

Georgetown University :: School of Continuing Studies
Social Media and the Digital Disruption (MPPR 850) :: Fall 2009

The Basics:

Class Time: Wednesdays — 7:45 to 9:45 p.m.

Instructors: Garrett M. Graff and Mike Krempasky

Email: gmg33@georgetown.edu and mike.krempasky@edelman.com

Telephone: 202-862-3503

Class Website: TBD

Del.icio.us Link: TBD

The Fine Print:

Goal: This is less a class about professional development and more a class about a state of being. The fourteen weeks of this class are designed to equip journalists and PR professionals to work in the ever-evolving digital world at the dawn of the 21st Century. You will learn the jargon of the Web 2.0 movement, examine case studies of online successes and failures, and try to begin to understand the profound transformations underway throughout society, as well as the benefits, dangers, and challenges that these changes present to our professions and as well as to us as citizens and media consumers.

Philosophy: The arrival of the digital age is causing incredible turmoil and change across all peoples and all industries in a very short length of time. We are living at a period when human beings are undergoing the most fundamental and sweeping transformation in history. We cannot hope to understand or foresee all of the various impacts and results of these changes so this course is merely a snapshot in time of what the web is doing right now; taught last fall or next fall this course would be radically different.

The guiding principle of the course is that to learn the web, you must live within it. There's a lot more in this course than you need to know—and a whole lot more than that not covered in this class. I want to encourage you to dive into the assignments as deep as you can, to do the extra readings, to explore the extra assignments, and for this semester at least hold your nose and dive in, giving yourself over to these new technologies and way of living. You'll be glad you did.

Absenteeism: Recognizing that most students are busy professionals, unavoidable conflicts will arise. You will be allowed two absences without affecting your final grade, as long as permission is requested *and* received before-hand. ANY unexcused absences will impact your final grade. The first excused absence is allowed without make-up work; a second absence will require additional readings on the subjects missed. At the beginning of the semester, it's recommended that you partner with another member of the class to share notes/etc. in the event of an absence. More than two absences will require that you write an additional paper.

Academic Resource Center: If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

Class Participation/Progression: Ten percent of your final grade will rest on class participation and progression along the course of the class. To be clear, participation requires both talking AND listening. Do not dominate the discussion or denigrate the views of other students online or in person. This portion of the class grade is also meant to help students who start from a lower base of subject knowledge as it allows them to demonstrate mastery of the subject over the course of the semester.

Part of your participation grade will include taking notes in class one week to share with other students. Each week, one student will be assigned the role of note-taker and will be responsible for taking notes on the class topic and discussions. You will then post these notes on your blog for others to share.

Contacting Garrett: I am available to meet both before and after class each week, as well as other times during the week by appointment. I will not hold regular office hours. I will try to respond to email promptly within 24 hours, except on weekends and during previously announced business trips. If I don't respond to you in a timely manner, please don't hesitate to nag me. You may also try me at my office at Washingtonian during normal-ish business hours: (202) 862-3503. Email-wise, please only use my gmg33@georgetown.edu address.

Contacting Mike: I am available to meet before, *but not* after class each week, as well as other times during the week by appointment. I will not hold regular office hours. I will try to respond to email promptly within 24 hours, except on weekends and during previously announced business trips. If I don't respond to you in a timely manner, please don't hesitate to nag me. You may also try me at my office at Edelman during normal-ish business hours: (202) 336-7964. Email-wise, please use mike.krempasky@edelman.com.

General Rules: Despite its subject matter, this class will be an oasis from the digital world. Please turn off your cell phones, pagers, BlackBerrys, and any other beeping or ringing devices during class. Anyone who violates this rule and whose mobile device rings during class will be responsible for bringing in dessert for the following week's class. Beyond simply as a punishment device and with the recognition that this is an evening course, you are invited to bring food and drink into the classroom as long as it is not disruptive or messy.

Georgetown University Honor Pledge: In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Honor System: Students are expected to abide by the Georgetown University Honor System. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the material and information posted on the Honor Council's website: <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/index.html>

Letters of Recommendation: Letters of recommendation will only be written for students AFTER successful completion of the entire semester. Successful completion will be defined as an 88 or above.

Grading

Grades will be calculated over the course of the semester on a points basis, with a total of 100 points being awarded over the course of the semester. Within reason, students may request their point totals any time up to the 12th week of class. Once or twice during the semester, I will give you an updated grade on your blog's progress.

Points will be awarded in the following amounts

Blogging:	34 points
Participation/Progression:	10 points
Del.icio.us Links:	10 points
Field Report:	6 points
Wikipedia Report:	10 points
Comprehension Tests:	10 points
Final Project/Paper:	20 points

Total:	100 points

At the conclusion of the semester, letter grades will then be based on a standard 100-point scale, with 80-83 points representing an B-, 84-87 points representing an B, and 88 and above representing an B+. The cut-off for an A will be 94.

One important note on graduate school: Anything below a C is considered a failing grade. Please don't put yourself in a position where that becomes a possibility.

Assignments

Assignments will come in six forms over the course of the semester: Blog entries, a Wikipedia report, a field report on a specific area of social media, a brief vocabulary comprehension test administered mid-semester in class, posting links to del.icio.us, and a final paper or project. The final project will be discussed later in the semester.

Blogging: The primary project for the semester will be your blog. By the second week of class, you will be asked to select a name for your blog and to purchase a domain name for it (approx. \$10). Each week thereafter you will be required to write a blog entry (300 to 400 words minimum) in response to the reading. Questions will be provided each week for you to help guide your responses, though you should write on any aspect of the readings you find interesting. "Response blogs" must be posted by 10 p.m. ET Tuesday night each week to receive credit. Each of these "response blogs" will be worth two points and must be labeled as such (details will follow in class). Late entries will be penalized one point. For the eighth week of class (March 4), ALL six response blogs for the first half of the semester must be completed by classtime or they will not be accepted. There are no exceptions to this deadline.

Additionally over the course of the semester you will be required to write three blog entries on your blog responding to either another student's blog or another blogger found through the class

del.icio.us links. Finally, you will also be assigned to write three blogs on a topic of your choosing—your job (be careful about this topic), your hobbies, your weekend, your love life, your reaction to current events. These six additional entries may be posted at any point prior to the final class meeting, but no more than two blog entries in a given week will count towards your six additional blog posts. Each of these additional blog posts will be worth one point.

For the response blogs, up to two points will be awarded for each blog point, based on the quality/thoughtfulness of the blogging. All 19 blog entries—13 weekly response blogs and 6 additional blogs—are due at the start of the final class. There are no exceptions to this deadline. I consider the blog the most important part of class and thus failure to complete the assigned entries will also negatively impact your class participation grade. (Total: 19 entries, 34 points possible)

Del.icio.us: Each week as you read, explore, and live the internet, you will be asked to post relevant blogs, items, developments, websites, and stories to the class's social media bulletin board using a class-designated folksonomy. You must tag your items with your name to receive credit. Each post to the class del.icio.us feed will be worth one-half point, with a maximum of one point being earned each week. This means you should count on contributing two items a week each week through the semester. These posts will serve as the basis for discussion at the beginning of each class and each week one student will present his or her del.icio.us links. (Total: 20 links, 10 points possible)

Field Report: In the first of two class mini-projects, you will be responsible for investigating and mapping the landscape of social media in a particular field/cause. (Total: 6 points possible)

Wikipedia Entry/Report: This mini-project will focus on how to contribute to and investigate the world's largest collaborative project. More details will be discussed later. (Total: 10 points possible)

Comprehension Tests: During through the semester, two brief tests—mostly but not exclusively multiple choice—will be administered in class focusing on vocabulary from the topics covered in class, the readings, and the coursework. These tests will not be announced in advance. I reserve the right to combine these two quizzes into a single test, depending on class schedules. (Each test will be worth five points; Total: 10 points possible)

Final Paper/Project: The culmination of your learning will be a final paper/project, the specific details of which will be worked out by the 10th week of class. (Total: 20 points possible)

Extra Credit: For those who fall behind for whatever reason, there is the opportunity for a single extra credit paper based on some of the suggested readings. This paper will be a minimum of five pages. If this becomes a necessity or something you want, you must talk with me regarding the paper. (Total: 5 points possible)

Reading

Each week, based on the topic, you will be assigned some del.icio.us keywords to read and familiarize yourself with. There will also be regular assignments focused on online videos, podcasts, and online games. These will be posted a week in advance on the class website.

Beyond the assigned readings, I strongly encourage you to read the following blogs on a regular basis, and we will cover in class how to use an RSS reader such that you can read these blogs more easily:

Jeff Jarvis's BuzzMachine (www.buzzmachine.com)
Steve Rubel's MicroPersuasion (www.micropersuasion.com)
Jay Rosen's PressThink (journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/)
Mashable (www.mashable.com)
TechPresident (www.techpresident.com)
Read/Write Web (www.readwriteweb.com)
TechCrunch (www.techcrunch.com)
Rebecca MacKinnon's RConversation (rconversation.blogs.com)
BoingBoing (www.boingboing.net)

In addition to the weekly web reading, watching, and listening, there will also be some dead tree readings as noted below. Please bring any assigned dead tree readings to class. Please note carefully the difference between the required reading and the *suggested* reading. The suggested readings are for those students who wish to delve deeper into understanding a given area, though you will not be required to know or utilize the included information.

Required Books:

- Scott Rosenberg, *Say Everything: How Blogging Began, What It's Becoming, and Why It Matters* (Crown, 2009)
- Dan Gillmor, *We the Media: Grassroots Journalism By the People, For the People* (O'Reilly, 2004). Also available FREE online at: wethemedia.oreilly.com
- Levine et al., *The Cluetrain Manifesto: The End of Business as Usual*, (Perseus, 2000). Also available FREE online at: www.cluetrain.com/book/index.html
- Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations* (Penguin, 2008)
- Chris Anderson, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More* (Hyperion, 2006)
- John Battelle, *The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed Our Culture* (Portfolio, 2005)

- Garrett M. Graff, *The First Campaign: Globalization, the Web, and the Race for the White House* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007)

Optional/Encouraged Books:

- Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005)
- Robert Scoble and Shel Israel, *Naked Conversations: How Blogs are Changing the Way Businesses Talk with Customers* (Wiley, 2006)
- James Surowiecki, *The Wisdom of Crowds: Why the Many Are Smarter than the Few and How Collective Wisdom Shapes Business, Economies, Societies, and Nations* (DoubleDay, 2004)
- Glenn Reynolds, *Army of Davids: How Markets and Technology Empower Ordinary People To Beat Big Media, Big Government, and Other Goliaths* (Thomas Nelson, 2007)
- Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* (Portfolio, 2006)
- Sarah Boxer, *Ultimate Blogs: Masterworks from the Wild Web* (Vintage Original, 2008)
- Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff, *Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies* (Harvard, 2008)
- John Broughton, *Wikipedia: The Missing Manual* (Pogue, 2008)
- Jonathan Zittrain, *The Future of the Internet—And How to Stop It*, (Yale, 2008)
- John Palfrey and Urs Gasser, *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives* (Basic, 2008)
- Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom* (Yale 2007)
- Eric S. Raymond, *The Cathedral & The Bazaar: Musings on Linux and Open Source by an Accidental Revolutionary*
- Colby Buzzell, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq* (Winner of the 2007 Blooker Prize)
- Brian Reich and Dan Solomon, *Media Rules!: Mastering Today's Technology to Connect With and Keep Your Audience* (Wiley, 2007)
- Joe Trippi, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything* (William Morrow, 2004)
- Hugh Hewitt, *Blog* (Thomas Nelson, 2005)

Fall 2009 Semester Syllabus (Subject to change)

Week 1 (September 9): Intro and Overview

Assignment for Week #2: Pick your blog's domain name, create both a LinkedIn and Facebook profile, and "friend" both Mike and Garrett.

Week 2 (Sept. 16): Digital Literacy 101 — Learn to blog, del.icio.us, and social network

Read: Levine et al., *Cluetrain Manifesto*, Theses, Chapters 3 – 4 (online)
Suggested: Gillmor, *We the Media*, Chapters 1 - 7 (entire book recommended)
Buy In-Class: Domain
Note: Come to class with a credit card to purchase a domain name.

Week 3 (Sept. 23): Blogging and RSS

Read: Rosenberg, *Say Everything*, pages 1 – 268 (entire book recommended)
Learn In-Class: GoogleReader
Note: Every week, beginning in Week 3 and there-after, blog entries due before class.
Note: Please come to class with a Google.com account/username. If you have a gmail.com address, this will suffice.

Week 4 (Sept. 30): Blogging, Part II: Vlogs and Podcasts

Suggested Reading: Boxer, *Ultimate Blogs*
Listen: Dawn and Drew, Mommymcast, iTunes podcast
Study: Edelman Trust Barometer

Week 5 (Oct. 7): Social Networking and Social Media: Digg to Facebook to Twitter

Read: Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody* (entire book recommended)
Suggested Reading: Li and Bernoff, *Groundswell*, p. 39 - 196

Week 6 (Oct. 14): Social Media, Part II

Read: Anderson, *The Long Tail*, Chapters 1 - 7, 11 - 13 (entire book recommended)
Browse: <http://www.digitalnative.org/>
Suggested Reading: Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks*
Available online: <http://tinyurl.com/wealthofnetworks>

Week 7 (Oct. 21): Google — The Most Powerful Media Company Ever

Read: Batelle, *The Search*, Chapters 1 - 2, 6 - 8, 10 - 11 (entire book recommended)
Watch In-Class: Googlezon

Week 8 (Oct. 28): Get a (Second) Life: MMOGs

Play: Second Life (www.secondlife.com), Persuasive Games games, World of Warcraft
Note: Field Report due in class
Note: First half reading blog entries due by class

Week 9 (November 4): Open Source Ideas

Suggested Reading: Surowiecki, *Wisdom of Crowds*
Raymond, *The Cathedral and the Bazaar*, pages 21 – 63

Week 10 (Nov. 11): Wikipedia, Truth, and Legal Issues

Watch: Loose Change documentary, Jimmy Wales interview
Suggested Reading: Broughton, *Wikipedia: The Missing Manual*
After-class: Edit/Create a Wikipedia Entry and create a WikiScanner Report

Week 11 (Nov. 18): What's Next!

Week 12 (Nov. 25): No Class (Thanksgiving)

Note: Wikipedia Report due for class-time

Week 13 (December 2): Online and Overseas: An International Perspective on the Web

Focus: Mobile Web and Global Voices (www.globalvoicesonline.org)
Read: Scoble and Israel, *Naked Conversations*, Chapter 8 (entire book recommended)

Week 14 (Dec. 9): War.com: Iraq as the First Online War

Read: Milblogging selections,
Suggested Reading: Buzzell, *My War*
Riverbend, *Baghdad Burning*
Listen: War News Radio, Hometown Baghdad podcast
Play: America's Army

Week 15 (Dec. 16): Politics Online, Part II: The First Campaign

Read: Graff, *The First Campaign*, Intro, Chapters 1 - 4, 11, Conclusion
Note: Final Paper/Project due in class
Note: All blog entries due by class. No blogs will be accepted after classtime.