



MMCC3046

Social Media

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2022

Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Terri Senft

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Sarah Keith

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will offer students an understanding of the key role social media now plays in media practice and culture. The ways in which social media impact and influence public debate will be explored. The unit will involve students in integrating existing and emerging online platforms and technologies into media practice. Students will analyse the way media organisations, corporations and individuals utilise social media to produce narratives and participate in public discourse. They will also examine the way social and online media have opened up new possibilities for building audiences and communities using a wide variety of social media platform and practices.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: synthesize a range of theories related to digital media, visual studies and social media studies.

ULO3: evaluate the ontological, epistemological and ethical differences between how networked computers, humans, and institutions experience perception, knowledge and action.

ULO2: apply disciplinary theories to evaluate the various uses of visual framing and networked images in social media.

ULO4: deploy the walk-through method to illustrate and unpack the visible and invisible governing structures of a social media platform, application, or practice.

ULO5: analyse and apply the theme, question, object, lens, method, presentation approach to assessing case studies in global social media culture.

General Assessment Information

Please note that the University and the Faculty of Arts have launched a new assessment policy effective as of 1 July 2021. This new policy particularly affects LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS.

The Faculty policy in relation to late assessment submissions is as follows:

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – 10 marks out of 100 credit will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted seven days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests, etc.

To be very clear:

- Unless you have applied for special consideration and had your application approved, for each day your assignment is late, 10 marks will be deducted. For example, if you submit your assignment 7 days late, 70 marks will be deducted, which means you will fail that assignment.
- If your assignment is more than 7 days late (including weekends), you will get 0 for your assignment.

These are serious penalties that will substantially alter your final grade and even determine whether you pass or fail this unit. Please make every effort to submit your assignment by the due date.

If you find you cannot submit your assignment on time, please apply for Special Consideration through AskMQ. Make sure you read Macquarie University's policy regarding Special Consideration requests before you apply: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration>

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Platform Walkthrough	50%	No	8 April 2022 (Friday) by 23:59 pm
Comparative Case Analysis	50%	No	3 June 2022 (Friday) by 23:59 pm

Platform Walkthrough

Assessment Type ¹: Project

Indicative Time on Task ²: 49 hours

Due: **8 April 2022 (Friday) by 23:59 pm**

Weighting: **50%**

For this exercise, students are required to consider the question, “How do social media platforms deploy visibility to signal their ideological biases to users?” For this exercise, you should focus on ONE social media platform of your choosing, and ONE ideological bias of interest (e.g. safety, usefulness, popularity, friendship, a ‘good’ experience, etc. As we discussed in class, platform visibility involves what (or whom) seem to receive visual emphasis, as well as what (or whom) seems hidden, obscured, or overlooked.

Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- synthesize a range of theories related to digital media, visual studies and social media studies.
- evaluate the ontological, epistemological and ethical differences between how networked computers, humans, and institutions experience perception, knowledge and action.
- apply disciplinary theories to evaluate the various uses of visual framing and networked images in social media.
- deploy the walk-through method to illustrate and unpack the visible and invisible governing structures of a social media platform, application, or practice.
- analyse and apply the theme, question, object, lens, method, presentation approach to assessing case studies in global social media culture.

Comparative Case Analysis

Assessment Type ¹: Qualitative analysis task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 49 hours

Due: **3 June 2022 (Friday) by 23:59 pm**

Weighting: **50%**

This assessment has been designed to test the “theme, question, lens, method, presentation” approach to social media studies. Using a traditional or creative format, students will be asked to compare two social media related events, phenomena, news developments, or user experiences.

Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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studies.

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- apply disciplinary theories to evaluate the various uses of visual framing and networked images in social media.
- deploy the walk-through method to illustrate and unpack the visible and invisible governing structures of a social media platform, application, or practice.
- analyse and apply the theme, question, object, lens, method, presentation approach to assessing case studies in global social media culture.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

CLASS DESCRIPTION: SEEING SOCIAL MEDIA

This is a class devoted to social media culture: the personal, social, political and economic ramifications of living in a time dominated by social media. As you might expect from our class title, **we will spend a substantial amount of time thinking about life online in terms of networked images.**

This can put us in contentious territory. If it is true that the internet is a trash fire, networked images provide a fair amount of its garbage, and most of its gasoline. Be they 'stupid' reaction GIFs, 'narcissistic' selfies, 'confusing' memes, 'serious' displays of evidence (as in photographed protests) or 'horrifying' displays of depravity (as in live-streamed executions), networked images tend to figure heavily into debates about what social media 'has done' to notions of identity, community, creativity, privacy, news, ethics, and pleasure around the world.

In this class, we will consider some of these debates, but we will also consider how the hyper-visibility of digital images contrasts with the opaqueness and transparency of platforms, apps, and technologies. This matters, because at the platform level, social media includes nearly every site or app we access each day. Everyone knows social networking services like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat "count" as social media. But we should also be thinking in terms of knowledge-building platforms like Wikipedia, shopping platforms like Amazon, travel platforms like TripAdvisor, streaming platforms like Spotify, Netflix, and Twitch, fitness platforms

like FitBit, plagiarism detection platforms like Turnitin, gaming platforms like Xbox Live, baby monitoring platforms....the list goes on.

We should also be aware that even platforms that aren't explicitly social can be driven by technologies that create socially networked effects. We've probably all heard of algorithmic manipulation on social networking sites like Facebook with "personally designed news feeds," but the most notorious company deploying algorithmic "recipes" to sort, rank and target its users is actually Google. Companies like Uber that gather our geographical data are also key players in the tracing and tracking game. Even if you never go online at all, your phone is already designed to work like a drone, collecting and reporting your movement patterns back to the companies that built them (and sometimes to the governments where they are located.)

The class will take up these issues, framing them in terms of what can be seen, known, enforced, and resisted in social media culture. Throughout, we'll continue to return to the question: **What are the best ways to learn, advocate, create, love and protect ourselves in social media culture, when both visibility and invisibility offer promise and threat?**

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

- FIRST LECTURE (AVAILABLE IN VIDEO FORMAT): **WEEK 1**
- FIRST TUTORIAL : **WEEK 2**

[See full semester schedule here.](#)

POLICIES

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au)

[du.au](#)) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

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- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

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Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the

expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

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Unit information based on version 2022.02 of the [Handbook](#)