FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL
Undergraduate Programs

Department Sociology

College Arts & Letters

*(To obtain a course number, contact **erudolph@fau.edu**)*

UUPC Approval 4-27-26
UFS Approval _____
SCNS Submittal _____
Confirmed _____
Banner Posted _____
Catalog _____

Prefix SYO

Number 3460

(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate)

Lab Code

Type of Course Lecture

Course Title Social Media and Society

Credits *(See Definition of a Credit Hour)* 3

Effective Date *(TERM & YEAR)* Fall 2026

Grading *(Select One Option)*

Regular (●)

Sat/UnSat ( )

Course Description *(Syllabus must be attached; see Template and Guidelines)*

This course provides an overview of sociological perspectives on the history and evolution of social media technologies. We will examine recent research and theorizing on this rapidly changing form of communication to better understand its economic, political, cultural, and psychological impacts.

Prerequisites, with minimum grade* N/A

Corequisites N/A

Registration Controls *(Major, College, Level)* None

Default minimum passing grade is D-.** **Prereqs., Coreqs. & Reg. Controls are enforced for all sections of course

WAC/Gordon Rule Course

☐ **Yes** ☑ **No**

WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to proposal. See WAC Guidelines.

Intellectual Foundations Program (General Education) Requirement *(Select One Option)*

None

General Education criteria must be indicated in the syllabus and approval attached to the proposal. See Intellectual Foundations Guidelines.

Minimum qualifications to teach course

PhD in Sociology or related area

Faculty Contact/Email/Phone

W McConnell/wmcconnell@fau.edu/216 990 4398

List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course

N/A

Approved by		***Date***
Department Chair	Ann Branaman	3/25/2026
College Curriculum Chair	Robin Larson	04/13/2026
College Dean		04/14/2026
UUPC Chair	Korey Sorge	4-27-26
Undergraduate Studies Dean	Dan Mecroff	4-27-26
UFS President		
Provost		

Email this form and syllabus to mjenning@fau.edu seven business days before the UUPC meeting.

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

SYO 3460-001 CRN

Social Media and Society

Date: Wednesday, Friday 12:30 PM - 1:50 PM

Building: General Classroom South Boca Room: 109

3 Credit(s)

Fall 2026 - 1 Full Term

Instructor Information

Robert Caputi

Email: rcaputi@fau.edu

Office: Room 263, Culture and Society Building
Office hours: Mondays 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm and by appointment only

Phone Number: 561-297-3275

Course Description

This course provides an overview of sociological perspectives on the history and evolution of social media technologies. We will examine recent research and theorizing on this rapidly changing form of communication to better understand its economic, political, cultural, and psychological impacts.

Major/minor: This course can be counted towards the sociology major or minor, and the communication major or minor

**Please listen to announcements made at the beginning of class and read announcements made on Canvas. Please email me at any time with questions.

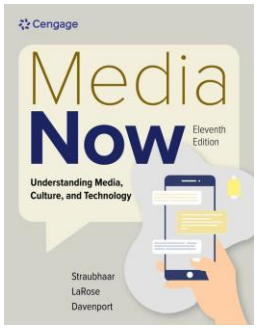
**This syllabus is subject to change, depending on how the class progresses. Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas. **

Instructional Method

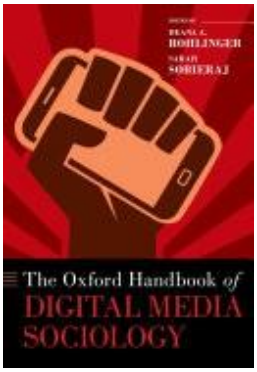
In-Person

Traditional concept of in person. Mandatory attendance is at the discretion of the instructor.

Required Texts/Materials



MEDIA NOW: Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology
ISBN: 9798214135625
Publication Date: 2024-01-01



The Oxford Handbook of Digital Media Sociology
ISBN: 9780197510636
Authors: Deana A. Rohlinger, Sarah Sobieraj
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Publication Date: 2022-01-01

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

1. To develop and apply media literacy skills to critically analyze social media content, platforms, and user practices.
2. To evaluate the impact of the internet and social media on social institutions, culture, and socialization.
3. To apply microsociological concepts to compare and analyze mediated interaction and face-to-face interaction.
4. To identify and apply sociological research methods used to study social media, including quantitative and qualitative approaches.
5. To analyze the impact of digital culture on sociological conceptions of popular, elite, and folk culture, as well as dominant culture, subcultures, and countercultures.

“One of the objectives of this course is to facilitate critical thinking and debate around topics, theories, and concepts where disagreement is not only anticipated but encouraged. The ability to think critically, express your ideas clearly, and respond to the professor and other students civilly are the keystones of the academic experience. In this course, the professor will objectively provide instruction and remain open to various viewpoints, so long as those viewpoints are evidence-based and presented respectfully. During class, the professor may take positions and make statements to accomplish an

academic objective or enhance the learning environment. Additionally, the adoption of class materials for this course does not imply an endorsement of the full content or the positions of the authors of those materials. The professor often provides materials as a point of departure for critical thinking and debate. Students should remember that the ideas presented or discussed during class may not necessarily reflect the professor's personal beliefs or opinions on the subject matter."

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Florida Atlantic University respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede their exercise. To ensure these rights, faculty members have the prerogative to:

• Establish and implement academic standards.

• Establish and enforce reasonable behavior standards in each class.

• Recommend disciplinary action for students whose behavior may be judged as disruptive under the Student Code of Conduct University Regulation 4.007.

Disability Policy

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses.

If you encounter any barriers to learning or participation, please let me know. I welcome conversations at any time to ensure you have the appropriate access.

For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

Course Evaluation Method

1. **Attendance and participation (10%). Note: Wearing headphones, signing someone else's name on the attendance sheet, excessive talking while others are talking, excessive cell phone use, or leaving the room too much, can result in you receiving a zero for this portion of your grade.**

2. **In-class assignments (15%). Three times during the semester at the beginning or end of class, there will be a quiz or written response paper worth 5 points. These will be announced during the prior class.**

3. **Two exams – Midterm and Final exam. Each will count as 25% of the final grade. Students will be responsible for all assigned reading whether or not it is discussed in class, and for all additional material presented in lectures whether or not it appears in the readings.**

4. **Final 5-6 page paper due the last day of class or in-class presentation (25%). More information on these assignments will be passed out in class.**

Code of Academic Integrity

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.

The honor code states: "Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty." For more information, see University Regulation 4.001: http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Honor_Code.pdf.

Title IX Statement

In any case involving allegations of sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report the matter to the University Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (OCR9). If University faculty become aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct, they are expected to report it to OCR9. If a report is made, someone from OCR9 and/or Campus Victim Services will contact you to make you aware of available resources including support services, supportive measures, and the University's grievance procedures. More information, including contact information for OCR9, is available at https://www.fau.edu/ocr9/title-ix/. You may also contact Victim Services at victimservices@fau.edu or 561-297-0500 (ask to speak to an Advocate) or schedule an appointment with a counselor at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) by calling 561-297-CAPS.

Attendance Policy Statement

Students are expected to attend all their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations, or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

Religious Accommodation Policy Statement

In accordance with the rules of the Florida Board of Education and Florida law, students have the right to reasonable accommodations from the University in order to observe religious practices and beliefs regarding admissions, registration, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. University Regulation 2.007, Religious Observances, sets forth this policy for FAU and may be accessed on the FAU website at www.fau.edu/regulations.

Any student who feels aggrieved regarding religious accommodations may present a grievance to the executive director of The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. Any such grievances will follow Florida Atlantic University's established grievance procedure regarding alleged discrimination.

Time Commitment Per Credit Hour

For traditionally delivered courses, not less than one (1) hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction each week for fifteen (15) weeks per Fall or Spring semester, and a minimum of two (2) hours of out-of-class student work for each credit hour. Equivalent time and effort are required for Summer Semesters, which usually have a shortened timeframe. Fully Online courses, hybrid, shortened, intensive format courses, and other non-traditional modes of delivery will demonstrate equivalent time and effort.

Course Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Letter Grade
A	94 - 100%
A-	90 - 93%
B+	87 - 89%
B	83 - 86%
B-	80 - 82%
C+	77 - 79%
C	73 - 76%
C-	70 - 72%
D+	67 - 69%
D	63 - 66%
D-	60 - 62%
F	Below 60

Grade Appeal Process

You may request a review of the final course grade when you believe that one of the following conditions apply:

• There was a computational or recording error in the grading.

• The grading process used non-academic criteria.

• There was a gross violation of the instructor's own grading system.

University Regulation 4.002 of the University Regulations contains information on the grade appeals process

Policy on Make-up Tests, Late work, and Incompletes

Late work will be accepted; however, 5-points will be deducted for each day it is not turned in.

Policy on the Recording of Lectures

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

Artificial Intelligence Preamble

FAU recognizes the value of generative AI in facilitating learning. However, output generated by artificial intelligence (AI), such as written words, computations, code, artwork, images, music, etc., for example, is drawn from previously published materials and is not your own original work.

FAU students are not permitted to use AI for any course work unless explicitly allowed to do so by the instructor of the class for a specific assignment. [Policy 10.16 Artificial Intelligence]

Class policies related to AI use are decided by the individual faculty. Some faculty may permit the use of AI in some assignments but not others, and some faculty may prohibit the use of AI in their course entirely. In the case that an instructor permits the use of AI for some assignments, the assignment instructions will indicate when and how the use of AI is permitted in that specific assignment. It is the student's responsibility to comply with the instructor's expectations for each assignment in each course. When AI is authorized, the student is also responsible and accountable for the content of the work. AI may generate inaccurate, false, or exaggerated information. Users should approach any generated content with skepticism and review any information generated by AI before using generated content as-is.

If you are unclear about whether or not the use of AI is permitted, ask your instructor before starting the assignment.

Failure to comply with the requirements related to the use of AI may constitute a violation of the Florida Atlantic Code of Academic Integrity, Regulation 4.001.

Proper Citation: If the use of AI is permitted for a specific assignment, then use of the AI tool must be properly documented and cited. For more information on how to properly cite the use of AI tools, visit https://fau.edu/ai/citation

AI Language Specific To This Course

AI Policy: Unless expressly permitted by me, any use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in this course is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of FAU's Code of Academic Integrity. This includes, but is not limited to, platforms such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Bard, Copilot, and similar AI-based tools. Unauthorized use of these technologies will be regarded as cheating, as defined by FAU's Code of Academic Integrity, and will result in disciplinary action.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau.edu/counseling/

Student Support Services and Online Resources

- **Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS)**
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**
- **FAU Libraries**
- **Office of Information Technology Helpdesk**
- **Center for Global Engagement**
- **Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI)**
- **Student Accessibility Services**
- **Student Athlete Success Center (SASC)**
- **Testing and Certification**
- **Test Preparation**
- **University Academic Advising Services**

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The CTL has a variety of FREE TUTORING and other academic support services to help you succeed in your courses. You are encouraged to build your academic support team early in the term and meet with your team regularly. At the CTL, you can practice difficult course content, develop skills, and learn academic success strategies -- in person and online. Learn more about FAU academic support at www.fau.edu/ctl.

Course Topical Outline

Schedule and Required Readings:

Readings should be finished by the date listed before class. Some additional readings (news articles) will be posted on Canvas.

Week 1: 8/26 and 8/28

Course Introduction

- "When the Extraordinary Becomes Mundane: Digital Media and the Social Lens" – Rohlinger & Sobieraj (Introduction - Oxford Handbook)

Week 2: 9/2 and 9/4

Media, Culture and Society

- "The Changing Media" – Straubhaar, et al.
- "Media and the Social Construction of Reality" – Couldry and Hepp (Chapter 2, Oxford Handbook)

Week 3: 9/9 and 9/11

The History of Social Media

- "Social Media" – Straubhaar, et al.

Week 4: 9/16 and 9/18

Sociological Theories on Media: From Mass Media to Social Media

- "Media & Society" – Straubhaar, et al.
- "Understanding Media and Society in the 2020s" – Lule. 2022

Week 5: 9/23 and 9/25 Technology and Social Media

- "I Love my Phone" - Johnston et al.
- "Sociology of Mobile Apps" - Lupton (Chapter 11, Oxford Handbook)

Week 6: 9/30 and 10/2

The Economics of Social Media: Media Industry

- "The Economics of the Media Industry" – Croteau & Haynes. 2025
- "Journalism in the Age of Twitter" – Barnard (Chapter 7, Oxford Handbook)

Week 7: 10/7 and 10/9

The Economics of Social Media: Labor & the Gig Economy

- "Technology, Labor, and the Gig Economy" – Jamie Woodcock (Chapter 10, Oxford Handbook)

Week 8: 10/14 and 10/16

The Politics of Social Media: Media & Ideology

- "Media and Ideology" – Croteau & Hoynes. 2025
- "Transformation in American Political Participation" - Deena A. Rohlinger (Chapter 33, Oxford Handbook)

Week 9: 10/21 and 10/23

The Politics of Social Media: Social Movements & Activism

- "Trolls & Hacktivists: Political Mobilization from Online Communities" – Beyer (Chapter 21, Oxford Handbook)
- "Media Law & Ethics" – Straubhaar, et al.
- "Digital Youth Politics" – Earl, et al. (Chapter 32, Oxford Handbook)

Week 10: 10/28 and 10/30

Social Life, Psychology, & the Self

- "Why's Everyone on TikTok Now? The Algorithmized Self and the Future of Self-Making on Social Media" – Bhandari and Bimo. 2022
- "The AI Chatbot Always Flirts With Me, Should I Flirt Back: From the McDonaldization of Friendship to the Robotization of Love" - Bibo Lin. 2024

Week 11: 11/4 and 11/6

Culture, Genres, & Social Media

- "TikTok As Television" – Fattasek, et al. 2023

- "Bringing Bourdieu to a Content Farm: Social Media Production Fields and the Cultural Economy of Attention" – Mears 2023

Week 12: 11/11 and 11/13

Youth + Social Media

- Selections from "The Anxious Generation" – Haidt, 2
- "In Their Own Words: How Adolescents Use Social Media and How It Affects Them" – Van der Wal, et al. 2024

Week 13: 11/18 and 11/20

Social media Influencers

- "Influencer Celebrification: How Social Media Influencers Acquire Celebrity Capital" – Brooks, et al., 2021
- Selections from Extremely Online: The Untold Story of Fame, Influence, and Power on the Internet

Week 14: 11/25 and 11/27

No classes for Thanksgiving

Week 15: 12/2 and 12/4

The Future of Social Media

- "Towards Truly Social Media" - Fuchs 2024