Article

Librarian as Professor of Social Media Literacy

Laurie M. Bridges
Oregon State University Libraries

Abstract

Many high school teachers are prohibited from interacting with students in social media sites despite the fact that the majority of teenagers actively use them. The first opportunity most students have to interact with instructors in an online environment is in higher education. University and college librarians can take the lead in providing social media literacy instruction by developing courses and workshops using the Information Literacy Competency Standards developed by ACRL. This article discusses the development and instruction of a freshmen orientation course at Oregon State University titled *Social Media: A Life Lived Online.*

Social media permeates the lives of most young adults in the United States. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 73% of teenagers use online social networking sites (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). It is a staggering number when one considers that most social networking sites have been in existence for fewer than 10 years. Facebook, for example, was launched in 2004 and Twitter was launched in 2006. Young adults and teenagers are online and using these sites on a daily basis, but who is teaching them the skills they need to be critical consumers of social media?

I began to consider this question in 2009, after I delivered two keynote presentations about social media to high school teachers. The topic of social media, in particular online social networking, was viewed with trepidation and the teachers were especially leery of "friending" students on Facebook. Their hesitancy is warranted because many K-12 schools throughout the country have social media policies that restrict student and teacher interaction on social media sites. Recently, the state of Missouri went so far as to enact a law requiring school districts to implement social media policies about student and teacher interactions online (Preston, 2011).

While high school teachers might not be able to engage with their students online due to legal barriers and district policies, university faculty and librarians do not face the same hurdles. We can interact in virtual spaces with students at the tail-end of their teenage years—the first opportunity most students have to engage with instructors about social media sites from within the sites themselves. Among university faculty, librarians are uniquely situated with a strong foundation in information literacy to guide and instruct students in becoming critical consumers of social media.

Undergraduate Orientation Course

In the spring of 2010, an email invitation was distributed to all Oregon State University (OSU) faculty from the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Success and Engagement, Susie Brubaker-Cole. It stated:

> We are currently soliciting interest from faculty to serve as instructors for one of the thirty sections of the 'U-Engage' freshman transition/orientation course to be offered in fall 2010. U-Engage sections are two-unit, interactive classes of 25 first-quarter freshmen. Instructors will design their sections around a set of broad shared learning goals adapted to a concept or theme in their area of interest, research, or teaching passion.

This provided an opportunity to teach a freshman orientation course about social media using an information literacy framework.

Prior to teaching the U-Engage course, my experience speaking and writing about social media was varied, but my audience was the same—high school and university faculty and staff. In addition to the high school speaking engagements mentioned earlier, I also presented at several national library conferences, wrote a book chapter about how and if university-level faculty should connect with students on Facebook (Bridges, 2009) and co-authored a popular library blog, *infodoodads*, about emerging Web social media tools. Although I had delivered these presentations and written about social media for my peers, I had not been able to engage with undergraduate students about the same topic. The opportunity to teach a for-credit course about a popular topic such as social media presented one way to have ongoing conversations with undergraduate patrons and, more broadly, to raise the profiles of librarians as faculty members and information literacy experts.

Titled *A Life Lived Online: Social Media,* the class I designed and taught was described in the University's 2010 promotional material for incoming freshmen as follows:

> This course requires active participation of students and a willingness to immerse in online social media. Using a variety of social media tools and drawing on theoretical literature about community, place, and self the class members and instructor will communicate weekly face-to-face and daily on Twitter. At the conclusion of the course, students will have an idea of how social media may affect them and society now and in the future.

A lengthier online course description from a communications class taught by Lonny Brooks at the University of California, East Bay helped in crafting my ALS199 class description (2011).

Social Media Literacy Defined

In this article, when discussing social media literacy, I will not argue that current definitions or frameworks of information literacy need to be abandoned, nor will I suggest a new term in lieu of information literacy. Instead, I will consider social media literacy as one form of information literacy within almost any of the current definitions or frameworks of information literacy used by librarians.

In higher education, librarians often rely on the Information Literacy Competency Standards developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) when creating a framework for teaching information literacy (2000). According to the standards, an information literate student is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

The report created by ACRL describes in detail five standards. Standard number four is especially relevant to social media literacies, "The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose." Although the ACRL standards were developed and finalized in 2000, they are still sufficient for discussing social media literacy. In my opinion, social media literacy is one form of literacy under the information literacy umbrella.

It is important to note that in the Fall of 2010, while I was teaching the social media course, EDUCAUSE Review published an article by Howard Rheingold titled *Attention, and other 21st-Century Social Media Literacies.* At the time of its publication, it received considerable blog and Twitter attention, was forwarded to me by several colleagues, and was ultimately named one of the top 10 EDUCAUSE Review articles of 2010 (EDUCAUSE, 2011).

The article's popularity highlights the heightened interest in social media instruction and the dearth of available literature on the topic. Rheingold is a social media scholar and instructor at the University of California Berkley and Stanford. In the article, Rheingold discusses five "social media literacies:"

(1) attention: the ability to identify when focused attention is required and to recognize when multitasking is beneficial;

(2) participation: more than consumers, participants actively participate—knowing when and how to participate is important;

(3) collaboration: participants can achieve more by working together than they can working alone;

(4) network awareness: an understanding of social and technical networks;

(5) critical consumption: identifying trustworthiness of the author or text

Although the article was published after I had developed the curriculum for my class, all five literacies provide a useful framework for developing future social media curriculum (Rheingold, 2010).

Developing a Curriculum

The theme for the class was social media; therefore I wanted to use a social networking site as the main communication tool between students and myself when we were outside the classroom. The first decision I made regarding the curriculum was to use Twitter for out-of-class communications. I made this decision by process of elimination. I was reluctant to use Facebook for the freshmen class because I did not want to require students to "friend" me and thereby reveal their profile information, which often includes photos and wall posts from friends, and other personal information they might be hesitant to share with an instructor. In 2009, I wrote a book chapter about faculty and student interaction on Facebook that outlined previous research on the topic. In the chapter I concluded that faculty should not search out students on Facebook, but "…instead, wait for them to invite you to be their 'friend'" (Bridges, 2009, p. 133).

Twitter was the second most popular social networking site in 2010 (BBC News). Despite the fact that Twitter received a lot of popular press and media attention, young adults aged 18-24 represented a small minority of users (Pingdom, 2010). As a result, I expected the majority of students in my class would not have a Twitter account. If a student did have a Twitter account he or she could easily create a second account for the purposes of the class. Therefore, I could require the students to use Twitter without invading their privacy. Students were required to "tweet" five times per week for the duration of the course.

After selecting Twitter as a communication tool, the next step was developing a rough outline of the topics I wanted to cover and identifying reading materials and videos for viewing. When a search of the journal literature did not turn up any articles about social media courses, I turned to Google to find online syllabi. I did not find any social media courses taught by librarians, but I did find some online syllabi and lesson plans in other

disciplines that were useful: *Online Social Networks* taught by Fred Stutzman at the University of North Carolina (2009); *Virtual Communities/Social Media* taught by Howard Rheingold at the University of California Berkeley (2008); and *Digital Media Production*, taught by David Silver at the University of San Francisco (2009). The three syllabi together provided an exhaustive list of reading materials from which to choose for my two-credit, quarter-long, freshmen orientation course. After reading and reviewing most of the articles, chapters, and reports, I selected materials I felt would resonate with first-term freshmen. The readings included a few peer-reviewed articles, but most of the readings were from magazines, newspapers, or blog posts.

While I was reviewing the readings from the three syllabi, I was also considering readings from additional sources. One book quickly rose to the top, *The Young and the Digital: What the Migration to Social-Network Sites, Games, and Anytime, Anywhere Media Means for our Future"* (Watkins, 2009) which covered many topics relevant to freshmen, including privacy, gaming, and internet addiction. The book's chapters were short and written in a conversational tone, something I felt would appeal to eighteen and nineteen year old students.

The course spanned ten weeks (OSU runs on the quarter system) and was comprised of eighteen 50-minute class sessions. The class was worth two credits, less than the typical three or four credit classes at Oregon State University. The in-class and out-of-class activities needed to meet the standard requirements of the U-Engage curriculum, while also encompassing the overall theme of social media. What follows is a brief review of the assignments and weekly discussion topics; the complete syllabus can be found in Appendix A. Overarching learning outcomes were developed and assessed by the First-Year Experience program at OSU; I did not develop learning outcomes relating to social media literacy. However, as I discuss later in the article, if I teach this class in the future, I plan to develop and assess learning outcomes for the subject topic of social media.

Course Assignments
- Tweet five times a week for the duration of the course.
- A reflective paper summarizing a presentation given by a University administrator.
- A three-page paper about social media, which includes personal reflections and excerpts from two interviews conducted with two people from different generations.
- A four-page paper on a social media topic covered in class.

Week 1: Community and Ethics
In the first class we worked on establishing a safe community, both online and off. Students generated a list of possible rules to govern their behavior online with their classmates and then voted anonymously in an online survey to ratify their "online social contract" (see Appendix B). Students also set up their Twitter accounts, which spilled over into the second week of class. Students were required to "follow" all their classmates, the graduate peer leader, and me on Twitter.

Week 2: History of the Web
The class reviewed the history of the Web and began reading from the course textbook, *The Young and the Digital* (Watkins, 2009).

Week 3: Virtual Community
We spent part of the week exploring virtual communities associated with Oregon State University. Students conducted a self-assessment of their time spent online over a one-week period. We also used the library meta-search engine provided by Serials Solutions® Summon service to find recent news articles about Twitter.

Week 4: Images, Photos, and the Permanence of Information
The overarching theme for the week was online images. The reference librarian from University Archives visited the class and discussed the Flickr Commons project and historic digital images. We also discussed the permanency of online information, in particular online images. Students began considering how the photos they post today might influence their future job search, both positively and negatively (e.g., giving a presentation with classmates vs. dancing at a party).

Week 5: Identity
I was off-campus attending a library conference and the graduate peer leader, Janice Halka, was the instructor. Janice led the students through activities and discussion about online identity and role performance. (Note: The graduate peer leader assisted in the development of the curriculum, grading, and instruction, in exchange for graduate credit hours.)

Week 6: Privacy
We focused on Facebook, privacy, and terms of service. Students visited a group within Facebook, *People Against the New Terms of Service (TOS),* which had over 148,000 members and contained heated discussions about the topic. Students paired up and identified one comment that intrigued them and then read through the Facebook terms of service to determine if the issue had been resolved or was still a problem.

Week 7: Gaming
During the gaming week we discussed online gaming. Second Life was installed on the classroom computers and students spent a class period setting up accounts and exploring Oregon State University's online "Beaver Island."

Week 8: Internet Addiction
The topic of internet addiction was purposely planned to follow the week about gaming because internet addiction and gaming are often linked in the news. We had a counselor from University Counseling & Psychological Services who specializes in addiction lead the class discussion.

Week 9: Employment
We reviewed job postings with the words "social media" in the job description. Jake Ten Pas, a social media specialist who works for AM:PM PR (a public relations firm in Portland, Oregon) visited the class. He discussed his job and the field of marketing as it relates to social media.

Week 10: The Future
We discussed the future of the Internet and watched portions of the PBS video *Digital Nation* (2010).

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The class convened every Wednesday and Friday for ten weeks and was originally designed to take advantage of the computer lab on Wednesdays with hands-on activities. Friday classes were reserved for large and small group discussions. Much to my disappointment, the students were incredibly hesitant to talk, possibly because it was their first term on campus or because the classroom was much too large for 21 students—either way, their silence made Fridays somewhat slow and painful. On the fifth week of class I was away attending a conference and the graduate peer leader decided to have the students produce an in-class reflection paper on the week's readings and hands-on activities rather than have a discussion. We were surprised when students turned in interesting and thoughtful papers—something that had not been present in the class discussions. We restructured the curriculum to include a weekly in-class writing activity and less discussion.

After our 10-week course concluded I spoke with another OSU librarian, Anne-Marie Deitering, about the difficulties my students had in engaging in classroom discussion. Anne-Marie was able to lend a unique perspective because she taught another U-Engage class the same term, in the same classroom, and on a similar subject—her class was titled "Is Facebook a Noun or a Verb?" She also had experience teaching a non-U-Engage credit course in the same space.

Anne-Marie's students were also reluctant to talk as a group. Upon reflection, she felt there was a combination of factors at play, relating both to the course content and the physical classroom space. First, the library classroom was not designed to support small, discussion-based seminar classes. Its layout and configuration is intended to encourage experiential learning and small group activities. It is very large and computer workstations are spread out in small clusters around the space. When students are at their computers they cannot hear what their classmates are saying if they are using normal conversational tones. Even when the class sits together in one part of the room, the overall space feels cavernous and does not create an intimate feeling that might encourage discussion.

Anne-Marie's second reason relates to the same tension that led me to choose Twitter as my communication tool. In her class, Facebook was the topic of inquiry, and as such, she asked her students to use or analyze Facebook in every class period. Responding

to the research cited above, though, she did not require them to friend each other, or to friend the course instructors. She had taught two previous versions of U-Engage (on topics unrelated to social media) and she expected that her students would use Facebook to connect because previous classes had done so, but to her surprise, that did not happen until the middle of the term, when the first group project was assigned. She theorized that because students had Facebook available to them in every class, they were more engaged with their existing Facebook networks than to the new, potential connections in the class.

Based on my experience and Anne-Marie's insights, I would not teach another first-year orientation course in the Autzen classroom. It does not create the casual and intimate environment that might help foster discussion and communication with students in their first college term.

Another point of interest relates to student use of Facebook in Anne-Marie's class and Twitter in mine. Anne-Marie's students were not required to "friend" each other on Facebook, while my students were required to "follow" each other on Twitter. Neither method seemed to facilitate connections between students that might lead to robust and engaging discussions and conversations in class. Yet, in the future, if I were to teach the class again, I would most likely keep the Twitter requirement based on one telling in-class activity. Early in the term I had students place themselves into one of four groups: Facebook late-adopters; Facebook users who check the site a couple times a week or less; Facebook users who routinely check the site, but not first thing in the morning; and Facebook super-users who check the site first thing in the morning and right before bed. The four students who placed themselves in the late-adopters group had all begun using Facebook only the summer before their first fall-semester at the University. One student said he joined as a way to keep in contact with his high school friends. As the term progressed, I noticed that three out of the four students who were late-adopters had varying levels of difficulty engaging with the topic of social media and were less likely to successfully complete the Tweeting requirement for the course. In addition, I noticed the students who had placed themselves in the super-users group completed the Tweeting requirement successfully and were the most likely to engage in in-class discussions. Later in the term, at the conclusion of the course, I distributed an anonymous survey that simply asked, "Do you feel using Twitter for this class made you feel more 'connected' to your classmates than you otherwise would have felt?" Half of the students replied "yes," while the other half replied "no". Because the survey was anonymous and not correlated with any other information, I can only assume the students who were super-users would have been among those to reply "yes." As a result, in the future I would rewrite the class description to indicate the curriculum is designed for moderate to heavy users of social media—not because late-adopters or infrequent users cannot do the work, but because previous inexperience with Facebook suggests they are not as interested in the topic as super-users.

When the term had concluded and I received the course evaluations I was surprised that many students indicated the class was "not challenging enough." Although at least one article or book chapter was assigned every week, it was obvious that many stu-

dents were not completing the readings, based on in-class discussions and reflective writings. Perhaps the students would have felt more challenged if the class included an ongoing primary-research activity (and fewer readings, which were perceived as optional) or if I had created activities in and out of class that made the readings seem less optional.

If I could turn back the clock, and also have Rheingold's 2010 article in-hand when developing the curriculum, I would intentionally create learning outcomes that relate specifically to the topic of social media literacy. In addition, I would tie each assignment and assessment of those assignments to the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes relating to social media would have helped me in assessing the usefulness of the assignments and the learning that took place in the class.

Conclusion

Many high school teachers face prohibitive legal restrictions and district policies about interacting with students in online environments despite the fact that the majority of students actively use social media sites. When students enter their freshmen year it is usually the first opportunity they will have to interact with instructors within a social media site. Although most students are social media consumers, very few have had scholarly, or even adult, conversations about social and technical networks; critical consumption of social media; multi-tasking vs. focused attention; when and how to participate in online conversations; and the benefits of online collaboration. Librarians are in a unique position, with their extensive knowledge about information literacy and positioning within the university culture, to help students become social media literate.

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Appendix A:

Social Media: A Life Lived Online
ALS 199: U-Engage
Oregon State University, Fall 2010

Text and Readings: Most of the readings for this class are available for free online and links are provided in Blackboard. We will be reading sections of the book "The Young and the Digital". A hardcopy of the book is available on reserve in the library and can be checked out at the circulation desk. If you'd like to purchase the book, it can be found at the OSU bookstore.

U-Engage:
This first year (more specifically, the first term) for college students is a critical time. According to student development theory, the better the integration process a student experiences during their college transition, the more likely they are to be retained. ALS 199: U-Engage was developed to help you with your transition to OSU. U-Engage will provide information about what it means to attend a research university, explore OSU's thematic areas, integrate you as members of our scholarly community, and explore OSU resource options available. We will keep this in mind as we explore our course topic: Social Media.

Learner Outcomes:
By the end of this term, U-Engage students will be able to:
1. Engage in inquiry (including developing a research question; collecting, analyzing and synthesizing information; understanding citations, etc.)
2. Reflect on educational activities to make meaning of learning experiences
3. Practice critical analysis
4. Identify campus resources
5. Develop a sense of belonging and contributing to a diverse community
6. Articulate the role of the OSU Baccalaureate Core
7. Understand the university expectation to be active and self-directed learners

How You Will Learn:
Learner outcomes will be met through tweeting, reading, writing, discussions, self-assessments, and group work.

Course Schedule:

9/29 – Week 1 / Twitter & Our Community
    Wednesday: Introductions and Twitter accounts
    Friday: Discussion about our community; set up social contract.
            REQUIRED WATCHING:

"Evan Williams on Listening to Twitter Users" http://bit.ly/9KChBG (8 minutes)
REQUIRED READING:
"Ethical issues in qualitative research in internet communities" http://bit.ly/b4pizn

10/6 – Week 2 / Twitter, RSS, and the History of the Web
Wednesday: Twitter and RSS feeds
Friday: Discussion about the history of the social web
REQUIRED READING: *The Young and the Digital* p. ix – xxi (introduction) and Chapter 1, "Digital Migration: Young People's Historic Move to the Online World" p. 1-17. These readings are available via Google Books @ http://bit.ly/introyd, in print on reserve at the library circulation desk, and the book can be purchased at the OSU Bookstore.

10/13 – Week 3 / Virtual Communities
Wednesday: Explore virtual communities related to OSU and discuss Fireside Chat questions
Friday: Discussion about virtual communities
REQUIRED WATCHING:
"How Cognitive Surplus Will Change the World." http://bit.ly/d51gjy (13 minutes)
REQUIRED READING:
The Young and the Digital Chapter 3, "The Very Well Connected: Friending, Bonding, and Community in the Digital Age" p. 47-74

10/20 - Week 4 / Online Images and Photos
Wednesday: Online images and Flickr – Guest speaker Tiah Edmunson-Morton
Friday: Discussion about online images, photos, and the permanence of online information
REQUIRED READING:
"Nasty as they want to be: Policing Flickr" http://bit.ly/aYlI8P
"Web Photos that reveal secrets, like where you live" http://bit.ly/nytphoto
"3 Tips for Managing Your Online Reputation" http://bit.ly/chr96P
ASSIGNMENT DUE: SOCIAL MEDIA PAPER

10/27 – Week 5 / Identity
Wednesday: Discussion
Friday: Discussion about online identity construction
REQUIRED READING
"Identity construction in Facebook: Digital empowerment in anchored relationships." http://bit.ly/aEAI5a
"Personal information of adolescents on the internet: A qualitative content analysis of MySpace." http://bit.ly/csKXLe

11/3 - Week 6 / Facebook and Privacy

      Wednesday: Facebook and privacy settings

      Friday: Discussion about online privacy

            REQUIRED READING:

            "Good-Bye to Privacy?" http://bit.ly/9be5JX

            "Why Privacy is Not Dead"

            http://www.technologyreview.com/web/26000/

            "Do You Own Facebook? Or Does Facebook Own You?"

            http://nymag.com/news/features/55878/

11/10 – Week 7 / Gaming

      Wednesday: Explore Second Life

      Friday: Discussion about Gaming

            REQUIRED WATCHING:

            "Gaming can make a better world." http://bit.ly/c8uvNb (20 minutes)

            REQUIRED READING: *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out* Chapter 5, "Gaming" p. 195 – 242

            http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/full_pdfs/Hanging_Out.pdf

11/17 - Week 8 / Homework Tools and Internet Addiction

      Wednesday: Blackboard, The Library, other homework/classwork tools, and the Baccalaureate Core

      Friday: Discussion about internet addiction – with guest Jim Gouveia

            REQUIRED READING:

            The Young and the Digital Chapter 6 "Hooked: Rethinking the Internet Addiction Debate" p. 133-155.

11/24 - Week 9 / Employment

      Wednesday: Social Media as a job! Jake Ten Pas, OSU alumnus, will be coming down from Portland to speak with us about his job in social media. (Here's a little more information about Jake: http://www.ampmpr.com/jake-ten-pas/)

      Friday: **NO CLASS**

12/1 – Week 10 / The Future

      Friday: Discussion about the future of social media

            REQUIRED WATCHING:

            "Digital National: Life on the Virtual Frontier" (90 minutes)

            http://to.pbs.org/95ZwqC

Learner Expectations:

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, ask questions, and respect yourself as well as your fellow classmates. Students are expected to abide by the online social contract established the second day of class.

Assessing What You Have Learned:
ALS 199 is a 2-credit graded course.

5 Tweets a Week	20 points
Class participation (online and/or off)	10 points
Reflective Writing/Fireside Chat Reflection	10 points
Social Media Paper	20 points
Capstone Project	40 points
TOTAL	100 points

Assignments
All assignments must be complete to pass the class.

1. <u>Twitter</u>: You will be required to tweet at least 5 times a week--I suggest you do it daily. Weeks are Sunday – Saturday starting on October 3. Each week is worth 2 points (Please note: If you only tweet 4 times in one week, you lose 2 points from your grade).

2. <u>Fireside Chat/Reflective Writing:</u> You must attend one fireside chat, hosted by the OSU President or other administrator. In class on 10/13 we will work to prepare questions to ask during the chat. You will also need to submit a 1-2 page reflection of your experience by 11/24.

3. <u>Small Scale Assignment:</u> Write a paper reflecting on your *current and past* experiences with online social networking and compare those with two people in another age group (18-35, 36-55, 56+). *Possible* questions to consider for yourself:

   a. How old were you when you signed up for Facebook? Were your parents involved in any way? What's the most positive/negative thing that's happened to you as a result of your involvement on Facebook?

   b. What have your experiences been with Facebook vs. MySpace?

   c. Did you use any social networking sites to help you in your college/university selection process? Describe your experiences.

   d. Have you used Twitter before this class? If so, how have you used it? If not, why not?

   e. Have you used YouTube in the past? If so, for what? Have you ever uploaded a video?

   f. Have you ever used any social media sites to help you with your homework (YouTube, Wikipedia, etc)? If so, how did you use them? Did your high school support or discourage the use of social networking sites?

   g. How have social networking sites strengthened/weakened your offline relationships?

   Possible questions to consider for the two people in two different age groups:

   a. How does he/she use the internet?

   b. Has he/she used any social networking sites and if so, which ones? If not, why not?

   c. How has the internet/social media changed his/her life, if at all?

   d. When does he/she first remember hearing about the internet? Using the internet? Using Social Networking sites?

   NOTE: The paper should be three-pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins and needs to include an introductory paragraph and a conclusion. Create a "narra-

tive" and do not simply list responses to questions. For more information about a "narrative" paper, checkout this quick YouTube video: http://bit.ly/aA2FtH

4.   <u>Final Capstone:</u> Take one of the topics we discussed in class (or suggest another topic, just run it by Laurie) and write a 4-page paper about the topic and your opinions—it should include *at least* two new sources of information (magazine article, journal article, newspaper article, or book). Of course you can include and cite articles we read in class, but these will not count as the two *new* sources.

     a. For those who want more specifics, here are some possible topics:
        i. Online communities verses physical communities: Is one more "real"?
        ii. How is social media influencing traditional journalism?
        iii. Facebook and privacy – should we be concerned?
        iv. Are our brains changing because of the internet?
        v. What are your opinions, and the opinions of professionals, about internet addiction?
        vi. In what ways are social dynamics changing in families because of online communication?
        vii. How has dating changed as a result of online interactions and dating sites?
        viii. What are some predictions for the future of the internet and social networking?
        ix. How does the use of social networking vary by country (compare and contrast 2 countries or more).

     b. If you'd like to suggest an alternative to the capstone paper, please write up your proposal in one to two paragraphs and give it to Laurie or Janice by November 1. Possible projects might include art, computer programming, or original research.

NOTE: The paper should be four-pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins and needs to include an introductory paragraph and conclusion. Page of references is not included in the four pages, but should be included at the end of your paper (either MLA or APA style).

What are we looking for in your assignments?
We expect that you will put some thought into your assignments and that you will critically engage the spirit of the task. Late work is not accepted. All papers should be typed and double-spaced, 12-point font.

Attendance Policy:
Students are expected to attend each lecture and recitation session. There is direct correlation between your presence in this class and the success of this course. Each week represents 10% of the class and a completely new topic. You are expected to attend and participate both in lecture and discussion section. Absences will only be excused for documented illnesses and emergencies—please submit documentation to your instructor. If you need to be absent, you should notify your instructor ahead of time. Missed classes will result in a lower grade.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

"Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term."

EQUALITY STATEMENT:

"The instructors are dedicated to establishing a learning environment that promotes diversity of the student's race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and physical disability. Anyone noticing discriminatory behavior in this class, or if you feel discriminated against, please bring it to the attention of the instructors."

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT:

The instructors will hold you accountable to the highest standards of academic integrity. You should read and understand the policy on academic integrity as published at the OSU website: http://success.oregonstate.edu/study/honesty.cfm

Appendix B

Online Social Contract

Do not post pictures of people in the class (without permission).
No racist or homophobic comments.
Be respectful. (No trash talk. Be kind. Don't be a baby. Don't be mean.)
No inappropriate pictures or comments you may later regret.
Respect each other's personal information.

Note: The online social contract was developed and voted on by the students.

Laurie M. Bridges is Instruction and Emerging Technologies Librarian at Oregon State University Libraries.