Comm 695 - Critical Issues of Social Networks and Social Capital in an age of Digital Communication

Instructor and Facillitator - Tim Anderson
Office - BAL 3016
Class - Dragas 2118
Meeting Time - 7:10pm-9:50pm
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Course - This course will offer us a chance to discuss questions of social capital and networks, with a focus on digital media and communication. Given the pronounced nature that digital social networking has in many of our daily lives, this seminar asks us to examine how and why we value networks in general and how we use them to generate valuable contacts and opportunites that help us sustain our communities, personal and professional lives. To do so we will look extensively at questions of social networking and social capital in "pre-digital" forms. As such this will be a theory driven seminar where discussion and focus on the texts are fundamental. Throughout we will be performing close, critical reads of the essays and books we engage.

Finally, we will work together in class in a way that leverages digital networks to better generate a classroom knowledge object on social capital that can be shared with the class and others. Although a majority of your grade will come from traditional papers and exams, your online and in-class contributions will help determine your final marks.

Grade

Participation - 15%

Group Work Contributions - 20%

Two Midterms - 30% (2 X 15%)

Final Paper and (Informal Presentation) - 35%

Class Participation

Class participation will be determined by attendance and verbal participation in class. You are allowed about one absence before it takes a marked toll on your grade. Each additional absence will lower your participation grade by two letter grades. Furthermore, simply attending class does not guarantee you a perfect participation grade; you must actually participate in class. Your participation grade will also be lowered if you repeatedly arrive late to or leave early from class.

Group Work - Will be centered around the creation of collective research resources. Each student will be assigned weeks (as determined by any number of variables) and during the week the student publish a story one storify article that draws from the readings and draws from the readings and connects it with either one's research or a relatively recent event(s). Out of this storify article will be the basic justification for building the an online resource that will be both general and specific. Each week a student will lead the class (myself included) for 40 to 50 minutes by distilling that week's readings online (What were the main concepts? How applicable are the concepts to our research? What other resources are available that are mentioned in the text(s)? etc.). To do this the student MUST bring a laptop of table that is able to contribute to the online space. The space is at https://socialnetworkssocialcapitaldigitalmedia.wikispaces.com. Ultimately this will be a resource that we can mine through the semester and longer for our research.

Two Midterms - Both midterms will be take home and allow for collaboration in researching answers. However, all writing should come from each individual. These midterms typically average twelve to fourteen pages, double-spaced and typewrittem. The second midterm will include a first draft of your final research essay. The second essay will be discussed later in the course, however students should be prepared to provide 8-10 pages of writing that includes an annnotated bibliography of major sources, a significant thesis pargrapg and substantial research. Without these elements, the second midterm will be returned with a grade of "fail".

Final paper - The goal of this class is to create a research paper (please note an emphasis on research) that is qualitative in orientation, focused on an aspect of mediated social networking and capital. "Mediation" is, as we conceive of it, a broad concept that includes what we traditionally label media and communication. , but also architecture, city planning, regional planning, the law, policy and so on. Throughout each paper we will focus on these aspects as they fit your research by forwarding a specific thesis about social networking and capital. Finally, the paper should aim to be publishable in its own right. It shoud be noted that while a focus on digital networking is encouraged, it is not the only media you can focus on. This paper should be presented in either a correct MLA or APA format. Please consider adopting EndNote for your work.

Tech needs - 1) One of the following: Laptop, tablet or smartphone with wi-fi capabilitiies. 2) An active Storify account. 3) A dropbox account (if you don't have one I will send you a request to join one) 4) Willingness to edit a wiki.

Readings

Selections from <u>The Gift</u> - Lewis Hyde

Selections from <u>Art Worlds</u> - Howard Becker

Selections from <u>Social Capital</u> - David Halpern

Selections from <u>A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia</u> - Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

Selections from <u>The Life and Death of Great American Cities</u> - Jane Jacobs

<u>Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community</u> - Robert Putnam (ISBN-10: 0743203046)

<u>Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture</u> - Henry Jenkins, et. al. (ISBN-10: 0814743501)

<u>Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings</u> - Charles Kadushin (ISBN-10: 0195379470)

<u>Networks of Outrage and Networks of Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age</u> - Manuel Castells (ISBN-10: 0745662854)

<u>Cognitive Surplus: How Technology Makes Consumers into Collaborators</u> - Clay Shirky (ISBN-10: 0143119583)

<u>A Networked Self: Identity, Community, and Culture on Social Network Sites</u> - Zizi Papacharissi (Editor) (ISBN-10: 0415801818)

Schedule

Week 1 - 8/28 - Meet, discuss - Discuss initial wikipedia entries on Social Capital and Social Networking, think about it's applications.

Begin - "The Forms of Capital" - Bourdieu; Selections from Lewis Hyde's <u>The Gift</u> - Introduction, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Week 2 - 9/4 - What is Social Capital?

Finish Bourdieu and Hyde; Read <u>Social Capital</u> by Halpern Chapter 1 "Introduction: Concepts, History and Measurment"; Begin Chapters from Jane Jacobs - Chaps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Week 3 - 9/11 - Social capital and Social Worlds

Chapters from Jane Jacobs - Chaps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6

Selections from <u>Art Worlds</u> - Howard Becker Chapters 1,2 & 3

Week 4 - 9/18 - Social Capital and Civic Engagement

<u>Bowling Alone</u> - Putnam - Chapters 1-13

Week 5 - 9/25 - No class - Meet with Dr. Anderson to discuss research

Finish Putnam, Catch Up and begin <u>Understanding Social Networks</u> - Kadushin

First Midterm on questions of Social Capital due on 9/27 at 5pm in my box at tjanders@odu.edu

Week 6 - 10/2 - What is a social network?

Finish <u>Understanding Social Networks</u> - Kadushin

Week 7 - 10/9 - Re-envisioning Communities and Social Movements

"The Rhizome" - Deleuze and Guattari and <u>Networks of Outrage and Networks of Hope</u> - Castells

Week 8 - 10/16 - New Media, New Values and New Valuations, Part One

Portions of Anderson manuscript - <u>Popular Music in a Digital Music Economy: Problems and Practices for a Service Industry</u> and begin <u>Spreadable Media</u> Chapters Introduction, 1, 2 & 3

Week 9 -10/23 - New Media, New Values and New Valuations, Part Two

Finish <u>Spreadable Media</u> Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and Conclusion

Second Midterm/First Draft of final paper on 9/25 at 5pm in my box at tjanders@odu.edu

Week 10 - 10/30 - Considering Collective Epistemologies, Captal and Cognitive Surpluses

<u>Cognitive Surplus</u> - Shirky

Week 11 - 11/6 - Identities and Actions in Online Social Networking Environments, Part One

<u>A Networked Self</u> Chapters Introduction, 1, 2, 3, & 4

Week 12 - 11/13 - Meet with Dr. Anderson and catch up

Week 13 - 11/20 - Identities and Actions in Online Social Networking Environments, Part Two

 <u>A Networked Self</u> Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and Conclusion

Week 14 - 11/27 - Thanksgiving Break - No Class

Week 15 - 12/4 - Meet, Discuss and Informally Present Your Papers with a Potluck! (Final Paper Due on 12/6 by 5pm)