

# Social Media, Health, & Well-Being

Community Health & Prevention Research (CHPR) 238

Spring 2021

Thursdays 8:30-9:20am Pacific Time, on Zoom

## Contact Information

Instructor: Erin Vogel, PhD (she/her)  
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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

**Welcome to CHPR 238!** Although we won't be meeting in-person this quarter, I am looking forward to getting to know you. Feel free to send me an email to schedule a virtual meeting. We can discuss the course material, any concerns you may have, or whatever is on your mind.

## Course Description

Focus is on how social media affects well-being, how and why information spreads, effects of social media on young people and other vulnerable populations, and how social media can be used to improve health behaviors and wellbeing. The synchronous class sessions on Zoom consist of brief lectures, guest speakers, and class discussions. Assignments will include reading, submitting written reflections, and participating in class discussions. Priority for enrollment given to current CHPR masters students, who must enroll for a letter grade.

## Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Through active engagement with and successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain different perspectives and evidence around the effects of social media on its users
- Critically examine health-relevant messages and interventions delivered on social media
- Apply research on digital health to the development of a health promotion intervention on social media

## Course Structure

This course will be facilitated entirely online through Canvas. Our Canvas website is: <https://canvas.stanford.edu/courses/138100>

Your grade consists of three components: 1) class attendance; 2) class participation, and 3) reading articles and writing discussion questions and reflections.

**Class attendance and participation:** Our class will meet virtually on Thursdays from 8:30-9:20am Pacific Time on Zoom. The instructor or a guest speaker will give a brief lecture on the topic of the week. Then, we will discuss the readings as a class and/or in small breakout groups. You can access the Zoom link on Canvas.

*\*\*\*NOTE: Students who cannot attend a class due to an unavoidable conflict are required to write a 1-2 page analysis of that week’s reading(s), which should give an overview and analysis of the material (double spaced, 1- inch margins, 12-point font). This make-up assignment is due at the very next class session. To receive credit, students must miss no more than 2 class sessions during the quarter. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me as early as possible.*

**Discussion questions and reflections:** Please complete the assigned readings before each class and submit 3 discussion questions, followed by a few bullet points or brief notes with your own thoughts on each question, *prior* to class. Your questions must cover all of the assigned readings. Discussion questions are due by 8am on Thursdays and must be submitted through Canvas. Late assignments can be submitted. 25% will be deducted for assignments submitted on the due date but after class has started. 25% will be deducted for each additional calendar day late. For example, discussion questions due at 8am on 9/24 would receive 25% off if submitted at 9am and 50% off if submitted on 9/25. If you have questions about this policy, please ask!

For week 10, there are no assigned readings. Instead, please design a social media intervention targeting health promotion or disease prevention. You will submit a brief written description of your intervention, incorporating what you’ve learned in the course. Your description and reflection should be approximately 2 pages (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font).

Rubrics will be provided for each grading component in advance. I encourage you to contact me early and often with any questions or concerns about expectations.

**Grade Breakdown and Policies**

Attendance	15%	Attended synchronous class session OR submitted satisfactory make-up assignment = 1.5 points X 10 class sessions = 15 possible points
Participation	15%	Overall engagement in class discussions throughout the quarter (see rubric) = 15 possible points
Discussion questions	70%	8 discussion question assignments X 7 pts. each Final reflection (due in Week 10) X 14 points =70 points total
TOTAL	100%	100 points

Grade Breakdown		
A = 93-100 points	A- = 90-92 points	B+ = 87-89 points
B = 83-86 points	B- = 80-82 points	C+ = 77-79 points
C = 73-76 points	C- = 70-72 points	D+ = 67-69 points
D = 63-66 points	D- = 60-62 points	F = 59 or fewer points

Note: A Satisfactory / No Cred (S/NC) option also is available. Satisfactory is C- (70 points) or better. Due to the stress and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, courses taken for S/NC in 2020-2021 will count toward the CHPR degree. The last day for students to change their grading basis is May 21, 2021.

## Course Schedule and Assignment / Assessment Deadlines

Week	Class Meeting	Topics/Activities	Due Today
Week 1	April 1	Introductions, syllabus review, norm-setting	-
Week 2	April 8	Social media's effects on mental & physical health	Week 2 discussion questions
Week 3	April 15	Misinformation & disinformation	Week 3 discussion questions
Week 4	April 22	Health conversations on social media	Week 4 discussion questions
Week 5	April 29	Social media & health promotion: opportunities and challenges	Week 5 discussion questions
Week 6	May 6	Promoting health equity through social media	Week 6 discussion questions
Week 7	May 13	Behavior change theory & digital health	Week 7 discussion questions
Week 8	May 20	Optimizing group-based social media interventions	Week 8 discussion questions
Week 9	May 27	Optimizing public health messaging on social media	Week 9 discussion questions
Week 10	June 3	Review & reflection	Week 10 written reflection

Note: This schedule is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

## Readings

### Week 1: Introductions, syllabus review, and norm-setting

*No readings or assignments. Attendance is expected and will be graded (present/absent).*

**Week 2: Social media's effects on mental & physical health**

1. Orben A, Dienlin T, Przybylski AK. Social media's enduring effect on adolescent life satisfaction. *PNAS* 2019;116(21):10226-10228.
2. Twenge JM. More time on technology, less happiness? Associations between digital-media use and psychological well-being. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 2019;28(4):372-379.
3. Zhang J, Brackbill D, Yang S, Becker J, Herbert N, Centola D. Support or competition? How online social networks increase physical activity: A randomized controlled trial. *Preventive Medicine Reports* 2016;4:453-458

**Week 3: Misinformation & disinformation**

1. Morley J, Cowls J, Taddeo M, et al. Public health in the information age: Recognizing the infosphere as a social determinant of health. *J Med Internet Res* 2020;22(8):e19311
2. Chou WS, Oh A, Klein WMP. Addressing health-related misinformation on social media. *JAMA*. ePub November 14, 2018

**Week 4: Health conversations on social media**

1. Fox S. The social life of health information. Pew Research Center 2014. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/01/15/the-social-life-of-health-information/>
2. Naslund JA, Aschbrenner KA, Marsch LA, Bartels SJ. The future of mental health care: peer-to-peer support and social media. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 2016;25:113-122
3. Abd-Alrazaq A, Alhuwail D, Househ M, Hamdi M, Shah Z. Top concerns of Tweepsters during the COVID-19 pandemic: Infoveillance study. *J Med Internet Res* 2020;22(4):e19016

**Week 5: Social media & health promotion: opportunities and challenges**

1. Ford E, Curlewis K, Wongkoblap A, Curcin V. Public opinions on using social media content to identify users with depression and target mental health care advertising: mixed methods survey. *JMIR Ment Health* 2019;6(11):e12942
2. Hunter RF, Gough A, O'Kane N, et al. Ethical issues in social media research for public health. *AJPH Law & Ethics* 2018;103(3):343-348

**Week 6: Promoting health equity through social media**

1. Bakken S, Marden S, Arteaga S, et al. Behavioral interventions using consumer information technology as tools to advance health equity. *AJPH* 2019;109(S1):S79-S85.
2. Dauphin C, Clark N, Cadzow R, et al. #BlackBreastsMatter: Process evaluation of recruitment and engagement of pregnant African American women for a social media intervention study to increase breastfeeding. *J Med Internet Res* 2020;22(8):e16239

**Week 7: Behavior change theory & digital health**

1. Laranjo L. Social media and health behavior change. In: Syed-Abdul S, Gabarron E, Lau AYS. *Participatory Health through Social Media*. Academic Press; 2016:83-110.

## **Week 8: Optimizing group-based social media interventions**

1. Cugelman B. 2013 Gamification: What it is and why it matters to digital health behavior change developers. *JMIR Serious Games* 2013;1(1):e3.
2. Ramo DE, Meacham M, Thrul J, Belohlavek A, Sarkar U, Humfleet G. Exploring identities and preferences for intervention among LGBTQ+ young adult smokers through online focus groups. *J Adolesc Health* 2019;64:390-397.

## **Week 9: Optimizing public health messaging on social media**

1. Elliott SA, Dyson MP, Wilkes GV, et al. Considerations for health researchers using social media for knowledge translation: Multiple case study. *J Med Internet Res* 2020;22(7):e15121.
2. Yousuf H, Corbin J, Sweet G, et al. Association of a public health campaign about coronavirus disease 2019 promoted by news media and a social influencer with self-reported personal hygiene and physical distancing in the Netherlands. *JAMA Network Open* 2020;3(7):e2014323

## **Week 10: Review & reflection**

*For week 10, there are no assigned readings. Instead, please design a social media intervention targeting health promotion or disease prevention. You will submit a brief written description of your intervention, incorporating what you've learned in the course. A rubric is posted on Canvas.*

## **Course Expectations**

It goes without saying that this year has brought unique challenges for all of us. Students and instructors alike are adjusting to new ways of teaching and learning, plus managing challenges in our personal lives. Classes, including this one, will look different this quarter. I remain committed to providing the opportunity for a valuable, engaging learning experience. In return, I ask that you commit to:

- Thoughtful, respectful, and open discussion of the issues raised in class
- Respecting and honoring the diversity of our group's identities and experiences
- Attending synchronous course sessions and participating actively
- Bringing unexpected challenges to my attention as soon as possible so that we can work through them together

During class discussions, it is important to be engaged. Most people (myself included!) find it easier to be fully present with video enabled. However, I realize this may not be practical for some students. Video presence is strongly encouraged, but not required.

Your well-being is of utmost importance to me. I hope that we can work together to adapt as best as we can. If you have suggestions for how I might support your learning in this course, please do not hesitate to let me know.