We acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ speaking Musqueam people.

iSchool Mission: Through innovative research, education and design, our mission is to enhance humanity’s capacity to engage information in effective, creative and diverse ways.

INFO 250: Networks, Crowds, and Communities – Course Syllabus (3)

Program: Bachelor of Media Studies (BMS)
Year: Winter Session 2020/21, Term 2
Course Schedule: Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.
Location: Collaborate Ultra on Canvas
Instructor: Dr. Richard Arias-Hernandez (He/Him/His)
Office hours: By email appointment
E-mail address: richard.arias@ubc.ca
Teaching Assistant: Vanessa Figueiredo
TA Office hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
TA Office location: Collaborate Ultra on Canvas
E-mail address: vanesfi@mail.ubc.ca
Learning Management Site: https://canvas.ubc.ca

Course Goal: The goal of this course is to provide concepts, tools, strategies, and methods to explore the contemporary landscape of social media, social networking, online communities, network organization, connectivity & communications. The course introduces students to social media strategy, social media analytics, and social media research.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify, explain, and apply basic concepts and principles of social networks and media
2. Design, implement, and evaluate social media strategies to achieve organizational and communicational goals
3. Conduct basic, conceptual and technologically-mediated social network analysis
4. Conduct basic content analysis of social media data
5. Relate social media production, use, and analysis to the broader field of media studies (e.g., media industries, media audiences, representation, framing, co-construction of social media & society, etc.)
6. Critically create, analyze, and evaluate social media
Course Topics:

- Social media strategy
- Tools for social media strategy
- Social media listening and monitoring
- Tools for listening, monitoring, and managing social media communications
- Social media analytics: social network analysis & content analysis
- Tools for social media analytics
- Critical analysis of social media and society

Prerequisites: Year 1 Core Courses of the BMS

Format of the course: Blended. Synchronous components include lectures, guest talks, class exercises and group activities. Asynchronous components include discussion fora, technology laboratories, online tutorials, in-class exercises, and community-based experiential learning (CBEL) project.

Required Reading:

Chapters from books:

- Khan, Gohar F. (2018). Creating Value with Social Media Analytics. Seattle: CreateSpace. Selections will be provided by instructor on Canvas.

Online Learning Platforms:

- Hootsuite Academy: [https://education.hootsuite.com/](https://education.hootsuite.com/) Most courses are not free, but the Hootsuite Platform Certification course is: [https://education.hootsuite.com/collections/hootsuite-platform-training](https://education.hootsuite.com/collections/hootsuite-platform-training). Requires to sign up for an account.

Articles:

• Geogacopoulos, C. (2020). The Threat of Qanon: How Do Disinformation Campaigns Are Seeking To Infiltrate Mainstream Political Discourse. Lousiana State University. Available at: https://faculty.lsu.edu/fakenews/elections/thethreatofqanon.php

Course Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy Experiment (Pairs or Individual)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>February 2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEL Project Plan (Group)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>February 9\textsuperscript{th}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring – Content Analysis (Individual)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netlytic Analysis (Individual)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
<td>March 16\textsuperscript{th}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEL – Video of process &amp; reflection (Group)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>April 6\textsuperscript{th}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEL – Blog article &amp; online showcase (Group)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>April 6\textsuperscript{th}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online participation (Individual)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>Overall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CEL (Community Engaged Learning) Term Project: Students in teams of 3-4 students will conduct a term-long project with a community partner on social media strategy and analytics. This project accounts for 50% of your grade split in three deliverables: CEL Project Plan, CEL Video of process & reflection, and CEL Blog article and online showcase. Your project may include some or all of the following aspects:

• Social Media Strategy aspects:
  • Social Media Strategy Cycle: You will be expected to analyze the current communication goals and uses of social media by the community partner. You will document current shortcomings in the use of social media as a communication channel and will produce a series of recommendations to improve the strategic use of social media to achieve the organization’s goals and increase the impact of their social media communication among
its different audiences. You will rely on proven facts from literature that inform on actions and strategies that work to increase the communicational impact of social media. You will test the effective use of social media by designing, implementing and evaluating a social media strategy to promote an event, a campaign, a product, or to develop a news channel for the organization.

- **Social Media Content Creation:** Within a content strategy (e.g., a campaign), you will determine in collaboration with your community partner what content needs to be created (images, video, text, hashtags, etc.), create an editorial and production calendar to create and publish content on your community partner’s social media channels, get the produced content from the community partners, work on post-production to produce high-quality and high-impact content, and coordinate with your community partner to publish the content in their social media handles. The impact of your content will be evaluated as part of the impact of the overall social media strategy in terms of engagement, likeability, and accomplishment of the communicational and strategic goals set by your client.

- **Social Media Analytics Aspects:**
  - **Social Network Analysis.** You will be expected to apply basic social network analysis (SNA) to analyze structural aspects of the online community/social media audience of your community partner. You will be expected to target a social media channel, extract data on relationships (e.g., replies, mentions, etc.) between users, and use this data to identify, analyze, and visualize the structure of a social network to identify organic influencers, sub-communities, and prolific contributors. You will report on the findings on your analysis and on the implications of the social network structure for using this medium to divulge information, identify influencers, or maintain online communities.
  - **Social Media Content Analysis.** You will be expected to apply a form of content analysis to a sample of social media data from your community partner. You will have to define a research question that can be answered with the results of the content analysis of social media data. You will harvest the required social media content and get your data ready to be analyzed in an appropriate format. According to your research question, you will devise a simple coding scheme to analyze your social media data and each of your team members will apply this scheme thoroughly to the same content. You will compare results and resolve divergent results. Finally, you will report on your findings and provide an answer to your initial research question.

### Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Lab/Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Mahoney &amp; Tang (2017), Chp. 1</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and studying at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities. Please visit [http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0) for an articulation of the values of
the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: https://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression

**Evaluation:** all assignments will be marked according to UBC grading policy.

**Required Materials and cost:** All reading material or software used in class has been carefully chosen or provided by the instructor on Canvas to make sure it is available for free to students.

**Academic Concession:** If you miss marked coursework (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in class) and are an Arts student, review the Faculty of Arts’ academic concession page and then complete Arts Academic Advising’s online academic concession form, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case. If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult your Faculty’s webpage on academic concession, and then contact me where appropriate.

**Policies and Resources to Support Student Success:** UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

**Academic Integrity:** The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University’s policies and procedures, may be found in the UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline. Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959 ($7)

**Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the Centre for Accessibility (previously known as Access & Diversity). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with Policy LR7: Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Joint Senate and Board Policy). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.