Social Media and Information Sharing

Instructor: Soohee Kim  
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Class meeting time: Tu/Th 11:30 am -1:20 pm  
Location: Room 160, Building 120

Course Description

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace, are used as platforms to share information about oneself and others. These new media provide a variety of novel ways to share information (e.g. ‘Like’, ‘Re-tweet’, ‘Share’, etc.) and change the way individuals maintain and create relationships. The goal of this course is to understand the emotional and motivational aspects of social media use and examine its potential consequences on individuals’ opinions and preferences. In the first half of the course, students will be introduced to theories in communication and psychology to have the foundation for understanding the mechanisms underlying media use. In the second half of the course, students will be introduced to more recent, empirical research studies examining the antecedents and consequences of information sharing in social media. At the end of the course, students will demonstrate their knowledge of psychological and emotional processes underlying media use and be able to evaluate the individual/social implications of social media use.

Assessment

Your final grade will be based on the following.

Attendance and participation 25%
• Students are expected to come to class and arrive on time. Students should read the assigned readings before the class meeting and come ready to participate in discussion. Please note that the readings are subject to change.

Individual presentation 35%

• Students will choose a topic related to the use of social media among the 8 topics in the schedule and have a short presentation. The presentation may include a brief summary of the readings, analyses of social implications of the findings, and raise some critical questions to share in class.

Final paper 40%

• Students will write a short research paper. In the paper, students will discuss their original ideas about the psychological/motivational factors related to social media use and propose the method they want to use to investigate their research questions. The use of media can vary from a Power Point presentation to a use of handouts, posters, etc.

Schedule

Week 1: Course Overview and Introduction to Communication/Media Studies


Week 2: Information Seeking and Media Use


**Week 3: Media Use and Social Network Sites**


**Week 4: Individual & Psychological Factors related to the Use of Social Media**


Week 5: Social Media and Political/Civic Participation


Week 6: Individual Presentation

Week 7: Emotion, Affect, and Social Media


Week 8: Selective Exposure and Information Processing

