

TECH3022-18 Social Media Practice

Workshop Eight: Engaging with People

1 Activity - Coursework B Planning

- Visit the DMU Commons Wiki and access the assignment briefs for Coursework B & C
- https://wiki.our.dmu.ac.uk/w/index.php/TECH3022_Social_Media_Practice#Assessment
- Working in a small group, look through the assessment criteria (i.e. how you will be marked) and note any issues that you need further clarification about.
- Note these issues and discuss them in your group. If you need further clarification discuss the issue with your tutor.
- Look at the examples of work that was undertaken by learners in previous years.
- https://wiki.our.dmu.ac.uk/w/index.php/TECH3022_Social_Media_Practice#Research_Planning
- Identify and note something that interests you about any of these particular projects?
- If you want to devise an alternative project, what would it consist of?
- If you want to adapt an existing project, how will you go about developing it?
- Coursework B asks you to identify an issue of social need that you can use your project to address.
- Discuss in your group what issues of social need you are drawn to and would like to explore.
- Open a thread on DMU Talk (<https://talk.our.dmu.ac.uk>). Using the TECH3022 Social Media Project category, write a brief description of what type of activity you are interested in and what issue of social need you think this will address.
- Include links, screen-grabs, images, or other media in your post.
- Read through the posts that other users have added to this topic and see if there is anything similar that you can learn from or that you might distance yourself from in order to make your project idea more distinctive.
- Over the coming week you can engage in discussion with other DMU Talk participants, and develop your ideas.
- At the end of this workshop you will have formed your group, so being ready with ideas and research will be essential.

2 Activity - Ethnographic Principles

- Working in a group or pairs, and focussing on the potential examples of online discussion of your chosen topic, use the following framework of questions to evaluate what you will be looking for online.
- Make notes of your observations of each of the following sets of questions.

2.1 In what way would you say that you will be:

- Immersed in a setting?
- Acting as a participant?
- Listening to what you are being told?
- Recording observations in our journal?
- Reflecting on our own experiences?

2.2 Online Communities

- To what extent will you be able to describe the sites that you are observing as a 'community'?
- In what way can you describe how people meet in these virtual spaces?
- How do the people that you interact with extend their engagement beyond the virtual spaces?
- How does the internet differ in the way that it locates the experience of the people you are observing?

2.3 Community Accomplishment

- How is the sense of community that is gained online by the participants articulated and accomplished?
- Is this sense of community more significant than other forms of community?
- What are the familiar places that people adhere to online?
- What is the form of the culture that people are expressing with their online interactions?

2.4 Cultural Markers

- What would you say are the markers that signify the connections that are undertaken in these communities?
- Is there a difference between the different types of sites that people use?
- What do the respondents and participants in these virtual communities describe as their 'lived experience'?

- How are these experiences represented in multimedia images and audio content?

2.5 Rituals & Norms?

- What are the ritualistic aspects of people interacting in their virtual communities?
- How do people behave online?
- What are the expressions of identity that people present and articulate?
- How do people manage their expectations about their roles?
- How do respondents use language to express their ideas?
- How do virtual communities organise and manage themselves?
- Are these linguistic systems, norms, actions and identities distinctive to online groups, and online communications?
- Are they taught? Are they common to some groups and not to others?
- Are they common to some media and not to other?

3 Discussion – Sharing Your Insight

- Using the whiteboard, present a short ad-hoc summary of your groups chosen topic area.
- Identify the issues that you have discussed in the sections above, and how they relate to your topic.
- What will be your approach to gathering information and data about these topics?
- What will be your approach to interacting with people who are involved in these discussions?

4 Activity – Wiki Research: Generic Social Processes

- Working in your group, discuss the following questions, and note some initial thoughts about how you might collect this information?

4.1 Can you describe how people acting online will:

- Participate in the observed situations?
- Engage in the subcultural life-worlds?
- Form and coordinating associations?
- How are these accomplishments managed simultaneously and concurrently?

4.2 Generic Social Processes - Perspectives

How do people acting online:

- Acquire their perspectives?
- Achieve their sense of identity?
- Undertake actions and tasks, such as performing their activities, influencing others, making commitments?
- Develop their relationships?
- Experience a sense of emotional connection or disconnection?
- Achieve fluency in the way that the communicate?

4.3 Generic Social Processes - Expressions

In what way are you being attentive to these processes and the range of expressions and dealings that people undertake in their virtual communities?

4.4 Generic Social Processes - Lifeworlds

What are the practical steps involved in:

- Attending to the life worlds or subcultural realms that *the participants* distinguish?
- Establishing intimate familiarity with those participating in these life-worlds?
- How can we acknowledge and identify the situated and emergent interlinkages, disjunctures, and irrelevancies that people experience in the course of conducting their affairs?

4.5 Generic Social Processes - Participation Settings

- How do we separate out the aspects of people experience that overlap?
- How do we separate out the multiple realms of involvement?

4.6 Grounding in Fieldwork

- In our descriptive accounts, how do we ground the field knowledge that we obtain?
- How do we recognise and account for the meanings that people ascribe to their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world?
- How do we account for the role of the researcher in collecting and recording the data based on participation?
- How do we account for our choices in selecting a field site?
- How do we describe the processes and the meanings that we encounter?
- How can we use images and descriptions to account for the meanings we encounter?
- What are the processes that we are concerned with?

4.7 Reporting and Assessing Social Media Usages

In what way are the sites that we have chosen to examine:

- A social world?
- Constituted through the use of language?
- Governed by assumed rules and terms of engagement?
- Who wins and who loses in these engagements?
- Who are insiders and who are outsiders?
- To what extent can online data be treated as social act?
- To what extent are these acts possible to understand within their context?
- How do we account for the ways these acts and social interaction overlap in different communities?

4.8 Computer Aided Research

To what extent are you using software to:

- Record fieldnotes?
- Correct, extend, editing, or revise fieldnotes?
- Store texts?
- Organising texts?
- Search and retrieve texts and make them available for inspection?
- Connect relevant data segments to each other, forming categories, clusters, or networks?
- Write reflective commentaries or 'memos' on the data as a basis for deeper analysis?
- Perform content analysis by counting frequencies, sequences, or locations of words and phrases?
- Displaying selected data in a reduced, condensed, organised forms, such as in a matrix?
- Aide in conclusion-drawing, interpretation, confirmation and verification?
- Building theory by developing systematic, conceptually coherent explanations of findings?
- Create diagrams or graphical maps that depict findings or theories?
- Prepare interim and final reports?

4.9 Connection with People

- How are we connecting with people?
- What forms of involvement, engagement, contact, interaction, communion, relation, collaboration and connection is being undertaken?
- How do we know that there are people at the other end?

4.10 Organisation

- How organised do we need to be to collect data?
- What will help us to be more methodical and systematic about data collection?

4.11 Online-Offline Relationships

- How can we interview people online?
- What kind of questions might we ask about people experiences?
- What sort of interactions are we looking for?
- What sort of activities are we looking for?

4.12 Interviewing

- How are you tracking your interactions online?

- What form is your journal taking?
- Are you keeping a diary of your interactions?
- How are you reflecting on your experience?

4.13 Participation

- How do people's experiences and the meanings that they apply to them differ and change over time and in different circumstances?
- How can we account for the shared meanings that are borne by participants, and are enacted through rituals and other behaviours?

4.14 Reflection

- How will we reflect on our experiences?
- How will we know that we are able to faithfully recall these experiences?
- How will we be able to offer insights into the forms of online culture that we encounter?

4.15 Ethnographic Process

- What will we do with the data we collect?
- How will we compare it?
- How will we check it?
- How will we manage ideas that emerge from the experiences we describe?

5 Activity – Blogging & Wiki Reflection Coursework B

- Visit the assessment criteria for Coursework B.
- https://wiki.our.dmu.ac.uk/w/index.php/TECH3022_Research_Planning_2017-18
- How will you write-up your research activities in your blogs, so that they illustrate and demonstrate the thinking, researching and planning that you are undertaking?
- What process of evaluation do you need to undertake to understand how the planning for the TECH3022 research project is proceeding?
- How will you undertake these evaluation tasks?
- How will you share your thoughts and insight about the principles you have established for the development of the expo?
- How will you keep a check of your progress?
- Are there any resources or support that you need to help along the way?
- What are your thoughts and feelings about this project and how it is being developed?
- What do you think will be a useful measure of success?

6 References:

- Bauman, Z., & May, T. (2001). *Thinking Sociologically* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hine, C. (Ed.). (2005). *Virtual Methods - Issues in social Research on the Internet*. Oxford: Berg.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography - Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. London: Sage.