

CMN108 Issues in Social Media

School: School of Business and Creative Industries

2025 | Semester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay

**BLENDED
LEARNING**

You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

Online

ONLINE

You can do this course without coming onto campus.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

Social media use has become a pervasive part of everyday life for billions throughout the world. This course will provide you with a comprehensive overview of the issues facing organisations, professionals and individual users of social media technologies. Using local and international case studies, you will develop a critical and analytical understanding of the moral, legal and ethical issues arising from contemporary social media use. Furthermore, you will gain valuable research and analytical skills to develop and articulate recommendations to manage social media issues.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Lecture – 1 hour online lecture content for 12 weeks (or equivalent).	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – In-class tutorial	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
ONLINE			
Lecture – 1 hour online content for 12 weeks (or equivalent).	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Interactive zoom tutorial	2hrs	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

1. Defining Social Media
2. Power, Control and Regulation
3. Legal and Ethical Issues
4. Privacy and Surveillance
5. Social Media Audiences
6. Trolling, Bullying and Extremism
7. #Activism
8. Memes and Images as Cultural and Political Objects
9. Information Overload
10. Crisis Communication and Social Media
11. Influencers and Celebrity
12. Social Media and Creative Entrepreneurship

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES		GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...		Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1	Identify and describe contemporary social media issues faced by organisations and individuals.	Knowledgeable
2	Identify and evaluate the ethical implications relating to social media issues.	Ethical
3	Investigate and analyse contemporary social media issues and their impact on organisations, social media professionals and individual users.	Creative and critical thinker
4	Communicate relevant recommendations appropriate to a specific target audience	Engaged
5	Apply academic literacies to written and oral communication modes.	Empowered

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Students in this course should have an understanding of social media technologies.

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

In-class drafts of Task 1 will be reviewed in Week 3 and 4 and feedback provided to ensure students' understanding of course content.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
Blended learning	1	Written Piece	Individual	25%	900 words	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
Blended learning	2	Oral	Group	35%	10 slides in 10 minutes	Week 9	In Class
Blended learning	3	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	Individual	40%	2500 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
Online	1	Written Piece	Individual	25%	900 words	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
Online	2	Oral	Group	35%	10 slides in 10 minutes	Week 9	Online Submission
Online	3	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	Individual	40%	2500 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

Blended learning - Assessment Task 1: Annotated Bibliography

GOAL:	You will become familiar with and be able to demonstrate foundational theoretical knowledge including concepts and approaches to social media.		
PRODUCT:	Written Piece		
FORMAT:	Academic writing. You will produce an annotated bibliography of 900 words consisting of six sources (4 scholarly and 2 non-scholarly sources) pertaining to an identified topic or issue in social media. Each entry of approximately 150 words will demonstrate your understanding of the text, the main concepts or arguments presented, and the relevance of the text to the identified topic or issue. The issue will be relevant to topics covered in Weeks 1-5 of course content.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Selection of appropriate sources and relevance to selected issue	2 5
	2	Critical understanding of social media issues, theory and approaches	1
	3	Identification of ethical and legal aspects of social media issues.	1 2
	4	Demonstration of appropriate academic writing, research, and referencing skills.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation, Information literacy		

Blended learning - Assessment Task 2: Case Study Brief-Oral Presentation

GOAL:	You will identify and assess problems relating to social media and formulate plausible ways to solve and/or minimise their impact on individual/organisational reputations and the community.	
PRODUCT:	Oral	
FORMAT:	In groups, you will have 10 slides (PowerPoint or Prezi) and 10 minutes to present a case study analysis relating to one of the social media issues covered in Weeks 3-8. The case should have gained prominence on social media and received traditional media coverage (television, radio, newspapers). Presentations will be held in tutorials.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Evaluation of the ethical implications relating to social media issues.	2
	2 Description and analysis of case.	1 3
	3 Evidence of research.	3 5
	4 Application of oral academic literacies.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

Blended learning - Assessment Task 3: Guiding Secondary School Students' Use of Social Media

GOAL:	The goal of this task is to develop an awareness of the connection between communication and audience as a key part of the process of designing influential communication artefacts for a specific audience.	
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	
FORMAT:	You will write a 1500 word equivalent "How to Guide" for secondary school students to provide advice on how to manage one of the issues covered in Week 5 - 12. The Guide will include a description of the issue, background analysis, legal and ethical considerations and 5-10 recommendations relating specifically to the issue to guide secondary students' use of social media. 1000 word analysis. 1500 word equivalent - How To Guide	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Analysis of selected issue and its theoretical and practical implications.	3
	2 Appropriateness of communication of information to the target audience.	4
	3 Evidence of research.	3 5
	4 Application of academic literacies.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

Online - Assessment Task 1: Annotated Bibliography

GOAL:	You will become familiar with and be able to demonstrate foundational theoretical knowledge including concepts and approaches to social media.			
PRODUCT:	Written Piece			
FORMAT:	Academic writing. You will produce an annotated bibliography of 900 words consisting of six sources (4 scholarly and 2 non-scholarly sources) pertaining to an identified topic or issue in social media. Each entry of approximately 150 words will demonstrate your understanding of the text, the main concepts or arguments presented, and the relevance of the text to the identified topic or issue. The issue will be relevant to topics covered in Weeks 1-5 of course content.			
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed		
	1	Selection of appropriate sources and relevance to selected issue	1	2 5
	2	Critical understanding of social media issues, theory and approaches	1	
	3	Identification of ethical and legal aspects of social media issues.	1	2
	4	Demonstration of appropriate academic writing, research, and referencing skills.	5	
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation, Information literacy			

Online - Assessment Task 2: Case Study Brief-Oral Presentation

GOAL:	You will identify and assess problems relating to social media and formulate plausible ways to solve and/or minimise their impact on individual/organisational reputations and the community.		
PRODUCT:	Oral		
FORMAT:	In groups, you will have 10 slides (PowerPoint or Prezi) and 10 minutes to present a case study analysis relating to one of the social media issues covered in Weeks 3-8. The case should have gained prominence on social media and received traditional media coverage (television, radio, newspapers). Online students can submit their group's oral presentation using one of the following three methods: 1. Audio/video recording over PowerPoint slides 2. Audio/video recording over Zoom 3. YouTube video		
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Evaluation of the ethical implications relating to social media issues.	2
	2	Description and analysis of case.	1 3
	3	Evidence of research.	3 5
	4	Application of oral academic literacies.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

Online - Assessment Task 3: Guiding Secondary School Students' Use of Social Media

GOAL:	The goal of this task is to develop an awareness of the connection between communication and audience as a key part of the process of designing influential communication artefacts for a specific audience.		
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece		
FORMAT:	You will write a 1500 word equivalent "How to Guide" for secondary school students to provide advice on how to manage one of the issues covered in Week 5 - 12. The Guide will include a description of the issue, background analysis, legal and ethical considerations and 5-10 recommendations relating specifically to the issue to guide secondary students' use of social media. 1000 word analysis 1500 word equivalent - How To Guide		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Analysis of selected issue and its theoretical and practical implications.	3
	2	Appropriateness of communication of information to the target audience.	4
	3	Evidence of research.	3 5
	4	Application of academic literacies.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Students must have access to a computer and the internet to undertake this course.

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%

The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10.General Enquiries

In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au