

FWIS 176: WRITING WITH AND ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA

Course Information

Martell College 101

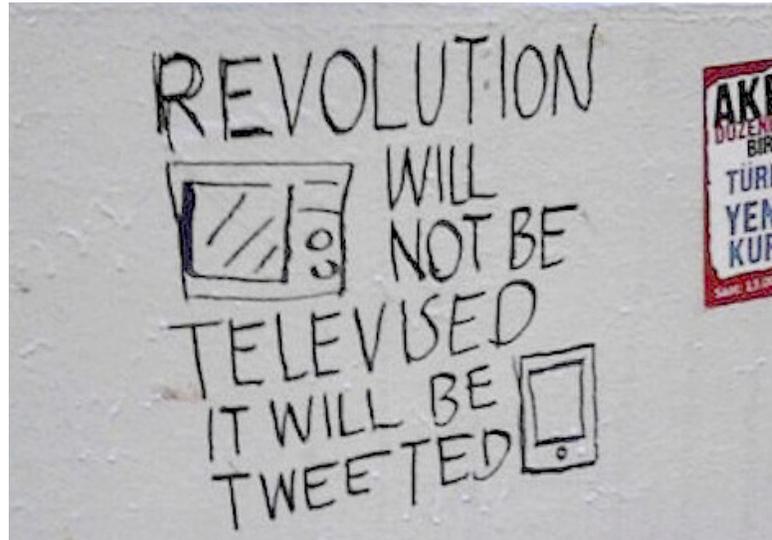
MWF 10:00-10:50

Instructor: Baird Campbell

baird@rice.edu

Office Hours: Sewall 125
Wednesdays 1:00-3:00
and by appointment:

<https://bit.ly/2ZcrpFB>



Required Texts

**The Breakup 2.0:
disconnecting over new
media**

by Ilana Gershon

Available in the campus
bookstore and online

All other course materials are
available on the Canvas
website for this course

Course Description

Social media is everywhere. From advertising campaigns, to news stories devoted to what the Kardashian/Jenners are wearing, to the sometimes earth-shaking tweets from the President of the United States, whether we like it or not, social media is part of our everyday lives.

In this course, we will explore social media from a number of perspectives: we will learn its history; explore its technicalities; think critically about its content; and ultimately seek to understand why and how social media has quickly become a mainstream tool for written and audiovisual communication. The course is divided into 5 units:

1. The Theory and Study of Social Media
2. The Ethics of Social Media as a Tool for Research
3. Identity on Social Media
4. Navigating Relationships Online
5. Social Media as a Tool for Activism

What is a FWIS course?

First-year Writing Intensive Seminar (FWIS) courses fulfill Rice's Writing and Communication Requirement, which all students must complete in order to earn a bachelor's degree from the university. They are capped at 15 students to support group discussion and foster relationships between students and faculty, and also ensures that students receive substantive feedback from instructors on their writing, speaking, and visual communication.

Student Learning Goals

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze an academic text, identifying main arguments and supporting evidence
2. Produce an argumentative text with scholarly supporting evidence
3. Engage in ethnographic research both on- and offline
4. Describe and analyze the relationship between on- and offline identity
5. Identify and replicate the key components of an ethnographic article
6. Coherently and effectively express a scholarly argument orally
7. Think critically about social media as both a part of everyday life and a scholarly tool



ASSIGNMENTS

Participation - 20%

Participation is more than just speaking up in class. It means doing all the reading, completing all assignments, being a generous and thoughtful peer reviewer, and coming to office hours. **All students are expected to come to office hours at least twice during the semester.**

Know Your Meme Presentation - 5%

Each student will give a 5-minute presentation on the history and impact on a meme of their choice. More Instructions will be given in class.

Multimedia Class Reading Diary - 15%

Each student will be responsible for producing and uploading one video, one tweet, and one meme summarizing class readings.

Guided Social Media Ethnography - 5%

In this activity, I will guide you through the steps of doing social media research, and you will write up the results ethnographically.

Field Notes - 10%

This class requires you to take weekly field notes on your topic of choice throughout the semester. At several times during the semester, you will be asked to share them with the class and/or turn them in.

Ethnography Drafts - 10%

These are your first forays into academic writing. Drafts will be graded on improvement from one version to the next. The best two grades will be kept.

Grading

Participation - 20%

Know Your Meme Presentation - 5%

Multimedia Class Reading Diary -
15%

Guided Social Media Ethnography -
5%

Field Notes - 10%

Ethnography Drafts - 10%

Final Paper Abstract - 5%

Final Presentation - 10%

Final Paper - 20%

A: 94-100, A-: 90-93

B+: 87-89, B: 84-86, B-: 80-83

C+: 77-79, C: 74-76, C-: 70-73

D+: 67-69, D: 64-66, D-: 60-63

F/I: 59 and lower

Academic Accommodations

I am committed to making our classroom an accessible space for all.

If you have a documented disability or other condition that may affect academic performance:

- make sure this documentation is on file with the Disability Resource Center (Allen Center, Room 111 / adarice@rice.edu / x5841) to determine the accommodations you need; and
- speak with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Need Help with Class?

Please come see me during office hours, and I will help you find solutions.

If you need additional help, check out:

CAPC (Center for Academic and Professional Communication)

Located on the 2nd floor of Fondren Library. You can book an appointment with a writing consultant online.

The Reference Desk

Any of the librarians at the Reference Desk will be helpful, but Joe Goetz (jgoetz@rice.edu) is the dedicated librarian for anthropology, and loves to help students!

Digital Media Commons

The staff at the DMC can help you with audiovisual assignments, and can also provide you with any equipment you may need. Located in Fondren basement.

Need Other Help?

Office Hours

It is perfectly acceptable to make an office hours appointment to talk about your struggles with the class that go beyond the content. Please reach out, and if I can, I will help you find a solution.

Counseling Services

To help you manage course work, deadlines, personal and professional relationships and being away from home and/or family matters, the Rice Counseling Center (RCC) offers free, confidential support.

A more complete list is available under **"On Campus Resources"** on Canvas.

Final Paper Proposal/Abstract - 5%

You will produce a 250-word final paper proposal, in the form of an abstract, to be peer edited in class and included in your final paper

Final Presentation - 15%

At the end of the semester you will give a 10 minute presentation about your final paper topic. This presentation should communicate the main arguments of your paper, necessary background information, methods, and ethical considerations you encountered.

Final Paper - 20%

The final paper is the culmination of your work throughout the semester. It should incorporate what you have learned about ethnographic writing, and how it can be used to make a cogent argument. It should rely on sources from both the syllabus and independent research. The final paper will also be graded in relation to your drafts throughout the semester, and your ability to implement feedback from your classmates and from me.

Formatting Your Work

All written work should be formatted as follows:

Font - Times New Roman

Size - 12

Margins - 1 inch all around

Page Numbers

In top left corner:

-Name

-Date

-Course

All work should be **spellchecked, proofread**, and have a meaningful **title**.

Attendance

Showing up to class is the single biggest factor in determining your success. However, I understand that life happens, and sometimes absences are not avoidable. You may miss **three (3)** classes without penalty. After this, each missed class will result in a deduction of your final grade by a third of a letter grade.

If you miss a class, you **must** find out what you missed from a classmate and come to the next class prepared.

Tardiness of more than 15 minutes is considered an absence.

School-sanctioned absences: Students who anticipate multiple school-sanctioned absences should make every effort to be present in class when they are able. It is each student's responsibility to inform the instructor of planned absences as soon as possible, and communicate with classmates to catch up on the content they missed.

Late Work Guidance

Late work will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late.

Missing a deadline is a stressful experience. Sometimes it's just the result of a one-off timing issue, but sometimes it's the result of something more persistent—struggling with the material, life circumstances, mental state—and the source of trouble is not always obvious from the inside. Students in this situation often blame themselves and feel like they could just complete the assignment the next day if they just do what they should, but the next day might not be any easier if the issue is persistent, and the stress snowballs as late penalties accumulate. Students sometimes fail classes because they get trapped in this cycle and ultimately never submit the assignment.

1. Email me whatever you have before the deadline. If I get something from you, no matter how incomplete, the first day's late penalty will be halved.
2. Stay in contact with me until you finish. We will make a plan to get you back on track.

Technology Policy

Screens can have a negative effect on listening and reading comprehension, so while technology is by no means banned, we will respect that there is a time and place to be connected offline rather than online. **If you are able, please print the readings and take notes by hand.**

Resubmit Policy

You may resubmit any one written assignment for a higher grade. You must resubmit this assignment to me within two weeks of the original due date.

Additionally, you must:

1. Meet with me
2. Meet with a CAPC writing consultant

Research Tools

WorldCat

Create a free profile, link your Rice account, and you can find out what Rice owns and what it can get through Interlibrary Loan (ILL) - <https://worldcat.org>

Google Scholar

Find reliable, scholarly sources
<https://scholar.google.com>

Fondren Library

Fondren has a brand new interface that makes it easier than ever to access resources
<http://library.rice.edu/>

Rice Honor Code

In this course, all students will be held to the standards of the Rice Honor Code, a code that you pledged to honor when you matriculated at this institution. If you are unfamiliar with the details of this code and how it is administered, you should consult the Honor System Handbook at

<http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/>.

This handbook outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of your academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process.

Office Hours

Attending office hours is one of the easiest things you can do to guarantee your success in this course.

To help get you into this habit, I require students to attend office hours at least twice throughout the semester.

At least one of these appointments must take place before October 14th.

Reasons to go to office hours:

- To discuss something you found interesting
- To discuss something you found confusing
- To work on improving a particular assignment
- To get to know your instructor
- To improve an an assignment



Classroom Expectations

Students will arrive on time and be prepared for the day's activities. This means:

- All assigned reading has been read, key terms defined, and questions prepared
- All assignments have been turned in, and printed copies prepared if requested
- Multimedia Diary submissions have been viewed

Students will treat each other, the instructor, the classroom, and the people who keep it running with respect. This means:

- Respecting class-defined norms governing class interactions
- Respecting the time of both the instructor and your classmates (arriving on time, meeting deadlines, etc.)
- Leaving the classroom in better condition than you found it (picking up trash, straightening chairs, etc.)

COURSE SCHEDULE

This syllabus is a guideline for this course. I reserve the right to make changes in it as necessary. All changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Week 1	In Class	Reading	Due
Welcome!			
Aug 26 What is the hidden curriculum?	Introductions Hidden curriculum activity		11:59 PM Tuesday: Getting to Know You Survey
Aug 28 What is required of me to succeed in this course?	-Syllabus -Co-created classroom norms -Academic communication	"How to Email Your Professor" by Laura Portwood-Stacer	5 PM Thursday: Email me a question you can't answer with the syllabus
Unit 1: The Theory and Study of Social Media			
Aug 30 What is social media? Why study it?	-Discussion of reading	"What is Social Media and What Questions Can Social Media Research Help Us Answer?" by Lori McCay-Peet and Anabel Quan-Haase	11:59 PM Sunday Writing Sample
Week 2	In Class	Reading	Due
Sept 2	NO CLASS	Labor Day - Learn about the history of Labor Day: https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/labor-day-1	

<p>Sept 4 Who is the audience of social media and why does it matter?</p>	<p>-Publics and counterpublics in the real world -Discussion of reading</p>	<p>- "Habermas & the Public Sphere." Watch video and take notes. - "Where I can be myself ...where I can speak my mind": Networked counterpublics in a polymedia environment," by Bryce J. Renninger</p>	
<p>Sept 6 How does framing affect our perception of events?</p>	<p>-Introduction to framing theory -Discussion of documentary</p>	<p>"FYRE: The Greatest Party that Never Happened" Available on Netflix</p>	
<p>Week 3</p>	<p>In Class</p>	<p>Reading</p>	<p>Due</p>
<p>Sept 9 How does framing affect our perception of events?</p>	<p>-Comparing the two documentaries</p>	<p>"Fyre Fraud" Available on Hulu</p>	
<p>Sept 11 How do you do ethnographic research on social media?</p>	<p>-In-class online methods workshop *bring your computers, tablets, phones, etc.*</p>	<p>"What is Ethnography? Teaching Ethnographic Sensibilities without Fieldwork," by Carole McGranahan</p>	
<p>Sept 13 What questions can ethnography answer?</p>	<p>-In-class guided social media ethnography activity *bring your computers, tablets, phones, etc.*</p>		<p>By 11:59 PM Sunday 250 words on your final paper topic</p>
<p>Week 4</p>	<p>In Class</p>	<p>Reading</p>	<p>Due</p>

Sept 16 What interests you about social media?	-Discussion of paper topics		
Unit 2: The Ethics of Social Media as a Tool for Research			
Sept 18 How do our interlocutors feel?	-Presentation from Chris Duffy: Becoming a Meme -Discussion of reading	"Social Media Users' Views on the Ethics of Social Media Research," by Kelsey Beninger	Due 11:59 PM on Thursday Guided Social Media Ethnography Write-up
Sept 20 What ethical dilemmas do researchers of social media face?	-Anticipating ethical dilemmas and brainstorming solutions -Discussion of reading	"Big Data, Ethical Futures" by Mary Gray	Due 11:59 PM on Sunday First round of field notes using template online
Week 5	In Class	Reading	Due
Sept 23 What and who is behind social media	-Discussion of readings	-"The Human Toll of Protecting the Internet from the Worst of Humanity" by Adrian Chen -"Facebook, Cambridge Analytica Share A Liking For Beta Tests In The Developing World," by Paul Blumenthal	
Sept 25 What is the role of ethics in social media research?	-Guest lecture from Dr. Natalie Troxel, UX researcher at Facebook -Introduction to Multimedia Diary and signup		

Sept 27 Is social media research ethical?	-In-class debate - "Is social media research ethical?" -Know Your Meme presentations introduction and signup		
Week 6	In Class	Reading	Due
Unit 3: Identity on Social Media			
Sept 30 What makes an identity? Is it a fixed category?	-The Setats -Discussion of reading	"Butler's 'Gender Performativity' Explained."	
Oct 2 What makes an identity? Is it a fixed category?	-Positionality activity -Discussion of reading	"Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," by Kimberlé Crenshaw	
Oct 4 How are race and ethnicity performed and negotiated online?	-Finding race in your field notes -Discussion of reading	"#OnFleek: Authorship, Interpellation, and the Black Femme Prowess of Black Twitter," by Malika Imhotep	
Week 7	In Class	Reading	Due
Oct 7 How is gender performed and negotiated online?	-Finding gender in your field notes -Discussion of reading	"Archiving the Wonders of Testosterone via YouTube," by Tobias Raun	

<p>Oct 9 How is sexuality performed and negotiated online?</p>	<p>-Finding sexuality in your field notes -Discussion of reading</p>	<p>““He has a way gayer Facebook than I do”: Investigating sexual identity disclosure and context collapse on a social networking site” by Stefanie Duguay</p>	
<p>Oct 11 How is disability performed and negotiated online?</p>	<p>-Finding disability in your field notes -Discussion of reading</p>	<p>“American Sign Language in Virtual Space: Interactions between Deaf Users of Computer-Mediated Video Communication and the Impact of Technology on Language Practices,” by Elizabeth Keating and Gene Mirus</p>	<p>Due 11:59 PM on Sunday Second round of field notes using template online</p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>In Class</p>	<p>Reading</p>	<p>Due</p>
<p>Unit 4: Navigating Relationships Online</p>			
<p>Oct 14</p>	<p>NO CLASS - Read “The Breakup 2.0” for Wednesday</p>		<p>11:59 PM Tuesday Mid-Semester Check-in Survey</p>
<p>Oct 16 How does the medium shape communication?</p>	<p>-Discussion of reading</p>	<p>The Breakup 2.0: disconnecting over new media, by Ilana Gershon - Introduction and Chapter 1</p>	
<p>Oct 18 How have our definitions of public and private changed?</p>	<p>-Discussion of reading</p>	<p>The Breakup 2.0: disconnecting over new media, by Ilana Gershon - Chapter 2</p>	
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>In Class</p>	<p>Reading</p>	<p>Due</p>

Oct 21 What is the role of "interactive traditions" in new forms of communication	-Discussion of reading	The Breakup 2.0: disconnecting over new media, by Ilana Gershon - Chapter 3	
Oct 23 What is the role of intent on social media?	-Discussion of reading	The Breakup 2.0: disconnecting over new media, by Ilana Gershon - Chapter 4	
Oct 25 How does social media compare to previous media?	-Discussion of reading	The Breakup 2.0: disconnecting over new media, by Ilana Gershon - Chapter 5 and Conclusion	
Week 10	In Class	Reading	Due
Oct 28	-Ethnographic writing workshop *bring your computers, tablets, phones, etc.*		
Oct 30	-Research Workshop Meet at Fondren Library		
Unit 5: Social Media as a Tool for Activism			
Nov 1	-The road to digital activism -Discussion of reading	"Towards Cyberactivism 2.0?: Understanding the Use of Social Media and Other Information Technologies for Political Activism and Social Movements." By Rodrigo Sandoval-Almazan & Ramon J. Gil-Garcia	By 11:59PM Sunday First draft of social media ethnography
Week 11	In Class	Reading	Due

<p>Nov 4 What is the history of online activism?</p>	<p>-Peer editing of first draft</p> <p>*Bring a printed copy*</p>		
<p>Nov 6 Is "being there" the same on social media?</p>	<p>-Discussion of reading</p> <p>-Citation Workshop</p>	<p>"#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States," by Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa</p>	
<p>Nov 8 What makes a good hashtag?</p>	<p>-Create a hashtag</p>	<p>How to Create a Hashtag That Will Actually Get Used by Alex York</p>	
Week 12	In Class	Reading	Due
<p>Nov 11 What is the effect of social media on inter-movement relationships?</p>	<p>-In-class lecture from Cayden Mak of 18 Million Rising</p>		
<p>Nov 13 How can activists maximize reach and retention?</p>	<p>-Writing an abstract</p> <p>-Discussion of reading</p>	<p>"Many Clicks but Little Sticks: Social Media Activism in Indonesia," by Merlyna Lim</p>	<p>By 11:59 PM Thursday Second draft of social media ethnography</p>
<p>Nov 15</p>	<p>-Peer editing of second draft</p> <p>*Bring a printed copy of new and previous draft*</p>		<p>Due 11:59 PM on Sunday Final Paper Abstract</p>
Week 13	In Class	Reading	Due

Nov 18 How does online activism shape us?	-How do you define yourself? -Discussion of reading	“‘We Define Ourselves’: 1.5-Generation Undocumented Immigrant Activist Identities and Insurgent Discourse,” by Hinda Seif	
Nov 20 What is the role social media in Asian-American activism?	-Discussion of readings	Standing Rock, #NoDAPL, and Mni Wiconi *Read all 12 posts!*	
Nov 22	NO CLASS - Work on third draft of Social Media Ethnography		By 11:59 PM Sunday Third draft of social media ethnography
Week 14	In Class	Reading	Due
Nov 25	Peer editing of third draft *Bring a printed copy of new and previous drafts*		
Nov 27	Wrap-up/Review/Party		
Nov 29	NO CLASS - Work on presentations		
Week 15	In Class	Reading	Due
Dec 2	Presentations		
Dec 4	Presentations		
Dec 6	Presentations		
Week 16	In Class	Reading	Due
Dec 13	Final paper due on Canvas by 5 PM		