

**Western University**  
**School of Health Studies**  
**HS4120B: Social Media & Health**  
**Winter 2023**

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### **1.0 CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**

Social media and its associated technologies have become ubiquitous in all aspects of our lives. This course integrates an understanding of social media with research in health and medicine. This course explores social media uses in health to address methodological, conceptual, ethical, and design issues pertinent to these emergent technologies.

**Prerequisites:** HS 2250A/B; Registration in the third or fourth year of the School of Health Studies

**Anti-requisites:** HS 4091B (if taken in 2015-2017)

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

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### **2.0 LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

With this, I respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

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### **3.0 COURSE INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Eric Collins, PhD

**Office:** Online (Zoom)

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Email:** [ecollin9@uwo.ca](mailto:ecollin9@uwo.ca) (48-hour response on weekdays and 72 hours during exams and holidays)

**Lectures:** Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. in HSB-35

**Tutorials:** None

### **Attendance and Classroom Behaviour (online and/or in-person)**

In the School of Health Studies, each course instructor sets specific expectations for attendance and participation that are specific to the course, teaching objectives, and learning outcomes. Regular attendance is expected and essential for all courses, but particularly those that include participation grades in their evaluation schemes. Participation means not only attendance, but active engagement in the class, including (for example) contribution to small and large group discussions, a demonstrated effort to prepare for class by completing assigned readings before class, and following the instructor's guidelines for use of electronic devices during class time. **Students who miss classes, or parts of classes, are responsible for the material they have missed. Instructors are not obliged to review the contents of missed lectures.**

**During Lectures and Tutorials:** Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only, and refrain from engaging in any activities that may distract other students from learning. From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers, to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

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### **4.0 Course Materials**

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, assigned readings will be posted to the Resources tool on OWL.

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### **5.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In this course, we explore the relationship between social media and several areas of health. We begin our exploration by unpacking the history of social media and the development of digital health technologies. Then, we examine how social media impacts and influences our mental health, sexual health, as well as our interpersonal relationships. We also investigate how and why social media is used as a tool in medicine, public health, and health promotion. Lastly, we evaluate how social media has influenced our parenting beliefs and behaviours.

## 5.1 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

| Learning Outcome   | Learning Activity               | Learning Assessment                                  |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how and why social media has become a significant tool in our society and examine its overall impact on our health beliefs, health behaviours, and provision of health care.</li> </ul> | <p>Lectures</p> <p>Readings</p> | <p>Forums</p> <p>Group Presentation</p> <p>Exams</p> |
| <p><i>Application of Knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess real-world scenarios and situations to predict how people will use digital health technologies and interpret the health information found on social media.</li> </ul>                             | <p>Lectures</p> <p>Readings</p> | <p>Forums</p> <p>Group Presentation</p> <p>Exams</p> |
| <p><i>Application of Methodologies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the scientific models, concepts, and theories that have been used to understand the relationship between social media and health.</li> </ul>   | <p>Lectures</p> <p>Readings</p> | <p>Forums</p> <p>Group Presentation</p> <p>Exams</p> |

## 6.0 ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION SCHEDULE

**Forum (10%):** Ten questions will be posted to the **Forum** on **OWL** throughout the term. Questions will be generated from weekly lectures and readings. Each student is required to provide an original response to each week's posting and comment on a fellow student's original response. Each week's original response and comment are worth a total of 1%. There are no part marks. "I agree" or "I disagree" are insufficient responses/comments and will not be awarded marks. Students are expected to provide thoughtful responses and comments that demonstrate critical thinking and an understanding of the theories, concepts, and arguments presented in this course. Each response and comment must include a **minimum of 80 words (160 words total)**. Examples of original responses and comments can be found on **OWL** in the **Forum**.

**Midterm Exam (25%).** The midterm exam covers all assigned readings and PowerPoint materials presented from **lectures 1-5**. The midterm exam consists of **60 questions** and is formatted as multiple-choice, true or false, matching, as well as fill-in-the-blanks. The midterm exam is scheduled by the OOR. The date at time will be posted later in the term.

**Group presentation (25%).** At the beginning of the term, students will be randomly assigned to a group and are expected to prepare a PowerPoint presentation based on any topic from the course. Group presentations will be submitted through **OWL**. Group sizes and presentation lengths will be determined based on the final enrollment of this course. A presentation rubric will be posted to the **Resources** tool on **OWL**.

**Final Exam (40%).** The final exam is **cumulative** and covers all the assigned readings, *The Social Dilemma* (film), and PowerPoint materials. The final exam consists of **75 questions** and is formatted as multiple-choice, true or false, matching, as well as fill-in-the-blanks. The final exam is scheduled by the OOR. The date at time will be posted later in the term.

**During Exams:** Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

## 6.1 GRADE DISTRIBUTION

| Component          | Value %    |
|--------------------|------------|
| Forum              | 10         |
| Midterm Exam       | 25         |
| Group Presentation | 25         |
| Final Exam         | 40         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100</b> |

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## 7.0 EVALUATION

*The university-wide descriptor of the meaning of letter grades, as approved by Senate:*

|    |          |   |
|----|----------|---|
| A+ | 90-100   | <i>One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level</i>  |
| A  | 80-89    | <i>Superior work that is clearly above average</i>                    |
| B  | 70-79    | <i>Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory</i> |
| C  | 60-69    | <i>Competent work, meeting requirements</i>                           |
| D  | 50-59    | <i>Fair work, minimally acceptable.</i>                               |
| F  | below 50 | <i>Fail</i>   |

*It is expected that the grades for this course will fall between 74-80%. In the event that the course average falls outside this range, a constant may be added (or subtracted) from each student's grade, by the instructor, to bring the class average in line with school policy.*

- Year 1: 68-72
- Year 2: 70-74 (core) and 72-76 (elective)
- Year 3: 72-76 (core) and 74-78 (elective)
- Year 4: 74-80

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## 8.0 CLASS/ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

| Episode | Day    | Topic  | Assessment   |
|---------|--------|--|--------------|
| 1       | Jan 12 | A History of Social Media                    | Forum 1      |
| 2       | Jan 19 | Digital Health Technologies (eHealth)        | Forum 2      |
| 3       | Jan 26 | Social Media and Mental Health               | Forum 3      |
| 4       | Feb 2  | Social Media and Sexual Health               | Forum 4      |
| 5       | Feb 9  | Social Media and Interpersonal Relationships | Forum 5      |
|         | TBA    | Episodes 1 - 5                               | Midterm Exam |
| 6       | Feb 16 | Social Media and Public Health               | Forum 6      |
| 7       | Mar 2  | Social Media and Health Promotion            | Forum 7      |
| 8       | Mar 9  | Social Media and Medicine                    | Forum 8      |
| 9       | Mar 16 | Social Media and Parenting                   | Forum 9      |
| Film    | Mar 23 | The Social Dilemma                           | Forum 10     |
|         | Mar 30 | Group Presentations                          |              |
|         | Apr 6  | Group Presentations                          |              |
|         | TBA    | Episodes 1-9                                 | Final Exam   |

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## 9.0 STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading\\_189](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_189)

Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's verbatim or paraphrased text in one's own written work without immediate reference. Verbatim text must be surrounded by quotation marks or indented if it is longer than four lines. A reference must follow right after borrowed material (usually the author's name and page number). Without immediate reference to borrowed material, a list of sources at the end of a written assignment does not protect a writer against the possible charge of plagiarism.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

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## 10.0 POLICY CONCERNING ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by extenuating circumstances, including short-term illness or injury. Reasonable academic consideration is a cooperative process between the University, the student, and academic staff. All participants in the process must act in good faith, and fulfil their respective obligations, if it is to succeed.

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant as to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements, may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

- (i) For medical absences, submitting a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner, in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or
- (ii) For non-medical absences, submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to academic advising office in their Faculty of registration, in order to be eligible for academic consideration.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work;
- Are encouraged to make appropriate decisions, based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (e.g., upset stomach) or upsets (e.g., argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for an SMC
- **Must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence;
- **Are advised that all necessary documentation, forms, etc. are to be submitted to academic advising office within two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities**

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## 11.0 OTHER INFORMATION

### Use of Recording Devices and Course Content

Course instructors own and retain the intellectual property rights of their teaching materials. These rights extend to materials used in online settings and digital learning management systems like Owl, Zoom and TopHat. Students do not have our permission to make audio or video recordings of lectures, take pictures of lecture material, or distribute any course content for nefarious purposes (E.g., for sale or to cheat on exams). It is the decision of the instructor as to how and when teaching materials can be shared or used. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of pre-recorded lectures or other course materials. Nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

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## 12.0 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

There are various support services around campus, and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/>
2. Student Health -- <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>
3. Registrar's Office -- <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>
4. Ombuds Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/>

The undergraduate experience is rewarding and challenging socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Finding ways to balance scholarly life with our personal lives can be tough, but it's important to learn how to manage stress. Western provides several health and wellness-related services to students, which may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>. You can also check out the Campus Recreation Centre or the McIntosh Gallery (<http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>), for alternative spaces to reconnect with your bodies and restore your spirit. You may also want to access local resources that are closer to where you are living during the school year. Recalibrating ourselves emotionally begins with slowing down, reminding ourselves that we are ok, and taking a few deep, slow breaths. This remarkably effective strategy brings the body from stress mode into a more relaxed state

If you are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [Mental Health Support - Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or Thames Valley Family Services (<https://www.familyservicethamesvalley.com/>), a trusted provider within the community. To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: [Health & Wellness - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#). It's also advisable to have a wellness safety plan if you don't want to reach out to formal services. Having the numbers of a few trusted individuals is another strategy.

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## 13.0 CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR IN-PERSON PIVOTING TO ONLINE LEARNING

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction**, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including

technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at:  
<https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

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#### **14.0 COMMON CONCERNS GUIDELINES**

The table below summarizes a list of common student concerns and how they are to be resolved. If you have a concern that is not listed here, then please email your instructor.

| <b>Concern</b>                          | <b>How to Address Concern</b>  |
|---|--|
| Course administrative matters           | Read through the course outline or email the instructor if your question cannot be answered from information in the course outline   |
| Course content questions                | Refer to the OWL Resources (e.g., notes, calendar, etc.) Email the instructor  |
| Grade disputes and requests for appeals | A student requesting an appeal to a specific course with respect to a grade for an assignment or examination must first contact their instructor to discuss such matters<br><br>Visit the following website for guide on submitting appeal:<br><a href="https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html">https://uwo.ca/fhs/policies/appeals.html</a> |