



LMC 3404: Social Media

Fall 2026 | GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

SECTION 94355 (A); M/W 3:30PM-4:45PM;

SKILES 269

professor: Dr. Charles Woods (he/him/his)

email: cwoods72@gatech.edu

drop-in hours: Skiles 326, Mon./Weds., 10:00am-12:00pm (walk-ins welcome), or by appointment

General Information:

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students learn the cultural history, theory, and practice of social media in a variety of settings, and its impact on personal, professional, and political life. Section information: Major restriction will not be lifted. *NOT a humanities option*

PREREQUISITE:

Undergraduate semester level ENGL 1102 (English Composition II), minimum grade of D.

COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of LMC 3404, students will be able to...

- Explain the history of social media and how it has influenced today's interfaces, communities, discourses, and cultures
- Summarize keywords and theories in contemporary research and criticism of social media
- Critically assess how social media influences the communication of identity and the sharing of information in contemporary society
- Trace the development and proliferation of messages and trends through social media
- Design, conduct, and articulate the results of research about and/or using social media

Required Materials:

There is no required textbook for this course. You will not need to purchase any materials. All required materials will be made available on Canvas or through the [Georgia Tech Library](#) resources.

Assignments & Grading:

Note that these are brief descriptions. Each project has multiple required components (e.g., brainstorming activities, outlines, reflections, etc.) and full assignments will be provided on Canvas. See the course calendar for due dates.

Memo of Introduction (4% of final grade) The purpose of this assignment is help me to better understand your goals for enrolling in this course, to learn more about how you come to the field of social media, and to help you to establish a rapport with me.

Short Assignments, Classroom Participation, & Professional Ethos (20% of final grade) Class attendance and participating in activities, writing short assignments, providing feedback on other classmates' drafts, and engaging in other in-class work will form this component of your course grade.

Reading Quizzes (21% of final grade) To ensure that students complete the assigned reading, there will be eight quizzes over the course of the semester. These quizzes will be unannounced, and makeup assignments will only be given if arrangements are made with the professor prior to the missed class. Some will involve multiple-choice or short-answer questions; others will ask you to engage in longer-form writing (~250–500 words) applying a concept from a recent reading to your real life, to demonstrate your understanding of communication/culture theories as well as privacy and surveillance, and to engage in intellectual reflection. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped, thus only seven will count toward your grade.

Discussion Lead (15% of final grade) Once during the semester, you will prepare a brief presentation (~10 minutes) that introduces one of the readings for a class period, before leading the class in discussion and/or an activity on that reading (this assignment may be done in pairs).

Viral Case Study (15% of final grade) You will pick an artifact that has gone viral (e.g., a meme, a trend, a sound, etc.), trace its origins, and discuss its cultural impact. You can choose to represent your final case study as either a recorded presentation of 7–10 minutes (with slides and narration) or a designed report (single spaced, with images of course!) of 5–7 pages.

Research Poster (25% of final grade) You will conduct research on a social media topic of your choice to create a poster; the last class meeting before finals will be a “poster showcase” where you and your classmates will show off the work that you’ve done to classmates and Georgia Tech community members.

FINAL GRADE POLICY:

I do not curve grades or offer extra credit at the end of the semester. The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A	B	C	D	F
100%–90%	89%–80%	79%–70%	69%–60%	59% or below
4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.0

LATE WORK:

Assignments are due at 11:59pm local time on the specified date, unless otherwise noted.

WHAT IF I GET STUCK?

If you're struggling with course content, projects, or deadlines, please talk with me sooner rather than later! You can always stop by my office hours, ask to schedule an appointment with me, or send me an email. I'm here to help. Extensions are possible if you request them in advance: I'd rather you take an extra day or two to finish a project than turn in something that's on-time and half-baked.

Additionally, the [Naugle Writing and Communication Center](#) is an excellent resource for undergraduate and graduate students, offering consultations on writing and speaking projects, as well as job documents, presentations, multimedia, and more. They offer virtual consultations, so they can help you out even from afar.

Attendance & Participation:

Participation is essential in this course. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings that are due. Plan on expressing your ideas, frustrations, questions, confusions, etc., even if you're not able to articulate them without some hesitation—sometimes, ambivalent or ambiguous remarks spark the liveliest discussions!

Although your participation will not be explicitly graded, you will be evaluated on your preparedness for class. I will use my assessment of your participation to manage borderline grades; thus, it will help you to attend class, share your views on readings, and participate in activities. If you repeatedly arrive late to class, expect that your grade will also be lowered. If you are concerned about this assessment at any time, you can contact me to request a “snapshot” of your current grade or discuss ways to improve your participation.

You have four (4) permitted absences regardless of documentation or excuse; for each absence after four (4), your final course grade will go down 1%. Absences will be recorded through the Attendance function on Canvas; it is your responsibility to keep up with your absence count in the class. It is also important to come to class on time. Therefore, if you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be marked absent for that class period. If you are absent, you miss valuable class time with your colleagues, as well as instructions for assignments and projects that will help you complete quality work. If you miss class, you are still responsible for obtaining class notes and completing work you missed.

Technology Requirements:

To participate in course activities, the following technologies are required:

- A laptop or desktop computer (not all course activities can be completed on a mobile device)
- A high-speed internet connection, which you will access daily for course messages through email, as well as to use Canvas
- A microphone and/or webcam, for video conferencing
- A program that can open PDFs (such as Acrobat or Preview)
- Microsoft Office or Google Docs (please save documents in .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats—no PAGES files, please!) ○ You will need the desktop version of Microsoft Office (not the in-browser app) to complete some course activities and assignments. If you do not have Office downloaded, you can download it for free using your GT Office 365 account.

When you use technology during class meetings, make sure it is not a distraction to yourself or others. Avoid using technology as a barrier to actively engaging in class. Do not take phone calls, scroll social media, snap, livestream, do work for other courses, or text during class unless you have planned with me ahead of time (due to an emergency or urgent issue). **TL;DR If technology isn't supporting classwork, turn it off.**

Copyright and Intellectual Property:

All videos, documents, and content in this course may only be used in and for this class. No video, document, or content may be downloaded or captured for personal use beyond this class without the written permission of its owner. Likewise, please seek permission from the instructor before recording (video or audio) the instructor or any portion of class.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement:

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See the [Institute Rules and Regulations](#) for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Academic Integrity:

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit the [Honor Code Policy website](#) or the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to

the [Office of Student Integrity](#), who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

GENERATIVE AI POLICY (CHATGPT, COPILOT, GEMINI, ETC.)

This course involves writing, communication, and critical thinking. Generative AI agents such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others present great opportunities for learning and for communicating. However, AI cannot learn or communicate for you, and so cannot meet the course requirements for you.

In this course, using generative AI tools in the work of the course (including assignments, discussions, ungraded work, etc.) is allowed only in instances specified by your professor.

As with any technology, generative AI tools need to be used critically and according to academic and professional expectations. Thus, in instances in which your instructor allows generative AI tool use, you are expected to adhere to these principles:

Responsibility: You are responsible for the work you submit. In instances in which your instructor allows generative AI tool use, this means that any work you submit should be your own, with any AI assistance appropriately disclosed (see “Transparency” below) and any AI-generated content appropriately cited (see “Documentation” below). This also means you must ensure that any factual statements produced by a generative AI tool are true and that any references or citations produced by the AI tool are correct.

Transparency: Any generative AI tools you use in the work of the course should be clearly acknowledged as indicated by the instructor. This work includes not only when you use content directly produced by a generative AI tool but also when you use a generative AI tool in the process of composition (for example, for brainstorming, outlining, or translation purposes).

Documentation: You should cite any content generated by an AI tool as you would when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing ideas, text, images, or other content made by other people. If you do not clearly attribute AI-generated work, and/or attempt to pass it off as your own, you will receive a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.

Using generative AI tools at times not allowed by the instructor will be considered an infraction of the Georgia Tech Honor Code subject to investigation by the Office of Student Integrity. Likewise, using generative AI tools in the course without adhering to these principles will be considered an infraction of the Georgia Tech Honor Code subject to investigation by the Office of Student Integrity.

This policy has been adapted from the Georgia Tech Writing and Communication Program (WCP).

Accessibility:

If you are a student with learning needs that require accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or via [their website](#) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss

your needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me within the first week of the semester to schedule an appointment to discuss your learning needs (you don't have to have a documented disability with the Office of Disability Services to do this!).

Nondiscrimination Policies:

The Georgia Institute of Technology has a commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, ancestry, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, disability, genetics, or veteran status. If you or someone you know believes you are experiencing any type of discriminatory behavior, even if none of the above policies have been violated yet, please consider reaching out to the Equal Opportunity, Compliance, and Conflict Management (EOCCM) team to learn more about possible supportive measures, resolution pathways, and on-and-off campus resources. The [EOCCM website](#) has more information on [reporting options](#) for students, faculty, and staff, as well as [resources for support](#).