

JOMC 490
Presidential Campaigning in the Social Media Age

Spring 2015

Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00am-12:15pm
Halls of Fame, Carroll Hall

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Hours: 10:00am-11:00am, T/Th and by appointment

This course will lead students in closely analyzing contemporary presidential campaigning in an era of social media. Students will encounter a number of readings by practitioners about effective social media use in campaigning, and analytical arguments and research from academics who study social media's role in public debate, electoral processes, and democracy more broadly. The class will be oriented around tracking developments on the campaign trail during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and students will apply practitioner and academic literature to understand real time political processes. In the process, we will create descriptive accounts of campaigns and candidates and their social media use, and seek to infer campaign strategy. More broadly, students will come to understand much about social media, contemporary cultural and social practice, and American politics more broadly.

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps> Students taking this course will be able to think critically, creatively, and independently, learn how to conduct research and evaluate information, write correctly and clearly, and critically evaluate their own work and that of others.

Book

Colin Delany, How to Use the Internet to Win in 2016. E-book.

<http://www.epolitics.com/winning/>

Course Requirements

Participation

This course is premised on active discussion and is run as a seminar. You are expected to come to class having completed the readings and ready to discuss them. In addition, we will open each class period with up to 30 minutes of open discussion about politics informed by our readings throughout the course. As such, you are expected to be following the daily political media. As a matter of course, we might not always get to

explicit discussion of the readings, but they will provide the broad context for the course and will be a resource for you.

You also have a more structured participation assignment:

Campaign Social Media Analysis

At the start of the semester, you will break into groups to analyze the content of one presidential candidate and campaign across social media platforms who you will follow throughout the class (or as long as she/he stays in the race). Once a week, your group will make a short, 5-7 minute presentation on that candidate's social media presence during the following week. Presentations can provide a descriptive analysis of what the candidate's campaign is doing on social media (such as how many tweets they sent and what issues they are promoting on Twitter), your group's perception of the strategy behind the campaign's social media use, or your interpretations of their social media use and strategy based on the insights from the class or other readings.

The best presentations will present examples of social media use by the candidates, take campaigning across a number of different social media platforms into account, analyze social media as a part of electoral strategy more broadly, strive to infer strategy, show how social media efforts effect discourse about the election in the professional press or in media more generally, and provide a critical evaluation of readings in the class.

If your group's candidate drops out, you will be responsible for choosing a party or political organization involved in electioneering efforts and tracking their social media use around the election. There are many examples that you can choose from, such as the conservative group Club for Growth and the National Rifle Association, or the progressive Center for American Progress and Planned Parenthood. Or, you could choose the Democratic or Republican parties. The goal is to show how, through social media, these organizations work to shape discourse about the election and, ultimately, its outcome.

Final Presentation

For your final class project, you will work in groups to craft a social media plan for a real or hypothetical general election candidate of your choosing. This includes drawing on the resources and discussions of the class to state your broad strategy on social media for your candidate, the goals, objectives, and audiences your group has for multiple platforms, and designing mock social media pages, images, and content for your candidate. You are not required to discuss every social media platform in existence, but at a minimum you should incorporate at least three into your campaign plan (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Tumblr). Your candidate can be either of the two party's nominees, a third party nominee, or a candidate who ran during this cycle and did not win (I am also open to other ideas, propose them!)

During the scheduled final, you will present this plan and turn in your paper. We will discuss what this should look like in class. The best social media plans will take account of who your candidate is (their image, biography, background, etc.), the electoral context (is their party in the White House? What issues are salient to voters? What does polling data say voters are concerned about? What is a potential path to the White House?), the audiences you are trying to reach (which voters does your candidate need to reach to register, persuade, or turn out?), and the audiences and affordances of platforms (what types of users are on what social media platform, who are you trying to reach and how?).

Grades

Participation (including classroom participation and group social media presentations):
60%

Final presentation: 40%

Resources

Most of the readings for the class are on Sakai. As students, you have access to all of these resources. In addition, students should pay particular attention to blogs that bridge social science and journalism. Here are a few of my favorites:

ESPN's 538: <http://fivethirtyeight.com/>

The Washington Post's *The Monkey Cage*:
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/>

The New York Times's *Upshot*: <http://www.nytimes.com/upshot/>

Vox's *The Mischiefs of Faction*: <http://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction>

Special Accommodations:

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

Honor Code:

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a

representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Seeking Help:

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity:

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Course Schedule

Part One: Democracy and Campaigns

January 12th

Introduction to the course

What is Social Media? Why is Campaigning so Different Today?

January 14th

Boyd, Danah, and Nicole Ellison. "Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship." *IEEE Engineering Management Review* 3, no. 38 (2010): 16-31.

January 19th

Karpf, David. "Social science research methods in Internet time." *Information, Communication & Society* 15, no. 5 (2012): 639-661.

Digital Campaign Strategy

January 21st

Delany, Introduction through Chapter 3 (pages 2-27)

January 26th

Delany, Chapters 4-6 (pages 28-62)

January 28th

Delany, Chapters 7-13 (pages 63-93)

Technology and Campaigning

February 2nd

Kreiss, *Prototype Politics*, Chapter 1

February 4th

Kreiss, *Prototype Politics*, Chapter 5

February 9th

Kreiss, Digital Campaigning

Social Media and Campaigning: Organizational Perspectives

February 11th

Serazio, Michael. "The new media designs of political consultants: Campaign production in a fragmented era." *Journal of Communication* 64, no. 4 (2014): 743-763.

February 16th

Baldwin-Philippi, *Using Technology, Building Democracy*
Chapter 4, Digital Circulation in Networked Publics (available online through UNC libraries)

February 18th

Baldwin-Philippi, *Using Technology, Building Democracy*
Chapter 5, Digital Retail Politics (available online through UNC libraries)

February 23rd

Kreiss, Daniel. "Seizing the moment: The presidential campaigns' use of Twitter during the 2012 electoral cycle." *New Media & Society* (2014): 1461444814562445.

February 25th

Social Media and Politics: The New Public Sphere

March 1st

Kreiss, Daniel. "The Networked Democratic Spectator." *Social Media + Society* 1, no. 1 (2015): 2056305115578876.

March 3rd

McKelvey, Karissa, Joseph DiGrazia, and Fabio Rojas. "Twitter publics: how online political communities signaled electoral outcomes in the 2010 US house election." *Information, Communication & Society* 17, no. 4 (2014): 436-450.

March 8th

Jungherr, Twitter in Politics

Available online at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2402443

March 10th

Freelon, Deen, and David Karpf. "Of big birds and bayonets: hybrid Twitter interactivity in the 2012 Presidential debates." *Information, Communication & Society* 18, no. 4 (2015): 390-406.

SPRING BREAK MARCH 15th-17th

Social Media and Campaigning: Research Perspectives

March 22nd

Neuman, W.R., Bimber, B., Hindman, M. The Internet and four dimensions of citizenship. Available online at: http://www.wrneuman.com/nav_pub_92_275693743.pdf

March 24th

Boulianne, Shelley. "Does Internet use affect engagement? A meta-analysis of research." *Political Communication* 26, no. 2 (2009): 193-211.

March 29th

Rainie, L., Smith, A., Schlozman, K.L., Brady, H. and Verba, S. (2012). Social media and political engagement. Available online at: <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Political-engagement.aspx>

March 31st

Gil de Zúñiga, Homero, Nakwon Jung, and Sebastián Valenzuela. "Social media use for news and individuals' social capital, civic engagement and political participation." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 17, no. 3 (2012): 319-336.

April 5th

Bode, Leticia. "Facebooking it to the polls: a study in online social networking and political behavior." *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 9, no. 4 (2012): 352-369.

April 7th

Bode, Leticia, Alexander Hanna, Junghwan Yang, and Dhavan V. Shah. "Candidate Networks, Citizen Clusters, and Political Expression Strategic Hashtag Use in the 2010 Midterms." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 659, no. 1 (2015): 149-165.

April 12th

Thorson, K., 2014. Facing an uncertain reception: young citizens and political interaction on Facebook. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(2), pp.203-216.

April 14th

McKinney, Mitchell S., J. Brian Houston, and Joshua Hawthorne. "Social watching a 2012 Republican presidential primary debate." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58, no. 4 (2014): 556-573.

April 19th

McKinney, Mitchell S., Leslie A. Rill, and Esther Thorson. "Civic Engagement Through Presidential Debates: Young Citizens' Political Attitudes in the 2012 Election." *American Behavioral Scientist* (2013): 0002764213515223.

April 21st

Vromen, Ariadne, Michael A. Xenos, and Brian Loader. "Young people, social media and connective action: from organisational maintenance to everyday political talk." *Journal of Youth Studies* 18, no. 1 (2015): 80-100.

April 26th

Wrap Up

Friday, April 29th 12:00pm

Final Presentations and Social Media Plans Due