

COMM345: Social Media

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COMM345: Social Media

Course Welcome

SOCIAL MEDIA permeates almost every aspect of our lives. Whether it is for work, connecting with others, starting a business, keeping up with our favorite celebrities or influencers, finding a job, looking for recommendations, selling our used stuff, politics, and issues--social media has crept into how we function as a society.

In this class, we will deconstruct social media, understand its purpose and its dangers, learn best practices, and create new channels to connect with our communities. Our focus will include both personal goals and business goals in digital marketing.

We will learn how social media influences us, our culture, and those around us. We will study the theory and philosophy of social media to gain knowledge and terminology to communicate our ideas better. This class aims to help you better understand the social media you consume and social media you produce as well as evaluating the brands we follow.

Big Picture Objective: Recognizing all persons as image-bearers, you will learn to effectively analyze and create social media plans and messages to serve organizational, personal, and other communication communities in truthful, life-giving ways.

Course Description and Credit Hours

(3 credit hours) Upon completion of this course students will understand the impact of social media on our culture, and they will learn how to use it effectively for relationships, personal marketing, public relations, journalism, and business. Students will also learn how to develop social media strategies for different businesses and organizations. They will learn the value of social media and the drawbacks.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

- Develop an understanding of social media platforms and best practices.
- Develop an understanding of social media philosophy and theories.
- Develop an understanding and adaptation of interactivity through social media.
- Develop an understanding of our social media culture.
- Develop critiquing skills (using social media to make a statement).
- Develop social media standards and procedures.
- Understand social media posting schedules for best effect.
- Engage with a complex and diverse world around us.
- Produce thoughtful and engaging content.
- Understand the history of social media and how it has changed the world.
- Understand your place in this social media maze.

Program Competencies

At the completion of the program, students should:

- Know how to think critically and analytically within their discipline.
- Be able to communicate concepts and ideas within their discipline effectively through both verbal and written skills.
- Be able to use knowledge and skills in a variety of settings, especially in employment situations.
- Understand how to apply a Christian world view in a variety of settings, especially in employment situations.

Required Textbook / Materials

Quesenberry, Keith A. Social Media Strategy: Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations in the Consumer Revolution. 2nd Ed.

While no textbook can cover all aspects of social media, this book covers the major process for creating effective social media plans in marketing, advertising, and PR. This text will be supplemented with additional readings and other texts. This text provides a solid overview of how social media interacts with business goals and objectives.

Hubspot Academy Website – Weekly assignments to result in a social media marketing certification that can be used on resumes and Linked In profiles.

Textbooks and other course materials can be purchased from the [online campus bookstore](#).

Instructor Email Response Policy

Any course related email sent to the instructor will have a response either by email, phone, or through Canvas within 48 hours.

Final Grade Calculation

Grade Distribution

Assignment	Point Value
Discussions	175 points
Hubspot Lessons	240 points
Short Assignments	150 points
Total	565 Points

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percent
A	94% - 100%
A-	90% - < 94%
B+	87% - < 90%
B	84% - < 87%
B-	80% - < 84%
C+	77% - < 80%
C	74% - < 77%
C-	70% - < 74%
D+	67% - < 70%
D	64% - < 67%
D-	60% - < 64%
F	Below 60%

Course Schedule

This schedule serves as a general outline for the course. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the schedule as the need arises.

Each week begins on Sunday at 12:00 am EST and ends on Saturday at 11:59 pm EST.

Week	Required Reading	Assignments
1	Chapters 1, 2, and Appendix	Discussion Short Assignment
2	Chapters 3 and 4	Discussion Hubspot Lessons Short Assignment
3	Chapters 5 and 6	Discussion Hubspot Lessons Short Assignment
4	Chapters 7 and 8	Discussion Hubspot Lessons Short Assignment
5	Chapters 9 and 10	Discussion Hubspot Lessons Short Assignment
6	Chapters 11, 12, and 13	Discussion Hubspot Lessons Short Assignment
7	Chapters 14 and 15	Discussion Hubspot Test and Certification

Course Requirements

All online course activities assigned to the course are performed within Canvas. Students will navigate through the course using the *Modules* page.

Additional web sites and related web-based activities, if assigned, will be accessed through the course on Canvas or through links provided for websites located outside the course.

Assignments

This course is divided by the seven weeks we share and each week's assignments are noted under "Modules". Each week focuses on various themes of social media, media literacy, effective social media strategies, etc. The weekly topic areas for the course are as follows:

Devotionals – Each module will have a devotional as part of the lecture.

Lessons – Each module will have a lesson or other form of presentation. It is critical that students complete the required reading as well as access all additional study materials and learning resources provided in Canvas.

Discussions – Each module will involve an in-person or online class discussion. In the event an on-ground class is canceled, the discussion will move online. This weekly discussion board will cover the readings and examples in our primary textbook. This requires you to participate in class through questions, comments, and discussions. You should be prepared to ask and answer questions, provide thoughtful commentary, and engage in meaningful discussions on the assigned readings. You will provide a 200-word response by Wednesday of each week to be followed by two substantive & topic relevant to at least two others by Saturday night. Each week is worth 25 points for a total of 175 points. Participation is required and a grade will be determined based on your level of interaction and depth of thought during the discussions. More details on the requirements for discussions are found in the next section of this syllabus under *Course Participation*.

Hubspot Academy – Each week, you will complete lessons in the Hubspot Academy in the Social Marketing Course to systematically earn a certificate by the end of the class. Each lesson takes between 30 minutes to one hour to complete. You will complete the lesson and then load a screen shot of your completed lesson to Canvas. Each week's work is worth 40 points for a total of 400 points

Short Assignments – These short assignments will encourage you to engage some of the issues and current events regarding social media from a cultural and social perspective. What are the effects, potentials and best ways to use social media for society will be the focus of these assignments. Please expect and be willing to respond to the numerous and changing issues in social media, see their complexity, and offer your thoughtful opinion. Each week's assignment is worth 25 points for a total of 175 points.

A consistent pattern of not participating will result in a lower grade. More than two weeks of unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the final grade by 100 points, and more than three absences will result in a failing grade.

Course Participation

Class Participation

Each week a portion of the course will be devoted to a class discussion related to a particular concept or topic. Each student is expected to participate in this discussion. In-class discussions are designed to allow the class to engage in a healthy dialog on the lesson topic or question being presented. In the event of an in-person class cancelation, the scheduled class session and discussion will continue online.

Many in-person classes utilize a weekly online discussion forum. Specific requirements for online discussions can be found in the next section of this syllabus.

Online Discussion Forums

Weekly discussion forums are a portion of all online courses, as well as some in-person courses, and are conducted in Canvas. Each student is expected to participate in online discussions as applicable for the topic chosen. Answers are to reflect the student's opinions, critical thinking, as well as properly documented research to support the student's insights.

To receive the minimum points possible for a weekly discussion, each student is to submit an initial discussion post by Wednesday at 11:59 pm EST, and reply to at least two classmate posts by Saturday at 11:59 pm EST.

The initial discussion post is to be a minimum of 250 words and must include a level of detail, analysis, and reflection related to the discussion topic. The student is expected to cite references to support their opinion using APA format.

Reply posts are to be a minimum of 100 to 150 words each and include a level of detail, analysis, and reflection. Students are encouraged to access the discussion board several times throughout the week to remain current and active in the discussion.

Post / Response Guidelines

For the dialog to remain productive, in either an online or classroom discussion, Bethel University requires each person to behave responsibly by adhering to the following guidelines. These help to maintain a collaborative and congenial environment by reminding us that whether we communicate online or in the classroom, we are engaging real people.

Be respectful of participants and their time by staying on-topic and not commandeering a discussion with vague or unrelated comments. Contribute productive information when participating in a discussion by stating a complete and logical idea or concept. The goal in the discussion is to delve into a topic and "learn," so when you share a comment, stay on topic, and explain your point of view.

Do not post copyrighted material without the expressed, documented permission of the copyright holder or following proper source citation of the information, just as you would when writing an essay or term paper. Cite a source if you use it.

Contact your instructor if you have any questions.

Bethel University Policies and Resources

To view all Bethel University policies and information, please review the [Student Handbook](#).

Attendance

Classroom Attendance

Classes are accelerated, and there are no “free” or “automatic” absences. Student success in the course work and in personal and small group relationships requires regular class attendance. A student may be considered absent if he/she attends only a part of the class. Please see the Student Handbook for the Attendance Policy.

Online Attendance

The academic week is seven days for an online session, which begins Sunday morning and ends Saturday night. When an on-ground course moves to an online week, due to a holiday, the week is based on the night the class normally meets (i.e., if the class meets on Monday night, then the online session will be from Monday night through Sunday night of the following week). To receive full credit for online attendance, you must login AND complete one of the following items as directed by the instructor:

- Submit an academic assignment.
- Submit a quiz or exam.
- Participate in a posted online academic discussion.

Note that the following actions will not count as attendance:

- Logging into class without active participation does not constitute online attendance.
- Work done in a lab or other outside environment will not count toward online attendance.
- Assignments completed the week after the online assignment is due will not count toward online attendance for the previous week.

It is best practice for students to access the online course a minimum of three days during each week to understand the subject fully and to be successful in class.

Late or Make Up Work

It is important for students to submit work on time as scheduled in the class. This allows the instructor time to grade the material and provide feedback if necessary. Circumstances may interfere with the ability to submit an assignment on time. However, as a student you agree to take the class and therefore agree to submit work on time.

Students are encouraged to work ahead to avoid late assignments. Please communicate with your instructor promptly if you have extenuating circumstances that may contribute to a late assignment.

Assignments (excluding discussion posts) will be accepted late, subject to a 10% deduction off the earned grade per day late (24-hour period), for up to 3 days. No assignments will be

accepted after 3 days. Discussion posts and responses that are not posted by the due date will receive 0 points and are not accepted past the due date.

All work must be completed and submitted by the end of Week 7 of the course. No work will be accepted after the last day of the course.

Class Cancellation / Weather Policy

In the advent of a classroom meeting cancellation due to a campus scheduled holiday or severe weather, the course will move to an online format. Campus closures do not affect the online course schedule.

Netiquette Policy

In an online course, almost all your interactions with other people will be through the internet. This netiquette policy applies to all your interactions with the instructor and your fellow students, and you are expected to follow the guidelines outlined below.

Respect other people and be willing to share your ideas and thoughts in a respectful way. Simply, respect others' views. You may disagree with someone but do so graciously and constructively. Pause before writing emails or posts when you are angry and reread what you wrote carefully before clicking 'send.' Treat others the way you wish to be treated—with respect.

Do not post or communicate offensive or hateful content. Bethel University does not permit discussions that are obscene, harassing, sexually explicit, or derogatory toward individuals or groups. These will be deleted and repeat offenders may be barred from future participation.

Do not post or share personal information. Do not post or share information such as addresses, telephone numbers, etc., and do not post or share someone else's personal information.

Plagiarism

Any act of deceit, falsehood or stealing by unethically copying or using someone else's work, including AI-created work, in an academic situation is prohibited. A student found guilty of plagiarism will receive an "F" for that paper, assignment, or exam. The instructor will have an interview with the student and submit a written report to the Program Coordinator for the area in which the student is enrolled. If a second offense should occur, the student will be required to appear before the instructor, the coordinator, and the dean of the academic program. At this point the student's continuation in the course and academic career are in jeopardy. Students are encouraged to refer to the Bethel Library's [online help for proper citation](#).

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Bethel University respects the dignity of all God's image-bearers, and stands against racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Because Christ calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, Christian discipleship includes pursuing the good of those who suffer injustice due to their color, race, or ethnicity. Therefore, we aim to continually transform our classrooms into safe and hospitable spaces where we listen to one another with mercy, learn from and value each other with tenacity, and commit to pursuing justice for the most vulnerable in our community.

Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law which provides civil rights protection for people with disabilities. Bethel University, in compliance with equal access laws, requests that students with disabilities seeking to acquire accommodations make an appointment with The Center for Academic Success – Disability Services by calling (574) 807-7460 or emailing academicsuccess@betheluniversity.edu.

The Center for Academic Success is located in the lower level of the Miller-Moore Academic Center. Please refer to Bethel's [website](#) for more information.

Information Technology Help Desk

The Help Desk is open Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., during the fall and spring semesters, and 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. during the summer (starting May 1). Hours may vary on holidays and breaks.

Contact the Help Desk at helpdesk@betheluniversity.edu or by calling (574) 807-7777.

Library

Bethel's Bowen Library offers a range of resources and services, both online and physical, to all students enrolled at Bethel University. All online resources are available at the [library website](#).

Almost all periodicals and journals are available online, and there is a wide selection of e-books available as well. Off-campus access to these resources requires an active Bethel login account. For help locating information, students can submit questions via email, through [Ask a Librarian](#), by phone, or in person during regular business hours. For physical resources, students can use the online library catalog to locate books and resources held by Bethel or any other library. Students may use the catalog to request books from another library and have them delivered to the Bowen Library.

Students may also go to any [PALNI](#) library or to Notre Dame or Holy Cross and check material out in person with a valid student ID. PALNI is a consortium of several academic libraries in Indiana of which Bethel is a member; some nearby member libraries include Saint Mary's, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Goshen, and Grace. In addition, physical books and journals, the Bowen Library provides study spaces, computers, and printers (included a web print station) to all students.

Syllabus Acknowledgment

Enrollment in this course is considered an acknowledgment that the student will review and follow the course syllabus and additional university policies as stated within the student handbook, university catalog and student information provided by the university through the campus website.

This syllabus is not a legal contract but serves as a general outline for the semester. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the course as the need arises.