, 2016.

Reynolds, 2016

### **Week 6**

Class: 6.1 Midterm Presentations

*Midterm Exam Period*

Class: 6.2 Midterm Presentations

### **Week 7**

Class: 7.1 Individual Discussions about paper topics and movie:

**Individual Discussions about paper topics and movie:**

**The Internet's Own Boy: The Story of Aaron Swartz**

Filmmaker Brian Knappenberger explores the life and work of programming prodigy and information activist Aaron Swartz.

Class: 7.2 The Debate Over the Power of Social Media for Change

Gladwell, 2010.

Shirky, 2011.

Tufekci, 2010.  
Madrigal, 2011.

## **Week 8**

Class: 8.1 Social Media Activism case studies

**Assignment: Come to class with your own examples**

Class: 8.2 Field Trip to Bloomberg

**Second blog post due!**

## **Week 9**

Class: 9.1 Trolling, Social Media and Terrorism

Morozov, 2011.

Mooney, 2014.

Manjoo, 2017.

Please read this overview and the excerpt summaries that follows Journalist's Resource:

<http://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/social-media/social-media-violent-extremism-isis-online-speech-research-review>

Class: 9.2 Guest lecture: Jaroslav Valuch, Online Hate Speech

Jaroslav is Czech expert in social media activism and communication with crisis-affected populations. He has worked with dozens of initiatives from all over the world. Recently he led a Czech governmental campaign against hate crimes and hate speech.

## **Week 10**

Class: 10.1 Fake News, Propaganda, and Disinformation

Pomerantsev, 2014.

Silverman and Alexander, 2016.

Wardle, 2017.

Smoleňová, 2015: 3-4 & 11-12.

Class: 10.2 Social media's impact on Journalism.

Verification, problems, techniques, examples.

Nieman Reports, 2012: 1-31,

## **Week 11**

Class: 11.1 Excursion to Respekt (the best Czech weekly newsmagazine)

Class: 11.2 Social Media Marketing

Clemons, 2009.

Mangold and Faulds, 2009.

## **Week 12**

Class: 12.1 Guest Speaker: Zuzana Zahorova: Online Marketing Specialist

**Social media marketing in the Czech Republic**

Class: 12.2 Final paper presentations

## Week 13

Class: 13.1 Final paper presentations (all papers due)

Class: 13.2 Wrap Up

## Course Materials

### Readings

Baym, Nancy K. *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*. Cambridge: Polity, 2010. (selections)

Boyd, Danah. "White Flight in Networked Publics? How Race and Class Shaped American Teen Engagement with MySpace and Facebook." In *Race After the Internet*, Routledge, 2011, pp. 203-222.

Boyd, Danah M., Ellison, Nicole B. Social Network Sites: *Definition, History, and Scholarship*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2007, pp. 210- 230.

Byrne, Dara N. "The Future of (the) 'Race': Identity, Discourse, and the Rise of Computer-mediated Public Spheres." *Learning Race and Ethnicity: Youth and Digital Media*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008, pp. 15-38.

Cone, James. "Wanted: The networked photojournalist." *British Journal of Photography*. 24 July 2013, <http://www.bjp-online.com/british-journal-of-photography/opinion/2284469/wanted-the-networked-photojournalist>. Accessed 28 July 2017.

Clemons, Eric K. "The complex problem of monetizing virtual electronic social networks." *Journal Decision Support Systems*, vol. 48, no. 1, Dec 2009, pp. 46-56.

Donath, Judith & Boyd, Danah. "Public Displays of Connection." *BT Technology Journal*, vol. 22, no. 4, October 2004, pp. 71- 82, <http://smg.media.mit.edu/papers/Donath/PublicDisplays.pdf>. Accessed 27 July 2017.

Dunn, Understanding How Social Media Fueled The Kony 2012 Craze, <http://edudemic.com/2012/04/understanding-how-social-media-fueled-the-kony-2012-craze/>

Dunn, Viral Kony Video Is A Teachable Moment, <http://edudemic.com/2012/03/viral-kony-video-is-a-teachable-moment>

Feuer, Alan: "On Tinder, Taking a Swipe at Love or Sex, or Something, in New York." *The New York Times*, 13 Feb 2015

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Freelon, Deen, Charlton D. McIlwain and Meredith D. Clark. "Beyond the Hashtags." 2016

[http://archive.cmsimpact.org/sites/default/files/beyond\\_the\\_hashtags\\_2016.pdf](http://archive.cmsimpact.org/sites/default/files/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf). Accessed Dec. 10, 2018.

Gardner, Howard and Davis, Katie: *The App Generation: How Today's Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy, and Imagination in a Digital World*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Gladwell, Malcolm, "Why the revolution will not be tweeted." *The New Yorker*, 4 Oct 2010, [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa\\_fact\\_gladwell](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell). Accessed 27 July 2017. Accessed Dec. 10, 2018.

Gillin, Paul. *The New influencers: A Marketer's Guide to the New Social Media*. Quill Driver Books, 2007.

Gladwell, Malcolm. "Why the revolution will not be tweeted." *The New Yorker*, 4 Oct 2010

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa\\_fact\\_gladwell](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell). Accessed Dec. 10, 2018.

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<https://slate.com/technology/2014/02/internet-troll-personality-study-machiavellianism-narcissism-psychopathy-sadism.html>. Accessed Dec. 10, 2018.

Morozov, Evgeny "The Net Delusion," Chapter 1: <http://www.publicaffairsbooks.com/morozovch1.pdf>

Morozov, Evgeny. "First thoughts on Tunisia and the role of the Internet": [http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/01/14/first\\_thoughts\\_on\\_tunisia\\_and\\_the\\_role\\_of\\_the\\_internet](http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/01/14/first_thoughts_on_tunisia_and_the_role_of_the_internet). Accessed Dec. 10, 2018.

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