



# Course program and reading list

Semester 2 Year 2023

**School:** Sammy Ofer School of Communications B.A

## Gaining virality on social media: Theory and practice

**Lecturer:**

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<b>Course No.:</b>	<b>Course Type :</b>	<b>Weekly Hours :</b>	<b>Credit:</b>
3096	Seminar	2	2

<b>Course Requirements :</b>	<b>Group Code :</b>	<b>Language:</b>
Final Paper	232309601	English

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### Course Description

**Course Subjects:** (1-13 weekly lesson plan & readings\*)

1. Virality: the main contemporary models

Goel, S., Anderson, A., Hofman, J., & Watts, D. J. (2016). The structural virality of online diffusion. *Management Science*, 62(1), 180-196.

Akpinar, E., & Berger, J. (2017). Valuable virality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 54(2), 318-330.

2. Virality on SNS - Guest lecture on Zoom

Weng, L., Menczer, F., & Ahn, Y. Y. (2013). Virality prediction and community structure in social networks. *Scientific reports*, 3, 2522.

Hansen, L. K., Arvidsson, A., Nielsen, F. Å., Colleoni, E., & Etter, M. (2011). Good friends, bad news-affect and virality in twitter. In *Future information technology* (pp. 34-43). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

### 3. Complex Contagion theory and virality

Sampson, T. D. (2012). *Virality: Contagion theory in the age of networks*. U of Minnesota Press.

Parikka, J. (2013). *Virality: contagion theory in the age of networks* by Tony D. Sampson.

### 4. Emotions and virality

Guerini, M., & Staiano, J. (2015, May). Deep feelings: A massive cross-lingual study on the relation between emotions and virality. In *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on World Wide Web* (pp. 299-305).

### 5. What makes online content viral – Guest lecture on Zoom

Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2012). What makes online content viral?. *Journal of marketing research*, 49(2), 192-205.

Mills, A. J. (2012). Virality in social media: the SPIN framework. *Journal of public affairs*, 12(2), 162-169.

### 6. The Berger/Milkman model

Berger, J., & Milkman, K. (2010). Social transmission, emotion, and the virality of online content. *Wharton research paper*, 106, 1-52.

Milkman, K. L., & Berger, J. (2014). The science of sharing and the sharing of science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(Supplement 4), 13642-13649.

### 7. Videos and commenting behaviour

Alhabash, S., Baek, J. H., Cunningham, C., & Hagerstrom, A. (2015). To comment or not to comment?: How virality, arousal level, and commenting behavior on YouTube videos affect

civic behavioral intentions. *Computers in human behavior*, 51, 520-531.

8. Virality and attention mechanism

Bielski, A., & Trzcinski, T. (2018). Pay Attention to Virality: understanding popularity of social media videos with the attention mechanism. In *Proceedings of the IEEE Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition Workshops* (pp. 2335-2337).

9. Hashtags and virality – Guest lecture via Zoom

Wang, R., Liu, W., & Gao, S. (2016). Hashtags and information virality in networked social movement. *Online Information Review*.

10. Sharing is caring? Virality and shareability

Tellis, G. J., MacInnis, D. J., Tirunillai, S., & Zhang, Y. (2019). What drives virality (sharing) of online digital content? The critical role of information, emotion, and brand prominence. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(4), 1-20.

11. Virality and strong emotions

Berger, J., & Milkman, K. L. (2013). Emotion and virality: what makes online content go viral?. *Marketing Intelligence Review*, 5(1), 18-23.

12-13. presentations (might take place via the Zoom platform if relevant)



## Course Goals

### **Course Description:**

The question which content is more likely to gain virality on online social networks has become a major issue in various fields, including marketing studies and even political studies. Studies aim to examine, for example, whether logic-based content gain more engagement than emotion-based content etc. to understand political manipulation. The seminar course will review the leading theories of virality and aim to encourage student to test some of these theories using applied research.

As some of the classes will be conducted via the Zoom platform, we will host several

guest lecturers

### **Course Goals:**

The course aims to give students tools to conduct empirical analyses, specifically using applied research methods. The analyses are examining the students' own projects as well as other real-life cases to examine virality of various content on the main social media platforms.

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### Grading

#### **Assignments and Requirements:**

80% seminar paper.

20% presentation

Grade Composition:

80% seminar paper.

20% presentation

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### Reading List

#### **Bibliography**

Kowalczyk, D. K., & Larsen, J. (2018). Scalable Privacy-Compliant Virality Prediction on Twitter. arXiv preprint arXiv:1812.06034.

Lu, X., & Szymanski, B. K. (2018). Scalable prediction of global online media news virality. IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems, 5(3), 858-870.

Nahon, K., Hemsley, J., Walker, S., & Hussain, M. (2011). Blogs: spinning a web of virality. In Proceedings of the 2011 iConference (pp. 348-355).

Nahon, K., & Hemsley, J. (2013). *Going viral*. Polity.