Course Syllabus: Dissecting the Complexities of Social Media: From Cyberbullying to Sexting

Number of Credits: 1*

Course Instructors: Cindy Swanson, Becky Smith & Joshua Merritt

Course Description:

Students are using social media in an alarming percentage of their daily activities. Studies show that 75% of youth use some kind of media every day, and over half of children under 10 years old possess smart phones or a tablet. Social media isn't going anywhere soon, so educators are struggling to keep up with the emerging technologies. Additionally, the evolution of technology has taken issues that were once overt and visible in the classroom to the abstract world of online. Teachers must learn to navigate the various scenarios that come with this rise in media and learn to solve problems and apply law when necessary.

This course will introduce educators to the evolving platforms of social media and familiarize them with their use. After studying trends and various media outlets, participants will learn to apply this technology to their classroom and engage students on its use. Additionally, this course will examine the controversial issues associated with social media, including the topics of laws regarding social media, sexting and online harassment.

Activities in this course include the analysis and application of various forms of social media platforms, a study of laws concerning cyber bullying and security, and using learned technology to create a classroom resource that will further engage students in academics.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate deeper knowledge and understanding of the evolving forms of social media and trends in its use
- Evaluate state and local laws on technology use and apply them to real-world scenarios

* Course Requirements:

To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

Other Course Information:

Getting Started

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with log in instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

Participation

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 3 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the "Submit A File" option.
- You may work collaboratively and submit similar responses on all assignments except final projects, which must be individually authored.

INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.

- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

Day	Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
Day 1			
8:00-8:45am	**Discussion:** Introductions – Participants will introduce themselves to the class, and discuss why they are interested in taking the class.	45 minutes	
8:45-10:00am	**Discussion:** What is Social Media and Its Current Trends – Participants will break into small groups and discuss what they believe social media is. They will also discuss how they think it impacts today's interpersonal interactions. They will then discuss as a class similarities and differences in current knowledge.	1 hour 15 minutes	
10:00-11:30am	**Discussion: Detailing a Social Media Platform –** Participants will share what they know about social media platforms with the other members of the course. Participants will discuss their findings together, and fill in any gaps in knowledge of the social media platform they were unaware of.	1 hour 30 minutes	
11:30-12:15pm	**Lunch**		

12:15-1:45pm	**Discussion:** Free Speech & the Internet – Participants will read articles on free speech in schools, and discuss themes of free speech surrounding schools, students, educators and social media.	1 hour 30 minutes	
1:45-2:45pm	**Discussion:** Ethics and Social Media – Participants will read articles on ethics regarding use of social networking and media, then discuss how one can balance harms and benefits of a social media-centric world.	1 hour	
2:45-4:00pm	**Discussion:** Cyberbullying – where does the school yard end? – Participants will dissect the Iowa Code language on cyberbullying, and read articles surrounding the issue of enforcing antibullying policies in a cyber-world. They will then discuss how they would respond to a case of cyberbullying as an educator, or if the law allows for response.	1 hour 15 minutes	
	Research: Final Implementation Preparation – Participants will review outside readings on social media and how the advancement of technology can both positively and negatively impact students. They will prepare to use this information for their Final Implementation Plan, to be turned at the conclusion of the course.		15 hours
Day 2	**Activities/Topics**	In Class	Out of Class
8:00-9:00am	**Discussion: Review and Reflect -** Participants will break into small groups and discuss assigned readings. They will also discuss what they have learned so far from the course, and how they can apply concepts to their classroom	1 hour	
9:00-10:45am	**Discussion:** Sexting – Participants will read on the challenges that schools are navigating with the rise in sexting among students. They will then discuss what the concerns are when it comes to sexting, and how schools should respond.	1 hour 45 minutes	
10:45-12:00pm	**Discussion:** How do we foster an environment of good digital citizenship? – Participants will read articles on the concept of	1 hour 15 minutes	

	digital citizenship. Participants will also watch a TedX Talk on how social media tends to make people less social.		
12:00-12:45pm	**Lunch**		
12:45-1:45pm	**Discussion:** NLRB Ruling & Social Media – Participants will read rulings on cases surrounding educators posting on their personal social media accounts, and where the ability to discipline begins and ends. They will then discuss the rulings, and what they mean for educators using social media.	1 hour	
1:45-2:45pm	**Discussion:** How can digital media support 21st century learning? – Participants will read an article on the challenges of implementing social media in the classroom while keeping lesson plans relevant. They will then discuss what the positive and negative aspects of utilizing social media can be in the classroom.	1 hour	
2:45-4:00pm	**Discussion:** You Don't Have to Be the "Bad-Guy" – Participants will review articles and discuss how to open the conversation with students about safety and social media "smarts." They will then discuss their own experiences, and their thoughts on materials.	1 hour 15 minutes	
	Implementation Plan: Benefits & Challenges Associated with Social Media – Participants will submit a final paper discuss the most important concepts they learned from the course, and what actions or strategies they will implement in their classrooms to reach students.		15 hours
	Total Time	15 hours	30 hours

Coursework

Participants can earn up to 100 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	100
Total	**100**

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (100-80 points)	P
79%-Below (<79 points)	NP

Student Requirements

Students are required to:

- Attend and participate in all in-class activities
- Complete all assigned readings and reflections
- Complete a final assignment

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

Final Assignment (20 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two page final assignment, using information and concepts from in-class discussions as well as reading materials. All sources must be cited in either MLA or APA format; plagiarism will result in a failing grade. This assignment is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Assignment		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	3
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	3
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	3
	Discusses Overall Implications	2
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	2
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	1
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	2
	States resources to be used	2
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	2
Total Points Possible		20