School of Informatics and Computing  
Indiana University – Bloomington  
Department of Information and Library Science

Z518 – Communication in Electronic Environments:  
Online Trolling  
Spring 2016

Instructors: Pnina Fichman & Madelyn Sanfilippo  
Day and Time: Tuesdays 1:00-3:45  
Location: LI001  
Contact Information: fichman@indiana.edu or mhomuth@indiana.edu  
Office Hours:  
Pnina Fichman, Room LI 007, Tuesday 4:00 – 5:00 PM or by appointment  
Madelyn Sanfilippo, Room LI034, Tuesday 8:00-10:00 am or by appointment

Introduction and Purpose:  
This course, Communication in Electronic Environments, “examines conceptual perspectives on information in organizations, covering topics such as types of information, information activities, organizational culture and information technology, communication as information flow, obtaining and using information from the environment, managing information in specialized extended communities, and ethical and quality issues. Focus varies by type of community studied.”

This semester the course will focus on online trolling and its perpetrators. As online communities evolved, deviant online behaviors are widely spread. The course aims to allow students to critically examine a common phenomenon in online environments, with which they are likely familiar: trolling. Students will be introduced to theories about why people engage in online deviant behaviors, how communities and individuals interpret and respond to these behaviors, from various points of view. Inconsistencies in dialogues between scholarly literature, popular media, and various social communities will be debated. Students will design a research proposal that will focus on the relationships between online trolling and its perpetrators and individuals, communities, and society at large.

Course Objectives:  
By the end of this course, students will be able to:  
1. Choose a theoretical approach that can inform the study of online trolling  
2. Identify specific research gaps  
3. Develop a research proposal on online deviant behavior  
4. Identify and challenge assumptions underlying scholarly, media, and social narratives about online deviant behaviors;  
5. Evaluate and interpret what motivations may underlie particular behaviors and what the objectives of particular actions might be; and  
6. Develop recommendations for management of online communities.
Assignments:

Grades for this course will be based on a combination of written assignments, presentations, and participation during sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Portion of Final Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete CITI Human Subjects Certification</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>February 2, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>February 23, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>April 26, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>April 5, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>April 12, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>April 26, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead 2 Class Discussions</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing basis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading, attendance and participation:

Readings are available on the course site on Canvas and students are expected to read all the assigned articles prior to each class. Attendance is very important and will affect grades in this course. Students must notify the instructor in advance, if they are unable to attend a session. One absence will not negatively impact a students’ final grade, however multiple absences will be noted in participation grades. Participation will be assessed both in class and online. Students are expected to submit comments or questions for discussion for all class sessions for which readings are assigned.

Case study
The case study assignment will provide an opportunity for students to analyze specific instances of trolling. Detailed guidelines will be distributed, along with the case, two weeks prior to the due date.

Research proposal and presentation:
Each student will be expected to develop a research proposal as a final course project. In order to prepare for this, CITI certification for human subjects research must be completed within the first four weeks of the semester. During the second week of class, expectations and students’ areas of interest will be discussed. During week 12, a draft proposal is due; at that time each student will peer review another student’s draft proposal (peer review is due by week 13). A written paper is due at the end of the semester, the content of which will be formally presented during the last week of class. Presentations will be approximately 20 minutes. Additional details will be provided, including rubrics.

Leading class discussions:
Each student will be expected to lead discussion in class on two papers throughout the semester. Students will select these papers during the first session. Students will discuss the research presented within the paper, offer discussion questions to promote analysis among other students,
and provide examples relating to concepts analyzed within the paper. Presentations should last 30 minutes.

Note:
All assignments are due electronically on Canvas, by the start of class on the assigned day. Grades will be reduced by half a letter grade for each day that an assignment is late.

Honor Code:

"Individual rights are best protected by a collective commitment to mutual respect. We have a social contract with each other. Without this contract and without these obligations and responsibilities, personal rights are jeopardized. Our responsibilities and obligations to one another preserve our individual rights and freedoms and promote our collective values. For these reasons, this Code was created with an expectation that each student will commit to carrying out the following responsibilities:

1. To be ethical in his or her academic work.
2. To take responsibility for what he or she says and does.
3. To behave in a manner that is respectful of the dignity of others, treating others with civility and understanding.
4. To use University resources and facilities in appropriate ways that respect the rights of other users.

To facilitate meeting these responsibilities, every student is expected to be familiar with the contents of this Code." (The full Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct is available at: http://dsa.indiana.edu/Code/)

Course Schedule & Reading Assignments:

All required readings are available through OnCourse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic and Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 12, 2016</td>
<td><strong>Week 1: On trolls and trolling (Concepts and Behaviors)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Milner, R. M. (2013). Hacking the social: Internet memes, identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month, Day</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suhay, E. (2013). The polarizing effect of incivility in the political
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26, 2016</td>
<td>Week 15: Final Presentations</td>
<td>Research Proposal Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommended books (optional):

Phillips, W. (2015). *This is why we can't have nice things: Mapping the relationship between online trolling and mainstream culture*. MIT Press.
Indiana University
Classroom Emergency Preparedness

Course Name: _Z518: Communication in Online Environments_____ Room Number:_LI001__________

On the first day of every semester:
• Know the emergency exits and evacuation areas for every classroom.
• Devise "buddy systems" so that everyone is accounted for in an evacuation.
• Evaluate the challenges that you might face during an evacuation.
• Be personally prepared for an emergency: http://protect.iu.edu/emergency

Emergency Communication
Campus emergency communication is done via a voice message, text and/or an email through IU Notify. Go to One to review your contact information. See more information about IU Notify at: http://protect.iu.edu/emergency/iunotify
Faculty – designate IU Notify monitor for each class. Self/Student

Fire
• When you see smoke or fire, immediately evacuate the building.
• If not already activated, pull the fire alarm switch to alert others of the situation.
• Use a fire extinguisher only if you know how to use it and the fire is small.

Evacuations – Drills or real
• You may not know if this is a drill or not, so take every call to evacuate seriously.
• Take your personal belongings and immediately leave the building.
• Know where the evacuation area is for every building you are in.
• Leave the campus only if instructed.

FOR THIS CLASS, the closest exit is:
Front entrance to Wells Library, adjacent to classroom.

We will meet at:
Top of steps leading from Wells Library to 10th St.
Earthquake
If it is severe enough to move furniture, DROP, COVER and HOLD ON: Immediately seek shelter (under a desk or table, if possible) cover your head and hold on. Evacuate if directed, or you feel it is safe to do so.

Severe Weather
Thunderstorms are the most common type of severe weather in the Bloomington area. However, winter storms, extreme hot/cold temperatures, flooding, and tornadoes can occur.
- Seek shelter indoors in a low part of the building
  (Maps w/shelter locations are located throughout the building)
- Move to a windowless interior room away from hazardous materials
- Monitor http://iub.edu/ and local media
- Take cover under a sturdy object or against an interior wall
- Wait for the all clear before leaving your safe space

FOR THIS CLASS, the closest shelter location is:

Faculty Bathrooms on ground floor of Wells Library.

Violence/Active Shooter
There may be situations where it is imperative that you seek shelter and not leave the building.
- RUN – if a safe path is available. Always try to escape or evacuate if possible.
- Call IUPD (812-855-4111) or 911 when it is safe to do so
- If evacuation is not possible, HIDE in a concealed location, Lock and/or barricade the door, Turn off the lights, stay quiet and silence your cell phone
- FIGHT – as a last resort, working together or alone, act with aggression; use improvised weapons to disarm the shooter. Commit to taking the shooter down.
- See the video at http://protect.iu.edu/police/active-shooter

Additional course-specific safety information:
For more information, ask your instructor, and go to http://protect.iu.edu