

# **How to Integrate Social Media in IS Curriculum, Especially for a Small IS Program?**

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## **Abstract**

Social media (or social networks) is ubiquitous, many people have accounts in social media websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, or Snapchat. Corresponding to this trend of using social media, researchers investigated how to make effective use of social media in business, and educators started to integrate social media into their curriculum designs. For example, AMCIS has dedicated a track to social media research since 2014. From the curriculum design perspective, some disciplines have actively integrated social media into their curriculums. For example, University of California at San Diego dedicates a whole course to social media in Marketing, School of Journalism and Mass Communication at University of Wisconsin-Madison offers a course on social media and journalism. Some IS programs have also actively integrated social media into their curriculums by offering business analytics courses, which usually include web mining (including mining the social media data) as an important component. For example, business analytics courses are offered at University of Arizona (UofA), and University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin) in U.S., University of Calgary and York University in Canada. In the case of UofA and UT Austin, they have very large IS programs with faculty members and students who are strong for programming skills. In the case of Calgary and York, they offer the programs in collaboration with statistics and/or computer science departments.

However, for small IS programs with only undergraduate programs, how to integrate social media into curriculums can be a challenge. Offering a business analytics course with data mining as UofA or UT-Austin is not practical, since only a small number of students have the necessary programming skills to take courses of data analytics. There are two ways to integrate social media into the IS curriculum: teaching social media as a component in the entry/introductory level class and teaching social media as a separate elective course for all business students without programming component.

For the entry level IS course, we plan to use two or three class periods to discuss social media including but not limited to: a review of what research has been done in this field from the perspective of findings that are relevant to business, a discussion on how social media impacts businesses and societies, and a group assignment for students (e.g., selecting a local business and design a social media strategy for that business). For a separate course that can be offered to all business students, we plan to have three major modules: using social media, security/privacy issues of using social media, managing social media at personal level and organizational level.

The reason that we would like to present our idea in TREO talk track instead of the IS curriculum track is that our ideas of an entire course of social media is still an idea, not a detailed course plan. We will present our findings of existing curriculum designs about social media, our ideas of this new course, and hear the feedback from the IS community. We welcome feedbacks, suggestions, and potential collaboration opportunities for co-developing such a course.