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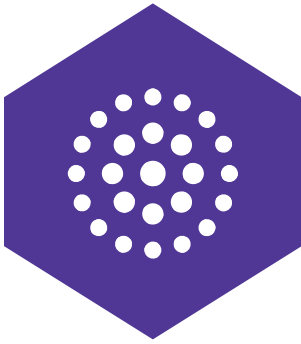# ExperientialLearning@SocialMedia.edu: Using the Tech Start-Up Concept to Train, Engage, and Inform Students

Stephanie J. Coopman, *San José State University*
Ted M. Coopman, *San Jose State University*

Ubiquitous Learning

An International Journal

ExperientialLearning@SocialMedia.edu

Using the Tech Start-Up Concept to
Train, Engage, and Inform Students

STEPHANIE J. COOPMAN AND TED M. COOPMAN

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ExperientialLearning@SocialMedia.edu: Using the Tech Start-Up Concept to Train, Engage, and Inform Students

Stephanie J. Coopman,[1] San José State University, USA
Ted M. Coopman, San José State University, USA

Abstract: Undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in an upper-division online experiential learning course organized as a technology company start up at a public university in the US. Students participated in an academic department's social media team, publishing a weekly newsletter and producing and curating content for multiple social media outlets designed for public and university audiences, a website for the department's students, and a career portal. Responses to survey questions provided support for Experiential Learning Theory's cyclical learning model. In addition, students viewed the entrepreneurial approach to the team as both liberating and challenging as they engaged with each other and the communities in which they were embedded. Although communication with their student supervisors, faculty supervisor, and other team members contributed to their positive evaluation of their learning experience, the tech start-up approach of task autonomy was the most important factor. Students came to recognize and embrace the multifaceted nature and ubiquity of learning opportunities. In addition, they developed key transferable skills, including effective writing, social media literacy, critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, decision making, self-management, and leadership.

Keywords: Online Experiential Learning, Social Media, Pedagogy

Introduction

Of the 7.676 billion people on this planet in 2019, 3.484 billion, or 45%, are active users of social media (Newberry 2019). Currently in the US, a majority of Americans use YouTube (73%) and Facebook (68%), with 18–24 year olds connecting on those traditional social media (Facebook 94%, YouTube 80%), but also relying heavily on Snapchat (78%) and Instagram (71%) as their favorite ways to network online (Smith and Anderson 2018). With the popularity of social media, it is no surprise that university instructors view these communication tools as holding tremendous potential for enlivening long-established pedagogy. For our research, we combined this interest in social media as a teaching tool with an experiential approach to learning. Rather than using social media as a way to deliver course content and promote classroom interaction, social media became the mechanism for students to produce content and interact with the larger campus community. That is, we took lessons learned from integrating social media in the college classroom to provide a venue for students to apply programmatic learning outcomes in an experiential setting.

In this essay, we first present previous research on the use of social media in the college classroom and on experiential learning. Second, we explain our ongoing innovative project in which students implement and manage a university unit's social media strategy. Third, we outline the study's methods and results. Last, we discuss implications and practical applications for merging social media and experiential learning in higher education.

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[1] Corresponding Author: Stephanie J. Coopman, 1 Washington Square, Department of Communication Studies, San José State University, San José, CA, 95192-0112, USA. email: stephanie.coopman@sjsu.edu

COMMON GROUND

Social Media in the College Classroom

In a recent survey of more than 300 higher education instructors from around the globe, Gruzd et al. (2018) found that study participants used a wide range of social media, including blogs, wikis, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. Respondents cited six primary reasons for using social media for instruction: engaging students, organizing materials, engaging students with outside resources, community building, stimulating interest in content, and charting a path for students to find resources. The researchers argue these reasons reflect three broad elements of learning theory: connecting classroom concepts to lived experiences, discovering resources outside the traditional classroom, and facilitating collaborative learning.

Instructors' motivations for using social media in the classroom appear to work in practice. For example, in their study of more than 700 students in five Malaysian universities, Al-Rahmi et al. (2018) found the use of social media increased collaboration in students' group work and engagement with the course material, indirectly improving students' perceived learning performance. Chugh and Ruhi's (2018) review of twenty-five empirical research articles revealed that, as a pedagogical tool, Facebook increased student-student and instructor-student interactions, facilitated students' collaborative efforts, resulted in greater satisfaction with the course, and improved student retention. Students also reported that using Facebook for class was convenient and encouraged them to participate in online class discussion. In addition, Facebook use related to a specific program or major can enhance the connections students feel to peers and the university. Similarly, Guo, Shen, and Li (2018) found that for students enrolled in an online introductory information technology (IT) course, integrating Facebook improved instructor-student interaction, lowered course failure rates, and increased student performance in the course.

The use of social media in the college classroom also offers a way to break down barriers between students. In Bharucha's (2018) year-long study of more than 500 business students in India, the ability to participate in classes using social media on mobile phones bridged traditional socioeconomic gaps. In addition, students created peer communities that crossed classroom and identity group boundaries. As part of the Nobel Peace Prize Learning Project, Carmichael and Norvang (2014) erased international lines by using Facebook to connect students in Norway, South Africa, and the US to discuss global citizenship and sustainable peace. Several peace-focused group projects spontaneously emerged from the discussions, including a Facebook page and website, artwork, a short documentary, and a music video.

Teaching with social media has its drawbacks. Chugh and Ruhi's (2018) review found that instructors may dominate social media postings and students may take a more passive rather than active role in initiating online conversations. In addition, information from other sources and advertisements can prove distracting. Students also expressed privacy concerns when using Facebook for a class. For instance, instructors and classmates could unintentionally reveal information they had meant to share only with family and friends. In their focus group discussion with university students, Waycott et al. (2017) found students varied in how comfortable they were sharing their schoolwork with classmates on social media. Students were especially cognizant of how their class assignments might impact their online identity, taking great care in how they represented themselves through their coursework. In similar focus group interviews with undergraduates at a Midwestern US university, Chromey et al. (2016) found that students viewed social media platforms as inappropriate for classroom use when they were inconvenient to use, assignments were graded, personal information was not kept private, and participation was required. Participants expressed particular concern with the use of social media in the classroom blurring the boundary between their personal and professional lives. Finally, within the larger campus community, the use of social media for cyberbullying and anonymous threats can have negative impacts (Luker and Curchack 2017; Reynolds et al. 2017).

Experiential Learning as High Impact Practice

Although experiential learning in its current educational applications derives from scholarly work in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Keeton 1976; Cooper 1979; Byrne and Wolfe 1980; Kolb 1984), its roots extend much farther back in history. Aristotle, whose writings still influence the communication and related disciplines today, also weighed in on how humans learn. In Book II of *The Nichomachean Ethics*, he wrote:

> Of all the things that come to us by nature we first acquire the potentiality and later exhibit the activity….For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them, e.g. [women and] men become builders by building and lyre-players by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts (Aristotle 2006, 56).

Aristotle was not writing about experiential learning per se, yet his observation that learning involves first knowing about something and then trying it out points to a fundamental practice in human behavior.

Experiential learning as it is formulated today builds on Aristotle's linear model to present a more transactive one. First outlined by Kolb (1984), Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) differentiates a more practice-based approach to learning from traditional classroom perspectives. As A. Kolb and D. Kolb explain, "ELT is a dynamic, holistic theory of the process of learning from experience and a multi-dimensional model of adult development. The dynamic view of learning is based on a learning cycle driven by the resolution of the dual dialectics of action/reflection and experience/abstraction" (2017, 11). Integrating the action/reflection and experience/abstraction dialectics identifies four points in the experiential learning process: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Key to the theory is a constructivist perspective on learning in which students identify how new knowledge connects with what they already know (Baker, Robinson, and Kolb 2012). ELT posits that all experiential learning creates a space for students to experience (concrete experience), reflect (reflective observation), think (abstract conceptualization), and act (active experimentation). Kolb (2015) describes that space as promoting:

- *Engagement in the learning cycle* where students feel free to express and apply the information they're taking in.
- *Respect for learners and their experience* and welcoming them to the learning space.
- *Starting the learning journey with the learner's experience of the subject matter* and valuing students' experiences related to the topic.
- *A hospitable space for learning* that simultaneously challenges and supports students.
- *Conversational learning* that involves both listening and speaking.
- *Development of expertise* and application of transferable knowledge and skills.
- *Inside-out learning* that taps into students' intrinsic motivations for learning.
- *Learners taking charge of their own learning* and preparing them for lifelong learning.

Research has identified both short-term and long-term effects of experiential learning on students. For example, a longitudinal study of more than 2,000 graduating seniors in a private liberal arts university in the US found that experiential learning, such as studying abroad, completing an internship, and participating in undergraduate research, improved students' writing skills, deepened their connections to the community and campus, and enhanced their relationships with faculty and administration (Coker et al. 2017). Analyzing data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, and Pascarella (2015) conducted a longitudinal study of more than 1,800 students who participated in experiential learning programs such as internships, study abroad, and undergraduate research. The results

3

revealed that such programs improved students' intercultural effectiveness and increased their commitment to socially responsible leadership.

In a case study of fifty health science students who completed projects for an external organizational partner as part of an innovation and project management course, students reported feeling more motivated, confident, and professional as a result of their experience (Ramsgaard and Christensen 2018). Applying experiential learning to four sections of an entrepreneurship course in a Brazilian university, Krakauer, Serra, and De Almeida (2016) found that students felt more committed to and empowered in the course than in a more traditional classroom format. Similarly, residential interior design students who completed projects for a nonprofit organization reported a deeper connection to their profession, greater commitment to their community, and enhanced critical thinking skills (Gomez-Lanier 2016).

Perrin (2014) examined two internship programs and a service-learning program at private universities in the US (2014). Through document analysis and interviews, the researcher identified three characteristics that contributed to student empowerment and engagement: learner autonomy, student accountability to community partners, and peer support. For instance, students had choices about their project goals, had to demonstrate how they met those goals, and participated in regular dialogue with their peers as they completed their projects. However, Tomkins and Ulus (2016) warn that learner autonomy does not equate with a hands-off or laissez-faire approach to teaching. In their case study using role-playing as a form of experiential learning in a university seminar, the researchers found that respecting instructors' experiences was as important as recognizing the experiences students brought to the class. That is, the expertise and planning that go into more traditional classes are essential in experiential learning, although the structures for the spaces created allow for greater student input and interaction. Moreover, Tomkins and Ulus (2016) suggest shifting the focus of experiential learning from student-centered to relationship-centered, arguing that instructors must balance directing with empowering as students move through their journey of knowledge exploration. Similarly, Krakauer, Serra, and De Almeida (2016) observe that instructors serve as mediators or facilitators in the experiential learning classroom, so still actively participate while at the same time encourage student involvement and responsibility.

As with the use of social media in the classroom, experiential learning is not without its drawbacks. In analyzing the experiential learning activities of 110 university students in Brazil, Krakauer, Serra, and De Almeida (2016) found that such an approach can prove unwieldly in larger classes and is time-consuming to plan and apply. In addition, qualitative evaluation may better assess the learning outcomes associated with experiential learning, which can run counter to institutional requirements for quantitative data. In their application of an extensive eBay activity in a business course at a university in Thailand, Wongtada and Chaisuwan (2011) found that instructors have less control over the learning environment in an experiential learning situation than when using more traditional teaching tools. Thus, there is more opportunity for assignments not to go as planned, possibly interfering with students achieving the course learning outcomes.

Overall, previous research suggests generally positive outcomes for students in courses that integrate social media and for courses that involve experiential learning. In exploring these two strands of research in our own course, we asked the research question: How effective is an entrepreneurial approach in an online applied activity course in social media production?

History of the Social Media Team

The communication discipline has long had an applied side with its roots in public speaking. Many communication programs require some sort of applied activity in the major, as with undergraduate research, service learning, tutoring, organizational projects, and other experiences in which students translate theory into practice. The communication program at San José State University is no exception. Majors must complete two units of an applied activity in one or a combination of these ways: communication tutor, service-learning course, internship, social media team, research project

with faculty member, or forensics activity. With the exception of the department's service-learning course, the social media team option is the most popular choice for students to fulfill their applied activity units. Students must complete an application for all the applied activity options except the service-learning course. The social media teams' primary faculty supervisor developed an application form designed specifically for the team (Appendix A).

The department's social media team has its roots in a weekly newsletter the first author of this paper, then serving as acting chair, started in Spring 2008. The newsletter's goal was to consolidate the sporadic messages students received into a single text-based newsletter, COMM Events, sent to students every Monday morning during the regular semester. In 2010, the first author, by then the department chair, started a department Facebook group, public Facebook page, and Twitter feed as venues for promoting department successes and events. The second author launched the social media team in Spring 2013 based on a strategic plan developed by Daniel Hinojosa, a communication major who managed the department's Twitter account (Appendix B). Within a year, the team grew from nine to twenty-five students and added Snapchat, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Vine (since defunct), and three years ago, started a Tumblr account. The team also developed an online hub for communication students, COMM Central, within the university's learning management system (LMS), Canvas, launched in Fall 2013. The site has grown to include regular podcasts, movie and game reviews, playlists, information on local eateries, and news items (Figure 1). Recently, the team spun off the career information section of COMM Central into its own website, the COMM Career Portal, also housed on the university's LMS (Figure 2). In addition, the team publishes the weekly newsletter using MailChimp (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Partial Frontpage of current COMM Central
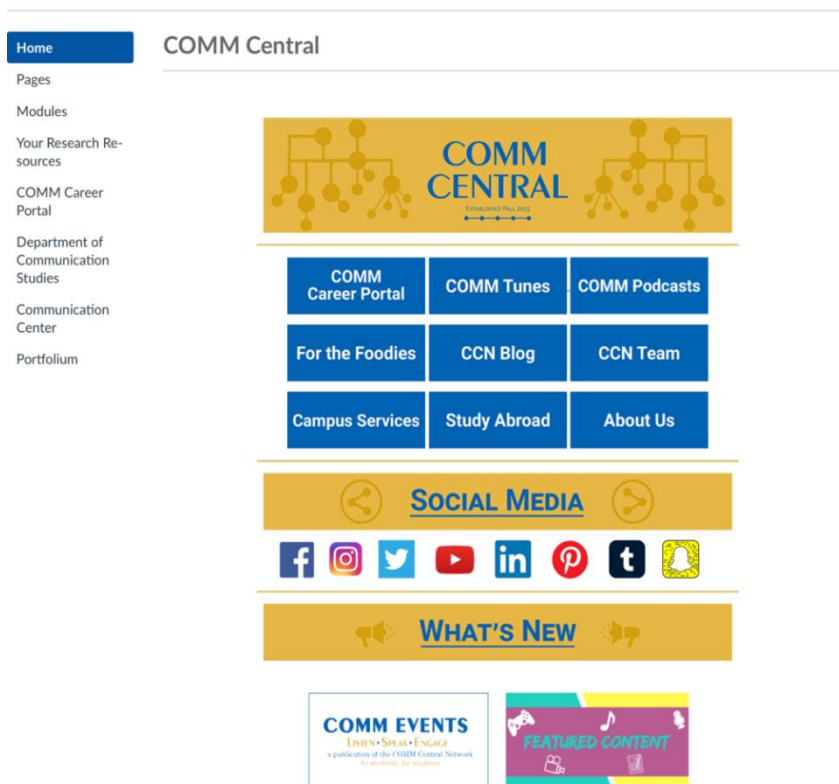*Source: Coopman and Coopman 2019*

Figure 2: Partial Frontpage of Current COMM Career Portal
Source: Coopman and Coopman 2019

Figure 3: Example COMM Events Header and Content Preview
Source: Coopman and Coopman 2019

The Social Media Team Course

Although students sign up for the course in three different ways—applied activity, undergraduate independent study, graduate independent study—all students access the course via a site on the university's LMS. This site includes the course syllabus, training workshops, assignments, policies and guidelines, organizational chart and position descriptions, the team's social media strategy, team member contact information, and additional resources. Moreover, students have access to Zoom, the university's video conferencing platform, and can schedule real-time meetings with other team members.

Along with completing the required workshops for the course, students submit a weekly report on the work they have done, with the primary faculty supervisor offering feedback on those assignments. Students meet via video conferencing at the start of the semester with one or both of the faculty supervisors as well as with their student supervisors. Students on teams, such as Snapchat and Instagram, coordinate via video chat, text messages, email, LMS messaging, or some combination of the four. A few students meet in person, although because the university is primarily a commuter school and nearly all students work part- or full-time, in person meetings are challenging to coordinate. The leadership team generally meets via video conferencing at least four times during the semester with one or both of the faculty supervisors.

Instructional Design and Logistical Challenges

A primary goal of the social media team is to provide an experience that can create a competitive advantage for students once they leave the university while fitting into the structural constraints of students' and supervising faculty members' busy lives. The central challenge of instructional design for the social media team thus becomes: How much work and responsibility can the instructor reasonably expect from students? Solving design and logistical challenges has been an iterative process over the six years of the social media team's development. Moving from 9 to 15 to 30, and now more than 40 students to meet demand for the course complicates this process because, without increased outside support, courses do not scale. The main solution was structuring the team to devolve responsibilities to the students themselves, much like the relationship-centered learning environment Tomkins and Ulus suggest (2016).

The first step in organizing the team each semester is identifying students with leadership skills to serve as unit leaders and on the board of directors. The second step is managing students' expectations for the experience and creating status and value in participation. This is accomplished through a multistage process that begins with recruitment of high performing students in our regular classes who exhibit responsibility and dependability, particularly in problem solving or overcoming adversity. Students view the invitation to apply as an honor, which enhances students' motivation to perform. Current team members also refer their peers, advisors suggest the option to students, and a few students apply on their own. Once students are accepted, the instructor sends a congratulatory email with instructions on registering for the course and completing a series of training modules on social media basics, along with information about the strategic plan and rules on content. Students also are instructed to contact their student supervisors. Finally, students meet with the supervising faculty member for a short check in, question and answer session, and pep talk. This final step is crucial in team building, identity formation, and cementing students' commitment to their work and the team.

Students submit weekly credit/no credit reports of their accomplishments. Earning points is an extrinsic motivator and fits with students' learned class behaviors, as well as a way to provide direct feedback via each assignment's comment function. Regular reporting also builds in accountability. Moreover, we frame the reporting ritual as an asset for students. Keeping track of the tasks they complete and having a record of their work on the team will make it easier to discuss their social media team experience with prospective employers. For the instructor, the

weekly reports provide a record to justify earned credit (or no credit). Compliance is high and few students have failed to meet the time and performance requirements for credit.

Generally, students are aware of the pitfalls of social media and require little oversight in posting content. Student managers set schedules for deliverables (as with posting and content creation) and supervise their teams or units based on mutually-agreed upon communication and reporting channels, often via text messaging. The primary faculty advisor developed an organizational structure that identifies students' responsibilities (Figure 4). To avoid a silo effect, students often serve dual roles.
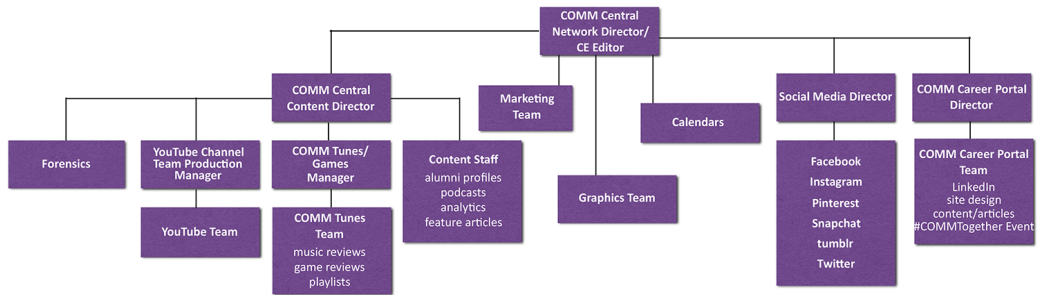

Figure 4: Social Media Team Current Organizational Chart
Source: Coopman and Coopman 2019

Method

For this study we surveyed students enrolled for social media team activity units. We received approval from our university's Institutional Review Board before collecting data.

Participants

Study participants were the ninety-six students on the team over three semesters. Students were juniors (third-year), seniors (fourth-year), or graduate students enrolled at San José State University and earned applied activity or independent study units for their participation on the team. Nearly all students were communication majors, although a few students from other majors, such as sociology and graphic design, were on the team as well.

Survey

Of the ninety-six team members, sixty-five (68%) responded to the survey posted online via the university's Qualtrics account about their experiences on the team, completing the questionnaire anonymously in the latter part of the semester. We developed survey items based on Kolb's (1984, 2015) experiential learning model as well as findings from previous researchers. For instance, we asked students if they felt more connected with different parts of the campus community as past research has suggested that students who complete experiential learning courses feel closer to their institution's units (e.g., Coker et al. 2017). The survey included nine open-ended questions, such as "What advice would you give future students who serve on the social media team?" and nine scaled items such as "How satisfied are you with your communication with your faculty supervisor?" In addition, the survey included one item that asked students to identify their skills that improved from serving on the team and another item that asked about their feelings of connectedness to groups in the university community (Appendix C).

Because this was a descriptive study that sought to gauge students' experiences, we computed frequencies and basic descriptive statistics on the scaled items. For the opened-ended questions, we conducted a content analysis, identifying themes within the responses for each

question. Both authors coded the responses to all open-ended questions, discussing any differences in coding to agreement.

Results

In this section, we report on the onboarding process of joining the team, immersion in the team, and outcomes. Overall, students reported positively about their experiences on the team, indicated they gained key transferable skills, and recognized the value of working on the social media team.

Onboarding: Joining and Expectations

Most students found out about the team from a faculty member (34%), their advisor (21%), or someone on the social media team (17%). The remaining students found out about the team on the department website, at orientation, by reading handouts about the major, or from an announcement in one of their classes. Students primarily wanted to join the team to get experience and job skills (41%), because of their interest in social media (21%), to increase their campus involvement (12%), and because the team fit their current skills set (13%). As one student wrote:

> I wanted to have some extracurricular activity at school. I was not a part of any other social group or team, so it was a nice way to expand my school life and to gain practical knowledge that I could use in the real-world settings and environments I would find myself in after school.

Additional reasons included the flexibility this applied activity offered and the opportunity to interact with other students on social media. The three main skill areas students hoped to gain from their experience on the team were teamwork (26%), using social media tools (23%), and content creation (23%). Students' expected outcomes also included gaining work experience, improving time management skills, building their portfolio, and utilizing their current skill sets. Not all students had such clear expectations going into the course, as with this student who stated:

> I just wanted to get the extra unit that is required, honestly. But as I started to really put out content and get more involved, I started to really enjoy what I was doing. I hoped to build a relationship with my team and build quality work experience to add to a resume.

Immersion: Working on the Team

When team members talk with others, such as classmates, instructors, coworkers, and family members, about the team, they emphasize four areas: skill development and professional experience (28%), promoting the content available on the various platforms and outlets (24%), their own work and role on the team (24%), and their general positive experience on the team (24%). Students clearly understand the pragmatics of this applied activity. For example, one student wrote: "It's a great way to stay connected with the department, build relevant skills, and get a unit of credit towards your degree." Similarly, another student responded, "First, I let them know all the resources the team offers through various social platforms. Then, I usually talk about my positive experiences and how the team feels just like any other team you would come across in the workforce." Another student remarked on the entrepreneurial aspect of the team: "I explain that the social media team works almost as a media team of a startup on campus. We bridge the gap between San José State University students and faculty while also promoting events, workshops, etc. to benefit their success at San José State University and after graduation." The theme of autonomy was evident as well, as one student explained:

I normally say that it is an experience that matters as much as you want to it to; the structure of the social media team gives students autonomy and thus it enables people to put in as much effort as they want, which caters to a wide variety of students. It's great for learning what to expect from an organization/social media start-up, while at the same time granting opportunities for growth, leadership, and content development.

For most students, their experiences on the social media team far exceeded or exceeded their expectations (68%), with about one-quarter reporting their experiences equaled their expectations (26%), and just a few finding their experiences fell short and fell far short of their expectations (6%). In addition, almost all the students (85%) reported that the description of the social media team as a start-up extremely accurately or very accurately reflected their experience on the team. Nearly all students were very or moderately satisfied with their communication with their student supervisor (89%), faculty supervisor (89%), and the other members of the social media team (75%). Almost all the respondents (94%) were very or moderately likely to recommend joining the social media team to other students. Overall, students rated their experience on the social media team as excellent (60%), good (31%), or average (9%). Table 1 provides a summary of these quantitative responses.

Table 1: Expectations, Communication, and Experience on the Team

Item	Response	Percentage	Standard Deviation	Variance
Expectations for the social media team	Far exceeded my expectations or exceeded my expectations	68%	.91	.83
Accuracy of social media team as start-up, giving students broad autonomy to complete assigned tasks	Extremely accurately or very accurately	85%	.89	.79
Satisfaction with student supervisor communication	Very satisfied or moderately satisfied	89%	.81	.65
Satisfaction with faculty supervisor communication	Very satisfied or moderately satisfied	89%	.76	.58
Satisfaction with communication with the other members of the team	Very satisfied or moderately satisfied	75%	.90	.82
Likely to recommend the social media team to other students	Very satisfied or moderately likely	94%	.58	.34
Overall experience on the social media team	Excellent or good	91%	.66	.44

Source: Data Adapted from Coopman and Coopman 2019

Chi-square tests (Cramér's V) were computed to explore the relationship between students' overall experience on the team and the team's functioning. As shown in Table 2, students' view of the team as a start-up that gave them task autonomy was the most strongly and significantly related to the evaluation of their overall experience ($V = 0.689$, $p < 0.00001$,) and satisfaction with their communication with their student supervisor was the least important ($V = 0.440$, $p < 0.0005$). Most telling, students' expectations for the team and their perceptions of the team as a start-up had an especially strong and significant relationship ($V = 0.727$, $p < 0.00001$).

Table 2: Relationship of Overall Experience to Tech Start-Up and Communication Variables

Item	Cramer's V
Expectations for the social media team.	.642*
Accuracy of social media team as start-up, giving students broad autonomy to complete assigned tasks.	.689*
Satisfaction with student supervisor communication.	.440**
Satisfaction with faculty supervisor communication.	.551*
Satisfaction with communication with the other members of the team.	.617*

*$p < 0.00001$ ** $p < 0.0005$

Source: Data Adapted from Coopman and Coopman 2019

Students felt more connected with the department (80%), the department faculty (54%), other students in the major (52%), and other members of the social media team (49%) due to their experience participating on the team. In addition, nearly half (49%) felt more connected with the university and more than one-third (34%) felt more connected to San José State University students in general. Figure 5 provides a summary of the responses.
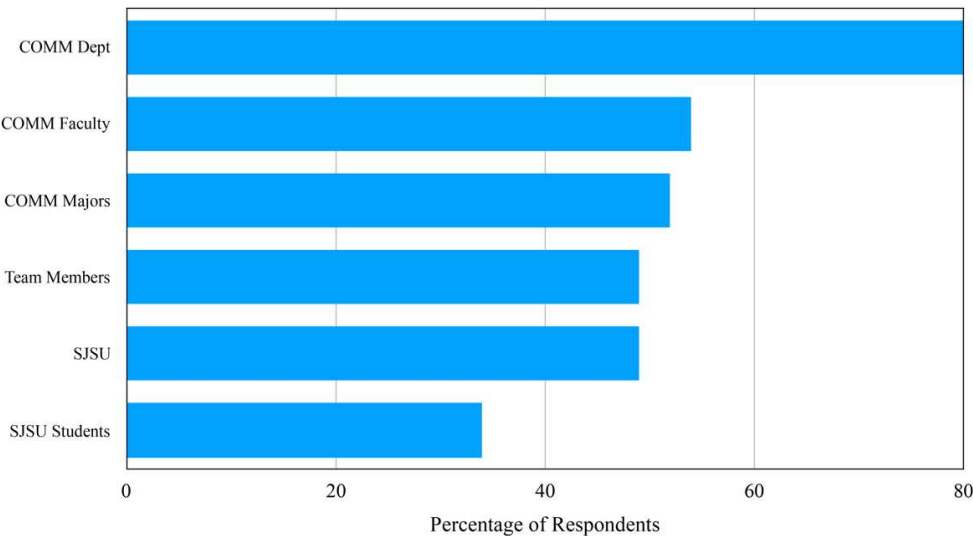
Figure 5: Feelings of Connectedness
Source: Data Adapted from Coopman and Coopman 2019

Outcomes: Value of the Experience

Almost all students reported that what they learned in their communication coursework was very or moderately applicable to their work on the social media team (85%). Most students were very or moderately likely to talk about their work on the social media team in a job or internship interview (86%). In addition, students reported improving their skills in a wide range of areas, especially teamwork (68%), time management (63%), visual communication (55%), and writing (48%). Additionally, students improved their skills in information literacy (40%), persuasive communication (40%), critical thinking (38%), problem solving (37%), and leadership (34%). Table 3 and Figure 6 summarize these results.

Table 3: Value of the Experience

Item	Response	Percentage	Standard Deviation	Variance
Coursework applicability to work on social media team.	Very and moderately applicable	85%	.85	.73
Mention in job or internship interview.	Extremely and very likely	86%	.85	.72

Source: Data Adapted from Coopman and Coopman 2019

Figure 6: Skills Acquired from Social Media Team Experience
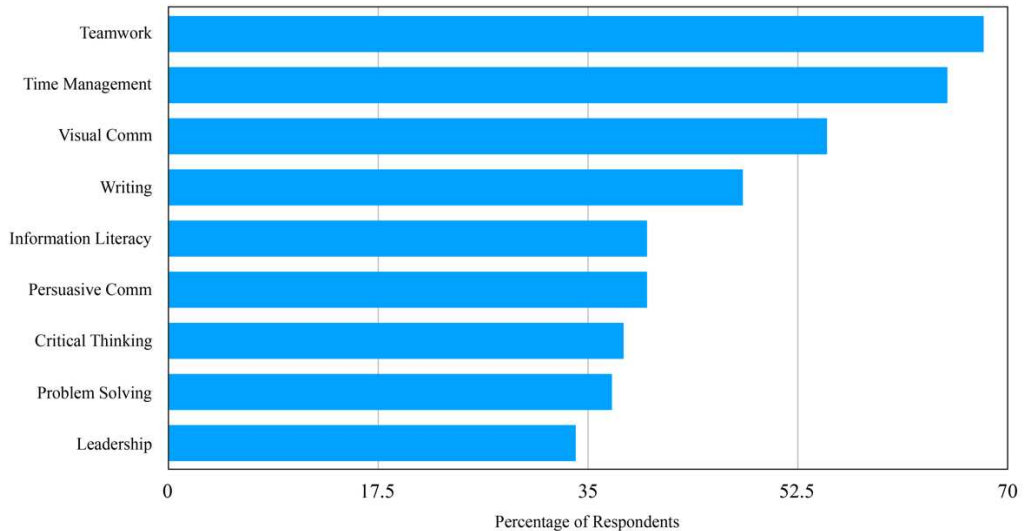*Source: Data Adapted from Coopman and Coopman 2019*

Many of respondents' comments about the positive aspects of the team focused on the applicability of the experience. Students noted the skills they developed, such as problem-solving, time management, and writing (34%); increased involvement with the campus community (25%); and teamwork/team interaction (17%). As one student observed, "I gained more exposure to COMM faculty, COMM students, and COMM news. Feeling of doing something that you love that has an impact on the department." For another student, the positive parts of working on the social media team included "Team building and getting connected with school more than I would have without it." A third student responded with "Learning when and how to post content online, setting up an effective schedule and knowing when events are occurring on campus. I have become way more involved and I don't feel like a lost Communication Studies student." A fourth student summarized the team's positive aspects this way: "Learning new skills, being aware of events on campus, building a network and a brand, variety of topics I interacted with, small group experience, and communication." Other positive aspects of the team included work flexibility and autonomy, contributing content, learning about the campus, networking, and benefitting others. One student noted, "I've extended my network and made great friends and contacts as well as added to my work experience and portfolio." Similarly, another student observed, "You are doing the work for and with San José State University. I am a part of a branch in the network I was already involved with." Finally, one student wrote, "I had a wonderful time! I met amazing people with amazing skills, I gained valuable knowledge, and I have something impressive to put on my resume!"

Going Forward: Improving the Team

Although a number of students reported no negative aspects of working on the social media team (41%), others did identify some downsides to their experiences. Students reported having issues with other team members (14%), lack of guidance (14%), and not enough in-person interaction (11%). For instance, some comments included: "[working on the team] can be very isolating and not very interactive face-to-face wise," "it just feels meaningless a lot of the time," "it's too autonomous," and "would like more training, coaching, mentorship." Other issues were tasks becoming boring, insufficient interaction with other team members or student supervisors, making time for tasks, and as one student wrote, "It makes your other classes feel not as fun."

Respondents had a wide range of suggestions for improving the team. Out of the forty suggestions for improvement, most focused on adding in-person team meetings (20%), more guidance and instruction from faculty advisors (20%), and more communication across team positions (18%). For example, students suggested: "more events on campus during school hours such as a pop-up," "have the student leaders host meetings on campus," "face-to-face meet-ups for our given teams," and "clearer expectations of what is needed from students to properly participate." Other suggestions included setting up a mentor/mentee program, improving communication with student supervisors, more online team meetings, increasing recruitment efforts for the team, and making the team selection process more rigorous.

The seventy-nine pieces of advice for future team members were concentrated in four main areas: time management and work flow (32%), communication with faculty and team members (28%), taking initiative and learning new things (20%), and having fun (14%). For example, respondents suggested: "make sure to stay on top of your work and do not forget to communicate with your group," "make sure to communicate with your teammates and manage your time wisely," "think outside of the box, learn, and have fun," "be prepared, be organized, and be flexible," and "dare to experiment and step out of your comfort zone." Students also suggested writing and posting about topics you care about, staying up to date on activities in the department, and focusing on the audience. As one student advised, "If you write/do things that you like the class is really fun. You also have an amazing supporting cast, who are always willing to help/answer your questions."

Discussion

For this study we asked the question: How effective is an entrepreneurial approach in an online applied activity course in social media production? Analysis of the students' responses clearly identified the tech start-up concept as the most important factor in their evaluation of their experience on the team. In addition, the entrepreneurial approach aligned with students' expectations for the course—most students expected a tech start-up environment and that expectation was matched. Although the entrepreneurial approach is not one students typically encounter in their classes, most embraced the challenge, engaging with each other and the various groups within the university. Students appreciated the multifaceted nature and ubiquity of learning opportunities on the social media team. Importantly, they developed key transferable skills applicable to their professional goals.

The results provide support for Kolb's (1984, 2015) Experiential Learning Theory. Students' responses to the survey suggest the program fulfills the requirements of experiential learning in that it offers a space for students to experience, reflect, think, and act—the continuous learning cycle Kolb (2015) describes. In their advice they would give to future social media team members, survey respondents emphasized taking advantage of the opportunity to work with others, produce and curate content, enjoy the experience, learn new skills, and take initiative. Their skills grew as they applied what they had learned in their other classes, reflected on what worked and what did not, and revised their strategies to better meet their own goals and the team's goals. That is, they experienced the essence of experiential learning, integrating their new

knowledge with what they already knew, rather than simply layering on additional information (Baker, Robinson, and Kolb 2012). The sense of active learning comes through in how students describe their experience on the team, as with "Grants opportunities for growth, leadership, and content development; always open to new suggestions and feedback; helpful team and vast network with variety of content," and "being a part of something bigger than me is pretty cool, and my problem solving skills have skyrocketed."

The structural constraints of the course build in the learner autonomy, student accountability to community partners, and peer support that align with ELT's learning cycle (Kolb 1984, 2015) and the characteristics contributing to student empowerment and engagement (Perrin 2014). The team's ability to function rests in part on the skills students bring and the positions they fulfill. Moreover, the turnover rate for student staff is high as most participants join as juniors or seniors. While students often stay on past their required activity units, team membership changes each semester. This level of turnover makes the structure of the course and team critical. Unlike a traditional course, the COMM Central Network persists past the term and is public, enforcing the need for consistency and dependability. From the perspectives of the audiences—students, faculty, alumni, the broader university community, and the public more generally—the COMM Central Network's performance is tied to and reflects the Communication Studies Department. Still, the course structure's entrepreneurial and start-up orientation presented an autonomy/dependence dialectic for students that was layered on top of ETL's action/reflection and experience/abstraction dialectics. On the autonomy side, they enjoyed the freedom to pursue their interests and apply their social media knowledge base to their tasks. One student observed that students on the team have "freedom to create our own projects and content, and [get] genuine support from supervisor and advisors." In that sense, the social media team's structure follows Kolb's (2015) suggestion that experiential learning courses offer a space for students to direct their own learning. On the dependence side, some students found that autonomy disconcerting and desired greater direction, remarking that "it can be daunting handling it on your own" and "I feel very unguided and have no idea if I'm doing well or not." Still, the majority of students embraced the autonomous yet team-centered nature of the course, with the tech start-up concept strongly related to their positive experience.

The key contribution of communication within the team to the students' overall experiences supports A. Kolb and D. Kolb's Conversational Learning Cycle that maps onto ETL's components. The researchers observe that "conversation is the most ubiquitous and common form of experiential learning" (2017, 35), with thinking and acting centered in speaking, and experiencing and reflecting centered in listening. Students rated teamwork as the top skill they gained from working on the social media team, with several noting the value of interacting with other team members, student supervisor, and faculty supervisor as essential to navigating their work and roles. In identifying the positive aspects of serving on the social media team, one student wrote, "I was able to work with other COMM students," and another stated, "you work with great people." Brusa (2019) found that communicating with others was essential in an experiential learning activity designed to help college students in a biology course follow a healthy lifestyle program. Students reported that the instrumental and social support they received from their team members were crucial to understanding the course material and applying that knowledge to the activity. In giving advice to future social media team members, one of our students suggested: "Make sure to stay connected with your team and communicate with them often about progress, tasks, interests, or ideas. It is called a team because everyone's contribution is necessary." With experiential learning, learning moves from a solo endeavor to something that arises from interacting with others. Another student reported talking about the social media team this way: "I brag about the students and the professor who take joy into putting together a team to bring awareness about the Comm department and SJSU itself." Learning happens with others rather than alone.

Similar to the findings of previous researchers' work on experiential learning (e.g., Gomez-Lanier 2016; Henderson and Barker 2018; Parks 2015), the structure and execution of the social media team improved students' communication and critical thinking skills as they were responsible for the public performance of their efforts. The challenge of dynamic technological environments and interpersonal interactions to meet goals necessitates problem solving. This sort of collaborative interaction enhances their relationships with teammates, faculty, and the larger community of students who view their work. Student managers learned the challenges of leadership and inherent tensions between fostering relationships and meeting production goals. Social media team membership helped them develop a professional identity not overtly yoked to traditional assignments and coursework. This level of responsibility and ownership of their work increased motivation and confidence. The social media team's structure provides learner autonomy, requires student accountability, and operates on peer support mechanisms. The instructors serve as facilitators, sometimes referees, and the final degree of accountability, striking a balance between directing and empowering students.

Applied programs like the social media team have practical outcomes for students. For instance, in their study of Chinese graduate students, He et al. (2017) found that social media use contributed positively to employability skills, such as leadership and innovation. In addition, effectiveness in an internship coupled with social media use had an even greater impact on students' skills associated with employability. The students in our study recognized the value of the many skills they learned while participating on the team, including teamwork, time management, visual and written skills, information literacy, and persuasion. In addition, they expected to acquire skills such as using social media tools, working effectively in a group, and creating content—and for most students, their experience on the social media team met or exceeded those expectations. In their experiential learning course in business that took an entrepreneurial approach, Liang et al. (2016) also found outcomes exceeded students' expectations, especially in the areas of teamwork, decision making, and business practices. Importantly for our students, they planned to highlight what they learned in future internship and job interviews. As one student wrote, "I feel more secure in what I want to do in the future and being on the social media team has been a big part of that." Another student observed the social media team "is an excellent resume builder and you can upload part of your work on LinkedIn as I do."

Another key outcome for students in experiential learning courses is learning how to learn, the bedrock of lifelong learning. Sanséau and Ansart (2013) argue that experiential learning serves as a catalyst for lifelong learning, providing students with the skills they need to adapt to an ever-changing environment. Moreover, Richards (2018) proposes that experiential learning is lifelong learning. Henschke's (2014) definition of lifelong learning identifies six components that align well with the skills in which our social media team members improved: learning to know (information literacy), learning to do (writing, persuasive communication, visual communication), learning to live together (teamwork, leadership), learning to be (critical thinking, time management), learning to change (problem solving), and learning for sustainable development (integration of all skills). The tech start-up concept in particular encourages students to acquire skills applicable to lifelong learning and prepare them for future professional and personal challenges and opportunities.

Connectedness is a recurring theme in the social media and experiential learning literatures as well as our students' responses to the survey. Reaching out to a department's community via social media offers benefits outside of the social media team itself. For example, research on international students has found that when they participate in their university's social media, they feel more connected and identify with the institution and the campus community (Fujita, Harrigan, and Soutar 2017). Similarly, the majority of our students felt closer to the department, its faculty, and its students as a result of utilizing the network's various social media outlets. The connectedness students feel after completing an experiential learning course cannot be overstated. One of our survey respondents enthusiastically declared, "I just love this team. I

wouldn't have had a wonderful experience at SJSU if it weren't for me joining the team. I gained multiple connections with the COMM faculty, Career Center, COMM staff, COMM students, and even recruiters." Paralleling Chugh and Ruhi's (2018) findings that social media use related to a specific program or major strengthens the ties students feel to peers and the university, about half our students reported feeling closer to the university as a whole and one-third felt closer to San José State University students more generally. As one student wrote, "Not only do you gain important skills that will benefit you in your future career, but you also develop a strong sense of pride and connection to San José State University."

Using social media in the classroom can have its challenges. For instance, students may not want to post their work online where it is publicly available and in situations where their submissions are graded (Chromey et al. 2016). However, because the social media team is a credit/no credit course, students did not express any such reservations, likely due to the low risk involved in posting their work. In addition, instructors sometimes can dominate interactions on social media, discouraging students from initiating conversations or topic shifts (Chugh and Ruhi 2018). Although that was not the case for the social media team as the faculty supervisors' social media posts were minimal, we did observe that the course is structured to emphasize producing content for social media to the neglect of engaging audiences in conversations. As one student wrote, "sometimes it is hard to interact with the audience." In addition, different social media wax and wane in their popularity. In earlier years, the team's social media outlets included Vine and Google+, both of which now are defunct. When that happens, students may feel the skills they learned associated with using those platforms are not applicable or transferable.

Experiential learning can have drawbacks as well, especially difficulties in implementation. For example, scaling for a larger class puts pressure on the instructor's time commitment (Krakauer, Serra, and De Almeida 2016). The increased size of the social media team, starting with nine students and now more than forty in the most recent semester, likely influenced students' feelings of disconnectedness from other team members. With nine students, coordinating in person and online meetings was fairly simply. With forty-plus students, identifying agreeable times becomes challenging and not always possible. Thus, some students felt like they missed out on the relationship and team-building aspects of experiential learning they had expected. One student observed, "There needs to be more relationship between all COMM team members. This can be done by hosting simple events or just simply getting everyone to meet up and get to know one another. I was hoping to meet more people!" In addition, due to the team's structure and entrepreneurial nature, the faculty supervisors exercise less control over the students' experiences than in a traditional in-person or online classroom environment. As Wongtada and Chaisuwan (2011) found in their use of eBay to teach marketing principles, sometimes things go wrong in spite of the instructors' best efforts, leaving students frustrated and disappointed. Even though we carefully review students' applications and try to match students' interests and skills with their team assignments, in a few instances, the matches are not ideal. These likely are the handful of students who reported becoming bored with their work and having issues with other team members.

Finally, the social media team encountered some of the challenges of any all-online class, group, or organization. While students' experiences were overwhelmingly positive, several noted that they missed more regular interactions, especially in-person, with other team members, their student supervisors, and their instructors. One student lamented, "I don't know my team that well and it makes it difficult to communicate with the staff through Canvas [learning management system] messages." Another compared the online experience with working in an office: "I don't get to see my teammates in person as much I want to. If we had our own office, I would have kept more in touch with them and built friendships, but instead, we either see each other at the career event or see each other's work online." Similarly, in their research on an online experiential course in teleworking, Madden et al. (2016) found students encountered issues with building relationships among classmates, with some students wishing for in-person interaction.

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Cathro's (2018) longitudinal study of an experiential learning course that employed global online teams identified similar frustrations among team members. Still, Madden et al. (2016) conclude that with the growing role of telework in organizations, students need to learn relationship-building skills for an online environment. Hu (2015) found that including specific training, as with a module on team processing for online experiential learning courses, improved students' interactions and online team-building strategies. In Magnier-Watanabe et al.'s (2017) study of an online MBA course that brought together students from France and Japan, student teams took the initiative to develop their own communication protocols when those included in the course were insufficient. Cathro (2018) found that more recently enrolled students adapted their communication needs and experimented with different communication technologies, as with migrating from email to WhatsApp. Thus, while social media team students encountered obstacles associated with online group work, these are not unlike those they will encounter as they move into their careers.

Next Steps for the Social Media Team

We already have taken several steps to improve the learning experience for team members. The two faculty supervisors met with the former student who developed the original social media strategic plan, Daniel Hinojosa. A knowledge worker in Silicon Valley for many years, Hinojosa provided key ideas and advice for revising the strategic plan and moving forward. For instance, by going back to the initial vision to use social media to "Listen, Speak, and Engage," we realized that the course focuses more on speaking (production) and less on listening (to others, especially the student audience) and engaging (facilitating conversations with students, faculty, alumni, and others in and connected to the campus community). We continued the conversation with the former student and brought in the current leadership team for an hour-long meeting. The student leadership team then met on its own. Finally, we met with the leadership team to develop the structure, strategies, and plans for the upcoming semester.

Although still in process, we are working toward restructuring the team to facilitate more listening and engagement, both externally and internally. For example, at least two students will be assigned to the team's Facebook group, one person primarily tasked with producing content and the other with outreach. One goal of the new structure, shown in Figure 7, is to balance autonomy with integration. That is, we want students to feel a sense of ownership and independence for their work and at the same time experience a connection with the rest of the team. Any area with three or more team members, as with those assigned to Instagram, will have a lead person to coordinate and facilitate tasks and communication. In addition, the student network director is planning in-person meetings for students who are on campus as well as more regular online video conferencing meetings as listening and engaging activities, rather than information presenting. The content director will develop a production schedule as well as more robust guidelines and standards for videos. Additional future steps include better utilizing the marketing team for on-campus outreach, creating an alumni advisory board to build stronger ties with former students, and developing a toolkit for university units interested in offering similar courses that bring a start-up experiential learning framework to social media production.
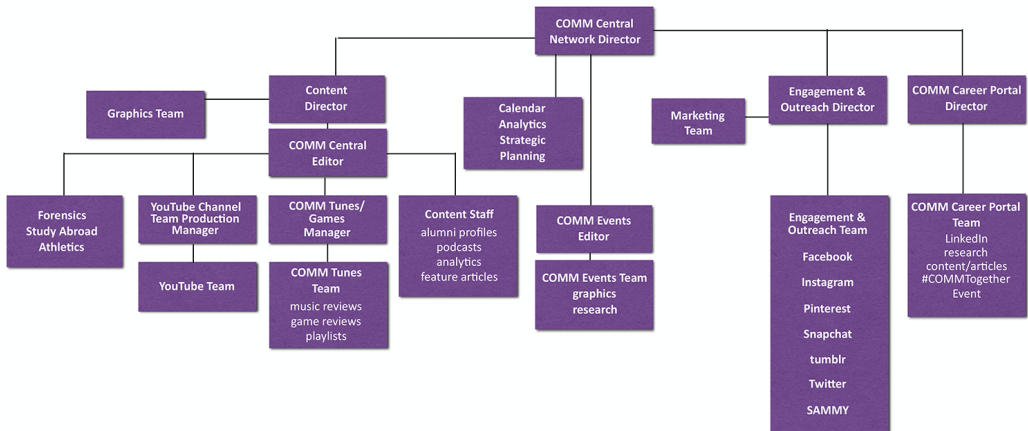
Figure 7: New COMM Central Network Organizational Chart
Source: Coopman and Coopman 2019

Limitations and Future Research

This study is based on one experiential learning course on social media in one department at one university in the US. In that respect, the generalizability of the findings is limited. In addition, many of the students had taken one or both of the faculty supervisors for previous classes, so they were familiar with the instructors' teaching styles and expectations. Other instructors in different departments and universities may have different experiences, even when applying the same entrepreneurial model. Also, we did not gather any demographic data in the survey as we wanted the responses to remain completely anonymous. That is, we did not want to ask any questions that would identify the respondents in any way. Different student groups, such as first-generation college students, older students, and students who ordinarily enrolled in in-person classes may have dissimilar experiences and perspectives. Moreover, we collected only survey data over the course of three semesters. Focus group and individual interviews may have revealed more in-depth responses from students. In addition, the surveys are self-reports of the students' perceptions, so we have no measurements of the students' actual skill improvement, for example. Finally, we have not tracked students after graduation. Did their experience on the social media team result in landing a job or internship? Did the autonomy they experienced translate into life-long learning skills? We do not know the answers to those questions.

Future research might go in several directions. First, we need to know more about students' experiences in experiential learning courses. Having students keep journals or blogs, participate in focus group and individual interviews throughout the term, and complete brief surveys at several time points would provide greater insight into their learning process as they are going through it, rather than having to recall something that occurred several weeks or months ago. How do students' understandings and interpretations ebb and flow across the course of a semester or quarter? Second, gathering and comparing data from a range of experiential learning courses, especially the more innovative ones such as the social media team, will offer guidance in best practices for such courses. Why might a more entrepreneurial approach work in some courses and not in others? Third, and probably most important, is determining the degree to which these best practices transfer across cultures. Does a start-up approach to a student social media team work as well in Brazil or Nigeria or Japan as it does in the US? How transferable is such a teaching strategy to different student populations? These and other questions suggest fruitful avenues of additional research on taking a tech start-up approach to experiential learning courses.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix A: Social Media Team Application Form

Communication Studies Social Media Team
COMM 198/180/280
Student Interest Form

Please fill out this form and return to the faculty supervisor so we can assess your qualifications for our team. Due to the limited number of positions, selection is competitive.

Overview

The Communication Studies Social Media Team operates the COMM Central Network (CCN), which is a network of social media websites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn), the COMM Career Portal, and our COMM Central Canvas site that serves as our hub and has a variety of features and information for COMM majors, minors, and graduate students.

We run the CCN as a social media start-up. The goal is to provide a professional level experience for students in the new media/social media field. We have an integrated strategy that students are expected to execute. Still, students are given broad autonomy to execute their assigned tasks. When possible, students are assigned tasks they are specifically interested in. Students are expected to:

- Meet with the instructor once at the start of the term via Zoom
- File a weekly activity/accomplishments report via Canvas
- Take direction from her/his immediate student manager and area director
- Attend online training and development workshops and online meetings as required

This course is less about meeting the requirements for your degree and more about gaining valuable experience in the field and building your resume. This can put you a step ahead of other applicants. Our goal is to have fun, learn new things, and serve our program.

A Social Media Team position is typically for one unit per term, although a two-unit assignment is possible in certain circumstances. Students who have fulfilled their COMM 198 requirements may be eligible to participate under independent study. Graduate students participate under COMM 280.

Please fill in the information below, expand sections as needed.

Full Name:
Email address:
Expected term/year of graduation:
Major/minor/MA focus:
What social media do you regularly use?
What media production skills or experience do you have (e.g., video, graphic design, web design)?
Tell us about any of your specialized skills or interests (e.g., writing/editing, music, sports/athletics, international travel)?
What extracurricular activities are you involved in (e.g., Forensics; ASA, Game Dev club, etc.)?

What sorts of things are you interested in working on as a team member (e.g., managing a social media site, creating video or other content, graphic design, management, logistics/analytics, feature development)?

Appendix B: Social Media Strategy

Communication Studies Department Social Media Strategy Proposal, *September 7, 2012*
1) What are our broad **aspirations** for our organization and the concrete **goals** against which we can measure our progress?
   a) The San José State University Communication Studies Department will be the recognized leader in BA and MA for the COMM major in the San Francisco Bay Area. The San José State University Communication Studies Department Social Media Strategy (CSDSMS) will support and serve the outward facing communications channels by detailing how we communicate activity, expectations, events, general perspectives and philosophies, and new thought on communication, as well as engaging the online community in dialogue pertaining primarily, though not necessarily only to communications.
      i) The San José State University Communication Studies Department will utilize the following channels in this effort:
         (1) Facebook
         (2) Twitter
         (3) Instagram
         (4) Blog
         (5) YouTube
         (6) LinkedIn
         (7) Other external facing publications (blogs, etc.)
      ii) Measures
         (1) Facebook
            (a) 10% growth of likes and "friends" (connections / followers) by the start of the Spring semester, 2013
               (i) Groups–started August 2008 (315 members)
               (ii) Public page - New as of mid-August 2012 (18 likes)
               (iii) Create an ongoing dialogue with Communication Studies Majors, Minors, Alums, Faculty, and community
         (2) Twitter
            (a) 50% growth in followers
               (i) 48 followers on 24.Aug
            (b) Create an ongoing dialog with followers and the Twitterverse
         (3) Instagram
            (a) Create an Instagram account
            (b) Post photographs as able - 1 - 5 a week
         (4) Blog
            (a) 10% growth of RSS feed subscribers
            (b) 1 post per week minimum
         (5) YouTube
            (a) Create a YouTube channel
            (b) Grow subscription of YouTube Channel by 10%
         (6) LinkedIn
            (a) Create a LinkedIn Group
            (b) Grow subscription by 10%
            (c) Invite all existing communication majors to join
            (d) Invite any and all previous communication graduates (BA, MA, PhD) to join

(7) Other external facing publications
    (a) Increase the number of publications X% per year (or, e.g., by #X by 2015)

2) Across the potential field available to us, **where** will we choose **to play** and not play?
    a) The San José State University Communication Studies Department will formerly utilize the following channels for external communications:
        i) Facebook (Social)
        ii) Twitter (Social)
        iii) Instagram (Social)
        iv) Blog (Social / Professional)
        v) YouTube (Social / Professional)
        vi) LinkedIn (Social / Professional)
        vii) Email (Social / Professional)
        viii) Other external facing publications (Professional)
    b) We will not utilize:
        i) Phone
        ii) SMS / Text
        iii) Pinterest
        iv) Google+
        v) Diaspora
        vi) Identi.ca
        vii) etc.

3) In our chosen place to play, **how** will we choose **to win** against the competitors there?
    a) The San José State University Communication Studies Department will be the online thought leader on social media participation
        i) We will seek out and utilize the latest tools to facilitate consistent participation in the chosen media outlets
        ii) We will, with the assistance of the faculty, publish (Tweet, post via FB, etc.) / communicate the latest theories and concepts on communication practice
        iii) We will seek to leverage our theories with input from the online communities in which we participate
        iv) Our Social voice will be positive, engaging, and dialogic
        v) To the extent budget allows, we will offer giveaways to help grow subscription rates (followers, friends, connections, etc.)

4) What **capabilities** are necessary **to build** and maintain to win in our chosen manner?
    a) We will utilize students assigned to maintain each social media outlet
    b) Faculty will be utilized to maintain professional communications outlets
    c) Up to date (current) computer resources are required that have the necessary tools to facilitate the CSDSMS
        i) Laptops / Desktop computers running Windows 7 or 8 or Mac OS Snow Leopard or later
        ii) Current / modern browsers (Firefox, Chrome, Safari, etc. - IE is a less preferred platform due to interoperability issues)
        iii) Scheduling tools (e.g., Twuffer, HootSuite, etc.)
    d) The use of high speed / quality Internet connections is critical to the success of the tactics to support the Social aspects of this strategy

5) What **management systems** are necessary **to operate** to build and maintain the key capabilities?
    a) The San José State University Communication Studies Department Chair is responsible for managing this communication strategy

b) The San José State University Communication Studies Department Social Media strategy is executed by the Communication Department Director of Communications
   i) Utilize students to run the various outlets
   ii) All outlets will use a common voice that is appropriate for each outlet (e.g., Facebook and Twitter is a more casual engaging voice with "friends and followers", where LinkedIn should be seen as a professional footing)
   iii) Accounts will be added to this list of approved "outlets" dependent on industry developments

Strategy points (top level 5) are drawn from the Harvard Business
Review: http://blogs.hbr.org/martin/2010/05/the-five-questions-of-strategy.html

Appendix C: Survey Questions

Please answer these questions about your experiences on the COMM social media team. Your responses are anonymous and will not affect your grade in the class in any way. We appreciate you taking the time to give us your feedback so we can make the social media team the best experience it can be for our students.

How did you first find out about the social media team?

Why did you want to join the social media team?

Looking back on when you first were accepted to the social media team, what did you hope to get out of the experience?

Overall, my experience on the social media team:
a. far exceeded my expectations.
b. exceeded my expectations
c. equaled my expectations.
d. fell short of my expectations.
e. fell far short of expectations.

How applicable was what you learned in your COMM classes to your work on the social media team?
a. Very applicable
b. Moderately applicable
c. Neither applicable nor inapplicable
d. Moderately inapplicable
e. Very inapplicable

How satisfied are you with your communication with your student supervisor?
a. Very satisfied
b. Moderately satisfied
c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
d. Moderately dissatisfied
e. Very dissatisfied
f. not applicable

How satisfied are you with your communication with your faculty supervisor?
a. Very satisfied
b. Moderately satisfied
c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
d. Moderately dissatisfied
e. Very dissatisfied
f. not applicable

How satisfied are you with your communication with the other members of the social media team?
    a.   Very satisfied
    b.   Moderately satisfied
    c.   Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
    d.   Moderately dissatisfied
    e.   Very dissatisfied
    f.   not applicable

The form to apply for the social media team includes this statement: "Think of the CCN as a social media start-up. The goal is to provide a professional level experience for you in the new media/social media field. The faculty advisor has developed an integrated strategy that you are expected to execute. Still, you are given broad autonomy to complete your assigned tasks." How accurately does that statement reflect your experience on the social media team?
    a.   Extremely accurately
    b.   Very accurately
    c.   Moderately accurately
    d.   Slightly accurately
    e.   Not accurately at all

Which of your skills improved as a result of serving on the social media team? Check all that apply.
    a.   writing
    b.   critical thinking
    c.   information literacy
    d.   problem solving
    e.   teamwork
    f.   leadership
    g.   time management
    h.   persuasive communication
    i.   visual communication
    j.   other (please specify)
    k.   other (please specify)
    l.   none

Based on my experience on the social media I feel more connected to: (check all that apply)
    a.   the COMM Dept.
    b.   San José State University.
    c.   the other members of the social media team.
    d.   COMM faculty.
    e.   other COMM students.
    f.   San José State University students in general.
    g.   other (please specify)
    h.   not applicable

How likely would you recommend to other students that they apply for a position with the social media team?
    a.   Very likely
    b.   Moderately likely
    c.   Neither likely nor unlikely
    d.   Moderately unlikely
    e.   Very unlikely

Overall, how would you evaluate your experience on the social media team?
  a. Excellent
  b. Good
  c. Average
  d. Poor
  e. Terrible

In a job or internship interview, how likely are you to mention your work on the social media team?
  a. Very likely
  b. Moderately likely
  c. Neither likely nor unlikely
  d. Moderately unlikely
  e. Very unlikely

When you talk with other people about the social media team, such as classmates, instructors, coworkers, supervisors, friends, and family members, what do you say?

What are the positive aspects of serving on the COMM social media team?

What are the negative aspects of serving on the COMM social media team?

What advice would you give future students who serve on the social media team?

What suggestions do you have for improving the social media team?

What additional comments do you have about your experience on the social media team?

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Stephanie J. Coopman: Professor, Communication, San José State University, San José, CA, USA

Ted M. Coopman: Lecturer, Communication, San José State University, San José, CA, USA

Ubiquitous Learning: An International Journal
sets out to deÿne an emerging ÿeld. Ubiquitous
learning is a new educational paradigm made possible
in part by the affordances of digital media.

Ubiquitous learning is a counterpart to the concept
"ubiquitous computing," but one which seeks to put
the needs and dynamics of learning ahead of the
technologies that may support learning. The arrival of
new technologies does not mean that learning has to
change. Learning should only change for learning's
sake. The key perspective of the journal is that our
changing learning needs can be served by ubiquitous
computing. In this spirit, the journal investigates the
affordances for learning in the digital media, in school,
and throughout everyday life.

Ubiquitous Learning: An International Journal is a
peer-reviewed, scholarly journal.