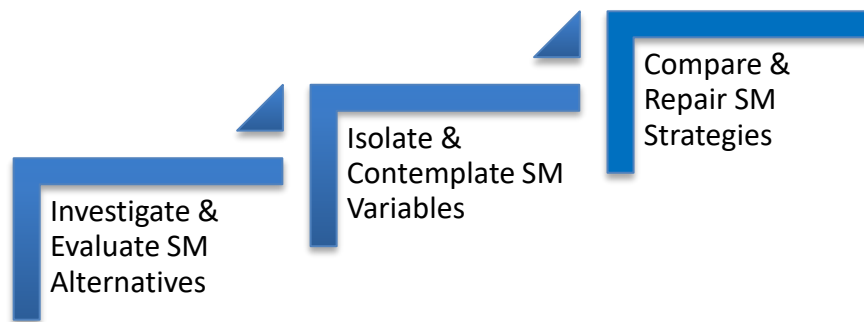


## Social Media Strategy Sample Syllabus

**Course Overview:** This course provides an overview of social media strategies. It will focus on: 1) understanding social media platforms, 2) learning the elements of social media strategy (the 5 Cs), 3) crafting a social media strategy and 4) evaluating social media strategies.

The course revolves around three major assignments/projects: For Assignment 1, your team will be asked to become experts on two social media (SM) alternatives by investigating the SM and evaluating it. For Assignment 2, you and your team will isolate key SM variables and contemplate the dynamics of SM systems. For Assignment 3, the team will select two organizations in related fields and compare their SM strategy. Then your team will repair the strategy of the organization deemed less effective. Each project is designed to bring you one step closer to becoming an effective SM strategist.



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### Textbooks:

- *Renegades Write the Rules* by Amy Martin (M)
- *Social Media Strategy: Tools for Professionals and Organizations* by Phil Clampitt (C)
- *Current articles on social media*

Note: I use textbooks as a launching pad for deeper discussions of critical concepts. Lectures, discussions, and projects are designed to build on this conceptual foundation. Therefore, I will not lecture on the books, per se, but we will address your questions in class.

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**Course Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- Explain various social media platforms to audiences with varying degrees of social media sophistication
  - Identify the characteristics of effective and ineffective strategies
  - Explain the 5 Cs of social media strategy to an executive
  - Construct social media strategies for organizations with various objectives
  - Assess the effectiveness of social media strategies
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**Course Policies:**

**Attendance** - the very nature of this class requires attendance. Inevitably, unforeseen emergencies arise that necessitate missing a scheduled class. In order to avoid penalizing any student who must, for some reason, be absent, the following policy exists:

*Students are held responsible for information covered in the session missed. Notes should be obtained from fellow classmates, **not the professor**. Excessive absences (more than 3) will result in a course grade reduction. If your involvement in university-sponsored activities requires that you miss certain class periods, then you must provide the professor with a written calendar of the days you will miss.*

**Plagiarism** - all work should be the product of the student's individual effort.

**Written work** - all daily work and major papers should be typed and conform to the university writing policy guidelines.

**Extra credit** - I do not assign and will not grade extra credit.

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**Grading:** Your class grade is based on the following components:

<u>Item</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Description</u>
Quiz Commentary	6%	See Appendix 1
Assignment 1	15%	Oral presentation and written report
Assignment 2	20%	Oral presentation and written report
Assignment 3	30%	Oral presentation and written report
Test 1	14%	Multiple choice, covering the books
Final exam	15%	Take-home essay

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**Grading Scale:** All grading will be done on a "0 - 100%" scale which translates into the following letter grades:

**A:** 92% +

**C:** 72 -78%

**AB:** 89 - 91%

**CD:** 69 - 71%

**B:** 82 - 88%

**D:** 60 - 68%

**BC:** 79 -81%

**F:** Below 59%

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**Communication:** One of the most important skills students learn at the university is how to effectively communicate with busy people. One key communication principle is to "select your communication channels based on your purpose and the attributes of the message." Therefore, we will use a variety of methods to communicate during the semester including:

**Email:** I check email on a regular basis and should respond within 24 hours of your question. If not, then assume the message was lost in cyber heaven and re-send. This is my preferred method of communication for most "lean" items.

**Walk-and-Talks:** Some issues can be discussed or resolved in short bursts of conversations during a walk between classes. Feel free to catch me at those times.

**Phone:** If we need to have a richer communication forum, then a phone call would be advisable. Please email me the times you are available and I'll give you call.

**Office Visits:** I will always be available to discuss the right issues (e.g., rich issues involving confidential concerns, complex issues, personal advice, etc.) in the face-to-face channel. Please use email to set up a time.

## Tentative Schedule

Week	• Major Activities*
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Renegades Write the Rules</i> by Amy Martin</li> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> by Phillip G. Clampitt, (1-4)</li> <li>• Select Groups</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Quiz Commentary (1-4). <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> (5-7)</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Commentary (5-7). <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> (8-10)</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Commentary (8-10). <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 1: MC over Martin and SMS 1-10 (September 29)</b></li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 1)</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 1)</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture/Discussion</li> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> (11-12)</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Commentary (11-12) <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 2)</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 2)</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture/Discussion</li> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> (13)</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Commentary (13)). <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture/Discussion</li> <li>• Read <i>SMS</i> (14-15)</li> <li>• Complete Quizzes and Commentary (14-15). <b>Due Sunday 7 pm</b></li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture/Discussion</li> </ul>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 3)</li> </ul>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project Presentations (Assignment 3)</li> </ul>
<b>Dec. 15 noon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final take-home exam due</li> </ul>

\*Note: Lectures and scintillating exercises will be conducted on all class days other than those designated for exams and group presentations.

# Assignment 1

## “Investigate and Evaluate” Social Media Platforms

**Purpose:** Investigate and evaluate two social media alternatives

**Rationale:** Most social media (SM) users have little understanding of the underlying dynamics at work when they choose to use a particular SM. A SM strategist should understand these dynamics and help others weigh the relative costs/benefits of their choices.

**Major Activities:**

1. Select one SM platform from the “Major Players” list below and one platform from the “Niche Players” list.

SM Major Players	SM Niche Players		
<b>Facebook</b>	Multiply	Live Journal	Digg
<b>Twitter</b>	MyLife	Deviant Art	Xanga
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Ning	Google Plus+	Badoo
<b>Pinterest</b>	Café Mom	VK	Xing
<b>Snapchat</b>	Orkut	flickr	Biznik
<b>YouTube</b>	Tagged	Foursquare	Friendstr
<b>Instagram</b>	Bebo	Tumblr	Meetup
	Waze	MySpace	Yelp

2. Become the resident expert on your two SM platforms. At a minimum, your expertise should allow you to answer the following questions:
  - a. What are the origins of the SM?
  - b. How does the SM provider make money?
  - c. What are the mechanics of using the platform? In other words, how does the platform actually work?
  - d. How do users typically make use of the platform?
  - e. Who are the primary users? Why are they the primary users?
3. Develop a list of effective and ineffective uses of the two SM platforms. Provide your rationale.
4. Describe the potential benefits and costs for various users (e.g., CEOs, entertainers, teens) of each platform.
5. Describe the potential benefits and costs for various types of organizations (e.g., restaurants, hi-tech, manufacturers, non-profits).

6. Craft an infographic for each of the two SM platforms that summarizes key facts along with your insights.
7. For each of the two SM platforms, summarize your thoughts with an ML (Most Like) + - analysis and demonstrate how it might be used to discuss a social media strategy for an organization.
8. Describe a recent SM “fail” that occurred on each of your platforms. Use the format found on the “Social Media Fails” link under the “Fun” tab on [www.amazingSMstrategy.com](http://www.amazingSMstrategy.com) (e.g., brief explanation, proof, and lessons learned). Note: Lessons learned should reference #5CsofSocial.
9. Craft a tool to evaluate whether an organization is making effective use of the two SM platforms. Justify your criteria.

**Requirements:**

- Professional group presentation (15 - 20 minutes) and cross examination (5 – 10 minutes)
- Written report (due 1 week after oral presentation)

**Evaluation:**

- Synthesis of key ideas – Does the report synthesize key insights from personal experience, research, and class principles?
- Utility of insights – Can the ideas in the report be applied to real-world problems?
- Depth of analysis – Does the report indicate that the team thought deeply about the issues? Have certain ideas been eliminated or honed through discussion?
- Quality of insights and rationale – Does the report go beyond the standard recommendations advocated by self-ordained “social media gurus”?
- Professional style - Does the report and presentation adhere to professional standards (e.g., well organized, one voice, proper design, well written, proper citations & appendices)?

*“There are three principal means of acquiring knowledge... observation of nature, reflection, and experimentation. Observation collects facts; reflection combines them; experimentation verifies the result of that combination.”*

Denis Diderot

## Assignment 2

### “Isolate and Contemplate” Social Media Variables

**Purpose:** Isolate key social media variables and contemplate their implications. (The variables might include items such as people, groups of people, content type, direction of communication, links between groups, etc.) Use your selected variables to highlight the underlying dynamics of three communication channels, two of which are social media platforms.

**Rationale:** Using a limited set of variables forces you to develop a deep understanding of the underlying dynamics of any system. It also helps you identify the potential choke points in the systems, the constraints of the systems, and the possibilities of the systems.

**Major Activities:**

1. Select one communication channel from each column below.

Traditional Channels	SM Major Players	SM Niche Players		
Lecture	Facebook	Multiply	Live Journal	Digg
Teleconference	Twitter	MyLife	Deviant Art	Xanga
Videoconference	LinkedIn	Ning	Google Plus+	Badoo
Newspaper	Pinterest	Café Mom	VK	Xing
E-mail	Snapchat	Orkut	Meetup	Biznik
	YouTube	Tagged	Foursquare	Friendstr
	Instagram	Bebo	Tumblr	Meetup
	YouTube	Meetme	MySpace	Flickr
		Waze	Yelp	

2. For each of your channels, select three geometric shapes that best represent your variables (you can use the same geometric shapes/variables for your three channels – in fact, this is encouraged). Develop a diagram or schematic of how each of your three channels functions based on these shapes. Think of this as diagramming a football play. Each shape and variation is meant to symbolize some important feature of the channel. The following provides some examples and a potential starting point for your choices:

Basic Shapes →	Circle	Line	X – Factor (Your choice)
Variation A	Size	Length	???
Variation B	Boldness	Arrow	???
Variation C	Color	Thickness	????
Variation D	???	???	???
Variation E	???	???	???

3. Provide your rationale for your choice of each shape/variation (e.g., Why is this attribute an essential feature that needs to be highlighted? What attributes of the channel did you choose NOT to highlight? Why?).
4. Use your diagrams to answer the following questions:
  - a. What are the critical differences between the three channels?
  - b. What potential barriers or bottlenecks do the schematics imply?
  - c. What communication tasks are best suited to each channel? What communication tasks are poorly suited to each channel?
  - d. What types of usage patterns are most likely to emerge in each of the channels?
  - e. How could you judge the effectiveness of communicators who use the channels?

**Requirements:**

- Professional group presentation (15 - 20 minutes) and cross examination (5 - 10 minutes)
- Written report (due 1 week after oral presentation)

**Evaluation:**

- Synthesis of key ideas – Does the report synthesize key insights from personal experience, research, and class readings?
- Utility of insights – Can the ideas in the report be applied to real-world problems?
- Depth of analysis – Does the report indicate that the team thought deeply about the issues? Have certain ideas been eliminated or honed through discussion?
- Quality of insights and rationale – Does the report go beyond the standard recommendations advocated by self-ordained “social media gurus”?
- Professional style - Does the report and presentation adhere to professional standards (e.g., well organized, one voice, proper design, well written, proper citations & appendices)?

*“A mind that is stretched by new experiences can never go back to its old dimensions.”*

Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.



## Assignment 3

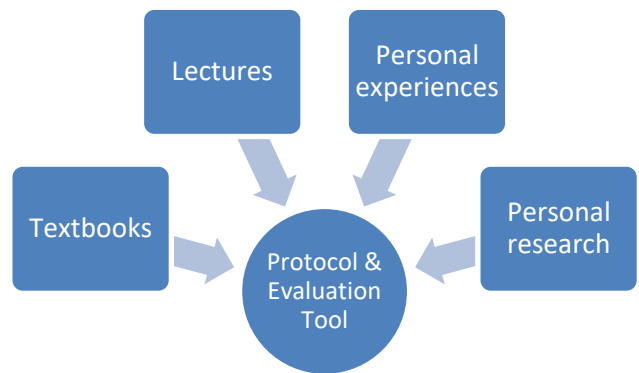
### “Compare and Repair” Social Media Strategies

**Purpose:** Compare how two organizations in related fields (e.g., Pepsi vs. Coke, Harvard vs. Yale) make use of social media (SM). Repair the organization’s SM strategy that you deem less effective.

**Rationale:** SM strategists should have a clear understanding of how to evaluate an organization’s use of SM and know how to take corrective action. Developing your own protocol and evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of SM can help you establish a solid reputation as a social media “guru.”

#### Major Activities:

1. Select two organizations in a related field.
2. Gather information about how each organization makes use of SM. At a minimum, answer the following questions:
  - a. What SM do the organizations use?
  - b. What are the goals of their SM strategies?
  - c. What messages/images are typically communicated in their SM?
  - d. How do the organizations evaluate the effectiveness of their SM strategies?
  - e. How does each organization’s SM relate to its other communications?
3. Craft a protocol and evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of any SM strategy.
4. Use your protocol and evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of the two organizations’ SM strategies.
5. Provide a “repair” or correction plan for the organization with the less effective SM strategy. Assume you would present the plan and rationale to the senior leadership team of the organization (Note: Most leadership teams would not be satisfied with merely matching a competitor’s strategy).



**Requirements:**

- Professional group presentation (20 - 25 minutes) and cross examination (5 – 10 minutes)
- Written report (due 1 week after oral presentation)

**Evaluation:**

- Synthesis of key ideas – Does the report synthesize key insights from personal experience, research, and class principles?
- Utility of insights – Can the ideas in the report be applied to real-world problems?
- Depth of analysis – Does the report indicate that the team thought deeply about the issues? Have certain ideas been eliminated or honed through discussion?
- Quality of insights and rationale – Does the report go beyond the standard recommendations advocated by self-ordained “social media gurus”?
- Professional style - Does the report and presentation adhere to professional standards (e.g., well organized, one voice, proper design, well written, proper citations & appendices)?

*“The only relevant test of the validity of a hypothesis is comparison of prediction with experience.”*

Milton Friedman

## Appendix 1

### Guidelines on Quiz and Commentary

**Purpose:** Over the years I've discovered that students learn best when they actively reflect on their progress. Crafting a brief commentary on your quiz results encourages that kind of reflection. Although I want you to do well on the quizzes, I'm less concerned with your "grade" than I am with what you learned from the results. For a more complete explanation of the process please see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HFEDAhnChY&feature=youtu.be>

**Process:** This is how I would approach the task:

1. Take the on-line quiz after you read the chapter.
2. Review the score you received.
3. Reflect on the answers you got correct and determine what helped you learn that material.
4. Reflect on the answers you got incorrect and determine the reason(s) for getting the question incorrect.
5. **Briefly summarize your "reflections" (Bullets points work fine). The following format works well:**
  - a. **Statement of your scores ("I earned a 9 out of 10 on quiz X")**
  - b. **Statement about your correct answers ("The reasons I scored well on this quiz were x, y, z")**
  - c. **Statement about your incorrect answers ("I missed questions 1 and 2 because I misunderstood x, y, z")**
  - d. **Statement about how the ideas in the chapter apply to you personally**
6. Submit the document.

**What You Can Expect:** Remember that I'm looking for you to demonstrate that you are "learning how to learn" the material. Some examples of what NOT to do:

1. "I aced this quiz. I feel great!" (Comment: I love the emotion but there is no reflection.)
2. "I bombed this quiz. I just don't get it." (Comment: The emotions are understandable but there is no reflection on how to improve.)

**Evaluation:** Your Quiz/Commentary grade will be determined by two factors:

1. Timeliness – Did you meet the deadline? (See schedule, usually 7 pm Sunday)
2. Successfully met criteria 5a – 5d above

**Notes:** a) **Your grade is NOT based on the score of your quiz.** b) I will read every response and will provide oral feedback in class. c) **Grading is simple: 95 = Met deadline, successfully met criteria 5a – 5d above. 85 = Missed deadline by 12 hours and/or failed to complete 5a-5d. 0 = Completed after deadline.**

## Seven Questions to Guide Your Thinking

### Questions

### Explanation



*Have I relied on reasonable evidence to reach my conclusions?*

Provide evidence for your claims.



*Have I properly identified the implications of the facts, ideas or situation? (So what?)*

Discuss the implications of your facts, ideas and situation.



*Have I made reasonable assumptions?*

Identify the premises underlying your notions.



*Have I properly identified the pattern(s)?*

Identify underlying trends.



*Have I properly defined effectiveness?*

Decide how you will measure success.



*Have I considered all the logical alternatives and selected the proper course of action?*

Describe the alternatives and actions you can take. Justify your choices.



*Have I considered the ethical impact of my decisions?*

Determine whether your actions are morally sound.

See [www.DrSoWhat.com](http://www.DrSoWhat.com) for further explanation. These questions should guide your decision-making while writing your paper.