

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS  
Certificate Request**

This form is to be used to request approval for a new certificate program that includes currently offered courses. A certificate program is not a major or minor. Refer to BOR policy 2:23 Certificate Programs.

<u>BHSU</u> Institution	<u>Mass Communication</u> Division/Department	<u>Institutional</u> Signature	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Date</u>
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**1. Name of Program:** Social Media

**2. Provide a justification for the program.**

A social media certificate program is needed due to a changing interdisciplinary communication landscape and a growing need for people to be informed about how to facilitate and use social media in all its forms. There is a need to explicate, at an academic level, the differentiation between professional and personal use. The certificate would be a cutting-edge, high-quality, interdisciplinary academic program offered through Black Hills State University.

Communication among the masses--and sectors of the masses--has changed dramatically over the past decade. Many new forms of communication have now become a part of daily life because of advancing communication technologies. One of the most prominent changes has come with the birth of Web 2.0 technologies and social media. "Social media touches nearly every facet of our personal and business lives" (Qualman, E. (2013). *Socialnomics: how social media transforms the way we live and do business*. Wiley: Hoboken, NJ. Foreward.)

For the past three years, Associate Professor Mary Caton-Rosser and Assistant Professor Barbara Looney have advanced a campus-wide social media experiment designed first to encourage faculty to use more digital tools and social media during instructional practice, and second to provide a measureable scale for the authors to track the trajectory of student and faculty feedback about their use of social media and digital tools.

Two Mass Communication students were involved in a research-gathering independent study in Spring 2015 semester on social media. Their basic justification for offering the certificate shows how social media affects their lives: "Social media [are] a growing need for businesses and anyone in the job market. This teaches students how to use it properly and to their advantage. It also accredits them to future employers looking for someone who has insight on these programs...[where social media is used in] Teaching students how to use social media in a professional way for businesses and personal usage."

The Altimeter Group regularly conducts business surveys that focus on media trends. Early use of social media was driven by marketing forces and public relations initiatives, while current use is evolving into a strong "social business movement that looks to scale and integrate social [activity] across the organization" (Solis, Brian & Li, Charlene. (2013). *The State of Social Business 2013: The Maturing of Social Media into Social Business*. San Francisco: Altimeter Group This organizational connectivity is more fully explored by human resources expert Dan Pontefract, who asserts that, to be

effective, future leaders will need to master and marshal social media assets as a way of building and sustaining employee engagement. Based upon his experience in corporate settings, Pontefract argues that digital connectivity can provide “a nurturing, collaborative, supportive and open [workplace] environment” where employees thrive and more strongly relate to one another and their corporate mission (Pontefract, Dan. (2013). *Flat Army: Creating a Connected and Engaged Organization*. Jossey- Bass/Wiley: Canada. p. 281).

From firsthand research and experience in supervising up to 40 undergraduate Mass Communication, Graphic Design Communication and Corporate Communication student internships a year, Dr. Caton-Rosser has observed that up to 85 percent of the “employers” request knowledge, application and demonstrated ability to-use social media professionally, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Google and others. The same goes for full job descriptions that come in to the university asking for students with degrees in marketing, public relations, business administration, communications, technology, multimedia and broadcasting, specifically, but it is very important to note that occupations across disciplines and subject matter from science to art to history to child development to education to social sciences and politics professionally access social media interactively with audiences and clients, as well as internally with employees, these days.

A Google search of careers in social media reveals three relevant findings. First, social media expertise typically surfaces in the context of public relations and marketing. The Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>1</sup> projects public relations specialists’ employment growth of 6 percent between 2014 and 2024, as fast as the average. Employment of market research analysts is projected to grow 19 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations.<sup>2</sup> Second, and related, articles such as one in Global News Wire indicate that the “online marketer/social media specialist job outlook shows no sign of dimming.<sup>3</sup>” Third, despite the widespread demand for employees with social media savvy in a variety of fields, many experts argue that social media is not a career and that university students should not major in it. A minor, however, that complements a broader major is deemed quite useful. These three findings reveal an encouraging employment outlook for students with a T-shaped profile that includes a Social Media minor.

### **3. Who is the audience for the program?**

The target audience is any student who wants to advance their learning about a rapidly growing medium of communication that studies show will become one of the most common channels of communication in the next five years. This includes university students of any age, major or demographic orientation, as well as community members who could enroll in a complement of courses without prerequisites.

Postsecondary educators should seriously explore and then apply the potential to intentionally and strategically harness the power of these revolutionary transformations of in technology use to better serve the needs of students to enhance their success (Davis, C.H.F., Deil-Amen, R., Rios-Aguilar, C., & Gonzalez Canche, M.S., 2014, p.2).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/public-relations-specialists.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/market-research-analysts.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2013/09/03/570883/10046604/en/Social-Marketing-Career-Wave-of-theFuture.html>

Since all three deans from the colleges at BHSU were interviewed as recently as Spring 2015 semester for their insight on the value of a social media certificate, we know that all majors and minors would most likely benefit from the credential in some way, shape or form.

From the roundtable faculty discussions, workshop series involving both faculty and students and five years of conference-presented research that has been conducted by Dr. Caton-Rosser and Dr. Looney with students and faculty since 2011, it is clear that the use of social media is interdisciplinary (Caton-Rosser, Looney & Schneider. May 2014. *Discovering Interdisciplinary Uses of Online Technologies in Higher Education*. ISSN: 1690-4524 SYSTEMICS, CYBERNETICS AND INFORMATICS VOLUME 12 - NUMBER 3, pp.17-21.)

A 2014 cross compilation of curricular lessons and materials from nearly 20 BHSU faculty was published as an e-book early in 2015 at this link <http://www.mobilizingfacultyonlinetechforteaching.com>, and a second edition of the e-book is currently being prepared with participation from at least a dozen faculty. (Looney, Caton-Rosser and Woodle *Mobilizing Faculty to Engage Social Media as an Instructional Tool: A How-to Experience that Produced an E-book, 2015*.) The various disciplines that are represented are testament to a range of majors and minors that will be interested in this certificate. However, the certificate will not just be available or cater only to a major and minor audience of students. The certificate can be gained by anyone who is willing to do the coursework.

The certificate course options below are specifically organized by college to make it evident to students that they will already be completing several of the certificate options during their regular degree pursuits. Thus, the appeal of earning the Social Media Certificate is heightened and made less burdensome, since most students will be part-way to certificate completion as they meet their degree requirements.

The arrangement by college also simplifies advising. Faculty and students can easily determine which classes, from within a given college, might apply to the certificate. Students and advisors equally determine which courses, from outside a major, might be of most interest to a student selecting the elected two courses.

By selecting courses from all three of the BHSU colleges, the Social Media Certificate can be easily promoted across the university.

We understand four courses under the options list do have “hidden” prerequisites, but eight courses without prerequisites are listed, which anyone could take for certificate completion.

The main point is that this certificate is not narrow – it is one of the first of its kind to be broadly interdisciplinary because of the wide appeal of the study and understanding of social media study and application. This is an interdisciplinary endeavor, not narrowly focused to just one or a handful of majors or minors. The mainstream, entire world uses social media for a variety of reasons and motivated by a variety of topic matter and goals.

The decision to include the following list of class electives is highly purposeful based upon the extensive research, roundtable discussions and workshops with BHSU faculty and students since 2011.

Here are some elaborations on the course choices listed below. For example, the course BADM 344 Managerial Communications will consistently make it evident that social media works as a viable internal and external tool of communication, as would BADM 475 Consumer Behavior. MCOM 210 Basic Newswriting will discuss both theoretically and applicably how social media is changing the information-gathering newsgathering and news presentation landscape among and with all-important audiences, interactively. The field of public relations was one of the primary professional spaces in the early 2000s and the introduction of Web 2.0 interactive online activity to latch on to the use of interactive media as primary tools to create relationships and do outreach and research with audiences. Thus, MCOM 373 PR Case Studies and MCOM 475 Public Relations are essential courses that are built around using the tools of social media. As well, all of these electives will be considered in the presentation of the core certificate course, MCOM 235 Social Media Survey. The curriculum of this course will consistently address and integrate the connections to the various aspects of the elective courses that have been carefully selected based upon qualitative research accomplished at BHSU specifically in Spring 2015 semester among the three college deans, department chairs and faculty.

BHSU seeks approval to deliver the entire certificate online and at the Black Hills State University-Rapid City location.

**4. List the courses to be completed, the credit hours of each course, and the total number of credit hours required for the program.**

<b>Prefix &amp; #</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
MCOM 235	Social Media Survey (new course online)	3
<b>And</b>		
MCOM 430	Media Law (face-to-face and online)	3
<b>And</b>		
TAKE any TWO of the following COURSES from the following options (at least one course must have the BADM or OE prefix):		
BADM 344	Managerial Communications (PreRequisite: ENGL201) (face-to-face and online)	3
BADM 370	Marketing (face-to-face and online)	3
BADM 372	Advertising (PreRequisite: BADM370) (face-to-face and online)	3
BADM 407	International Business (face-to-face and online)	3
BADM 475	Consumer Behavior (PreRequisite: BADM370) (face-to-face)	3
MCOM 161	Graphic Communication (face-to-face)	3
MCOM 210	Basic Newswriting (PreRequisite: ENGL101) (face-to-face and online)	3
MCOM 220	Introduction to Digital Media (online)	3
MCOM 373	PR Case Studies (face-to-face)	3
MCOM 475	Public Relations (face-to-face)	3
MCOM 485	Science Writing (online)	3
OE 376	Technology Integration (face-to-face)	3

**Total Credit Hours Required**      12 credits

**5. Proposed CIP code** 09.0102

**6. Effective Date of Certificate Program** Summer 2017

## **Addendum to Curriculum Proposal for Social Media Certificate**

Date: February 5, 2016

**Committee concerns:** Some of the options are not really available to ALL students. Committee uncertain the proposal has been passed to faculty who may be impacted by included courses.

**RESPONSE:** This proposal for the Social Media Certificate came after extended research among faculty, all deans, and Dr. Custer. During spring semester 2015, via an independent study entitled Social Media Development, Mass Communication interns Hannah Downs and Lina Katelaite conducted interviews with Deans Simpson, Wolff, and Romkema, as well as with faculty that were suggested by the deans and with students taking a range of majors from all three colleges. All administrators welcomed the Certificate Proposal, viewing it as a means for the University to stay current with digital trends while building enrollment and providing students more options for credentialed study. The impetus for the Certificate come after nearly 5 years of internationally published research in social media on the BHSU campus, including an interdisciplinary e-book of curriculum tools, tested and implemented by a unified faculty across subject matter and across all colleges. The e-book results were presented at an international conference in New York City in summer 2014. A second e-book is in process.

The course list intentionally reaches broadly, listing some classes for which few students may qualify. The point is to offer an option-rich course menu that attracts students because they will see for their selected major that they may already have taken several of the Certificate classes. Thus, adding just two or three more classes will earn them this additional valued area of study. The course list should not be trimmed to reflect options that ALL students can access, because to do so would narrow the pool of potential enrollees.

In this climate of fierce need to attract and retain students, the Social Media Certificate needs to be as broadly available as possible.