

**COURSE TITLE:** KIDS & SOCIAL MEDIA: Concerns & Best Uses

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 60

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 6 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 4.00 credits]

**OREGON PDUs:** 60

**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 60

**INSTRUCTOR:** Suzanne Warner  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Social Media - it connects our students, yet also divides our students. Many questions surround the use of social media:

- How much time on social media is too much for our students and children?
- What are the effects of social media on students – their brain development, identity, possible addiction, and well-being?
- Is there a positive side to social media?
- How can we keep our students safe from the negatives of social media, such as cyber-bullying?
- What advice can we share with our students and their parents to make the most of social media?

This class will delve into these questions (and more). You will learn about the positives and negatives about social media, form your own answers to some of these questions, and come away with ways to advise students and parents about the best way to use social media and the best ways to stay safe on social media.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

- An understanding of the effects of social media on student development, identity, and well-being.
- Knowledge of cyber-bullying and how to combat it.
- Understanding of how social media affects all of us as users of the platform - whether we know it or not.
- Comprehensions of why teens are so drawn to social media and how we can help them make good choices.
- The ability to advise parents and teenagers on how to manage social media in a safe manner.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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### **HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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### **UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
  2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
  3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%
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**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

**ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION****REQUIRED TEXT**

*It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Used text on Amazon costs about \$9.

None. All reading is online.

**MATERIALS FEE**

none.

**ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT****A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

**Assignment #1: Introduce Yourself**

1. Introduce yourself. Share your own personal experience with social media and describe your students' use of social media and whether or not they have an unhealthy relationship with social media.
2. Read the Introduction (pages 1 – 28) of the course text. In two (2) or more pages:
3. Share your personal history with social media.
  - Do you employ social media in your classroom? If so, how? If not, why not?
  - How do you see students/children using social media?
  - What, if any, positives do you see coming from students' use of social media?
  - What, if any, concerns do you see coming from students' use of social media?

**Assignment #2: The Social Dilemma Documentary on Netflix**

View the documentary [The Social Dilemma](#) on Netflix and write a two (2) page essay.

- Share your overall impressions of the documentary.
- What 3 – 5 points were most thought-provoking for you? Why?

If you do not have a Netflix subscription, there may be other ways to watch the documentary - you can try this link (<https://www.documentaryarea.tv/player.php?title=The%20Social%20Dilemma>), Amazon prime, and/or google "How to watch The Social Dilemma for free.")

**Assignment #3: Facebook's Response to The Social Dilemma Documentary**

1. Read the [response by Facebook](#) on The Social Dilemma documentary.
2. Respond with 2-3 paragraphs sharing your thoughts and opinions on the validity of Facebook's arguments. With what do you agree/disagree? Does the response by Facebook change your original thoughts to the documentary – why or why not?

#### **Assignment #4: The Effects of Social Media on Youth Identity Formation.**

1. Read:

- [Growing Up Wired: Social Networking Sites and Adolescent Psychosocial Development](#)
- [How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers](#)
- [Benefits and Costs of Social Media in Adolescence](#)

2. Read Chapter 1: Identity, Chapter 2: *Privacy*, and Chapter 3: *Inequality* in our class text.

3. Create a visual slideshow using a minimum of 5-6 slides (Google Slides, Prezi, PowerPoint, etc..) or create a 2-3 minute [video](#) that addresses the effects of social media and adolescent identity formation. Include 3-5 key points that concern you and their ramifications on adolescent development and identity formation.

#### **Assignment #5: Effect of Social Media on the Brain**

1. Read the following:

- [7 Ways Social Media Literally Changes Your Brain, According To Science](#)
- [The Psychology of Social Media](#)
- [Excessive Social Media Use Comparable to Drug Addiction](#)
- Chapter 3: *Addiction* in our class text.

2. Develop a brochure, flyer, poster, infographic, or something along these lines - summarize the ideas of social media and its effects on the brain. Include in your information:

- Social media as an addiction
- How social media changes the brain.
- Social media and mental health.

#### **Assignment #6: What Constitutes Cyberbullying?**

1. Read:

- [What Is Cyberbullying? An Overview for Students, Parents, and Teachers](#)
- [Cyberbullying: What is it and how to stop it](#)
- [Six Types of Cyberbullying](#)
- Chapter 5, *Bullying* and Chapter 4, *Danger* in our class text.

2. Write a 2 page essay describing the types of cyber-bullying, its effects on kids, and some remedies

#### **Assignment #7: The Allure and Cautions of Social Media for Teens**

1. Watch the TedTalk: [Impact of Social Media on Youth](#)

2. Watch the follow short YouTube Videos from *Teen Voices* of [Common Sense Education](#)

- [Friendships and Social Media](#)
- [Who Are You on Social Media?](#)
- [The Pressures to Stay Connected](#)
- [Presenting Yourself Online](#)
- [Hate Speech Online](#)
- [Oversharing and Your Digital Footprint](#)

3. Read [U.S. Surgeon General: We need to protect our kids from social media risks immediately.](#)

4. Create a PowerPoint Presentation or Google Slide Show on one or more of the topics or subtopics you heard/learned about in these presentations, and that is included in at least three of the references. Identify the topic(s), the benefits and challenges associated with each, and how students can manage challenges and/or create a positive out of a difficult situation.

#### **Assignment #8: Student Survey**

Create and implement a survey asking your students (or other children/teens) about their social media experience. You may ask about whatever topics you feel most relevant.

You will submit:

- A copy of the survey.
- The survey results, presented in a chart, graph, infographic, or essay form.
- Write a 2-page paper on your reflections of the survey results.

#### **Assignment #9: Advice to Parents, Teens, and Teachers about Social Media**

1. Read:

- [How to Keep Your Teen \(or Tween\) Safe Online](#)
- [Tips for Safe Social Networking for Teens](#)

2. Watch:

- [How to Stay Safe on Social Media](#)
- [How to Be Safe Online, from a Young Person](#)

3. Choose ONE of the following:

A. Write a letter (1-2 pages) to parents sharing 3-5 ways they can help their children manage social media and stay safe online.

**OR**

B. Write a letter (1-2 pages) to your students sharing 3-5 ways they can help themselves manage social media and stay safe online. (Alternatively, you can create a graphic or flyer for students.)

#### **Assignment #10: Culminating Assignment - How Students Can Make the Most of Social Media**

1. Watch: [How can young people use social media to create positive change?](#)

2. Read:

- [11 Teens Using Social Media for Good Deeds](#)
- Chapter 7, *Literacy* and Chapter 8, *Searching for a Public of Their Own* in our class text.

3. Write a 3-page paper summarizing what you have learned in this class, focusing on the following questions/issues:

- Look back at your initial Flipgrid post from Assignment #1 – specifically focusing on your comments about positive/concerns about social media. Do you feel the same way now? If not, what has changed, and why?
- Has your personal interaction with social media changed in any way? If so, how?

Answer the first question and one of the following three to focus the remainder of your response.

- What are 3-5 key points that you learned, and how will you integrate these lessons into your own use of social media, that of your children, or your students?
- What are the top 3-5 social media issues do you want your students to know, and how will you address these issues?
- What are the top 3-5 issues of social media do you want your students' parents to know, and how will you address these issues?
- What are 3-5 ideas for how you can use social media for the positive in your personal life or classroom?

#### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

##### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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### Assignment #11: Lesson Plan for Social Media

Create a lesson plan for students or parents (or if not applicable, for children/teens/adults – your choice – in your life) on any topic(s) related to social media use that will best meet your needs. You may use the [Heritage Institute Lesson Template](#) or any template of your choosing.

1. Implement your lesson with students/parents/adults.
2. Submit the lesson plan.
3. Write a 450-500 word commentary/reflection, including (where applicable):
  - what worked well
  - what could have been improved.
  - what additional topics and issues were raised (specifically if this was completed with adults/parents)

Include any feedback or noteworthy student products, if applicable.

### Assignment #12: Journaling

Take into consideration your new knowledge from your work in Section A, Learning Acquisition.

Over a 2 – 3 week time period, keep a journal of what types of interactions you had with students (and their parents, if applicable) about social media. How did you approach these conversations differently than you may have in the past? Did you notice that you, yourself, approach social media differently? If so, in what way? What thoughts/ideas did you experience during this timeframe that differs from before you started this class? Share important thoughts or ideas you had that apply to social media and our students.

The journal can be in whatever form you'd like – paragraph form, bullet points, video – it's your journal, so you chose the format. It's OK to have a digital journal, on google docs, for instance, and post your response.

### Assignment #13: Implementation Plan

Create an actual or hypothetical grade-level or department-wide implementation plan for safe and enriching media-informed classroom learning for your school. (If you are currently not in the classroom, create one for a future class that you think you may teach one day, or even your own children, if applicable). This plan can be presented as a presentation, video, or a 500-word response paper. Share what you have learned in the class, as well as strategies for implementation.

### Assignment #14: (500 Level ONLY)

In addition to the 400 level assignment, complete **three** (3) of the following:

- A. Conduct additional research via periodicals, online articles, or videos about social media and our students, and document the key points you learned in either a 3-4 page paper or a mind map with equivalent scale of content. Include an analysis of how this research supports or contrasts with the course text and assignments. Include a bibliography of your sources.
- B. Create an annotated bibliography focused on the topics learned in this class. Include 6 - 8 resources.
- C. Read one of the books listed in the bibliography of this syllabus or the textbook. Write a 2-3 page reflection comparing the premise of your chosen book to that of the information you learned in this course.
- D. Create a 15-20 minute PowerPoint presentation that could be used as an in-service to parents and/or colleagues in your community and/or school that describes what you have learned in this class.
- E. Another assignment of your own design with the instructor's prior approval.

### C. INTEGRATION PAPER

Assignment #15: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

### SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER

(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
  2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
  3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
  4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
  5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?
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#### **INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Suzanne Warner, M.S.**, received her Masters Degree in Education from the University of Rochester, New York. She has taught mathematics in the middle school, high school, and college settings, most recently in Oregon. Suzanne has been lauded by administrators, colleagues, students and parents regarding her teaching and classroom management skills. Her students enjoy learning in a respectful, productive environment, where each student is in control of her/his own learning and behaviors. She strongly believes that all students want to do well, and creates a teaching environment for them to succeed.

When not in the classroom, Suzanne enjoys spending time with her family reading, hiking, backpacking and traveling.

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

##### **KIDS & SOCIAL MEDIA: Concerns & Best Uses**

**Freitas, Donna**, *The Happiness Effect: How Social Media is Driving a Generation to Appear Perfect at Any Cost*, Oxford University Press, 2019, Paperback, 978-0190239855

Drawing on a large-scale survey and interviews with students on thirteen college campuses, Freitas finds that what young people are overwhelmingly concerned with--what they really want to talk about--is happiness. They face enormous pressure to look perfect online--not just happy, but blissful, ecstatic, and fabulously successful. Unable to achieve this impossible standard, they are anxious about letting the less-than-perfect parts of themselves become public. Far from wanting to share everything, they are brutally selective when it comes to curating their personal profiles, and worry obsessively that they might unwittingly post something that could come back to haunt them later in life. Through candid conversations with young people from diverse backgrounds, Freitas reveals how even the most well-adjusted individuals can be stricken by self-doubt when they compare their experiences with the vast collective utopia that they see online.

**Homayoun, Ana**, *Social Media Wellness: Helping Tweens and Teens Thrive in an Unbalanced Digital World*, Corwin Teaching Essentials, 2018, Paperback, 978-1483358185

Today's students face a challenging paradox: the digital tools they need to complete their work are often the source of their biggest distractions. Students can quickly become overwhelmed trying to manage the daily confluence of online interactions with schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and family life. *Social Media Wellness* is the first book to successfully decode the new language of social media for parents and educators and provide pragmatic solutions to help students: Manage distractions, Focus and prioritize, Improve time-management, Become more organized and boost productivity, Decrease stress and build empathy.

**Palfrey, John and Urs Gasser**, *Born Digital: How Children Grow Up in a Digital Age*, PBG Publishing, 2016, Paperback, 978-046500515

The first generation of children who were born into and raised in the digital world are coming of age and reshaping the world in their image. Our economy, our politics, our culture, and even the shape of our family life are being transformed. But who are these wired young people? And what is the world they're creating going to look like? In this revised and updated edition, leading Internet and technology experts John Palfrey and Urs Gasser offer a cutting-edge sociological portrait of these young people, who can seem, even to those merely a generation older, both extraordinarily sophisticated and strangely narrow. Exploring a broad range of issues -- privacy concerns, the psychological effects of information overload, and larger ethical issues.

**Twenge, Jean M.**, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us*, Simon & Schuster, 2018, Paperback, 978-150115198

With generational divides wider than ever, parents, educators, and employers have an urgent need to understand today's rising

generation of teens and young adults. Born in the mid-1990s up to the mid-2000s, iGen is the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone. With social media and texting replacing other activities, iGen spends less time with their friends in person—perhaps contributing to their unprecedented levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness. But technology is not the only thing that makes iGen distinct from every generation before them; they are also different in how they spend their time, how they behave, and in their attitudes toward religion, sexuality, and politics. They socialize in completely new ways, reject once sacred social taboos, and want different things from their lives and careers. More than previous generations, they are obsessed with safety, focused on tolerance, and have no patience for inequality.