Homework II – CS 6474/CS 4803 Social Computing[*]

Grade	Max 100 points; 10% of overall grade (late policy applies)
Due	**March 11, 2026, 11:59pm Eastern Time**
What to hand in	A report (as a PDF file) with answers to the different questions; reports should be about 5 pages in a single-spaced, single column format with 1-inch margins. Overly long reports beyond the suggested limit will be penalized. Design sketches and references are *not included* in the page limit. PS: Any references you include should be in the APA format[1]
Where to submit	Canvas

Question:
You and three of your friends have been contracted by a large company to build features that cater to mental health influencers on a short-video sharing platform that is similar to TikTok. The goal of this initiative is to: i) encourage candid discussion of lived experiences of mental health struggles, based on the narratives presented by the influencers, and ii) empower influencers to serve as allies to fight stigma and misconceptions around mental illness. You will be working to add, modify, or remove design features of the (TikTok-like) social computing platform to meet this broader goal, anchored in literature from our class readings and discussion.

To do so, based on the course readings [1-3], answer the following questions:

a) [30 points] Drawing on Goffman's dramaturgical approach to self-presentation [1] and Hogan's conceptualization of self-presentation on social media as an exhibition [2], present some sketches and low fidelity prototypes of design features that could serve the above two goals. Hand drawn sketches are fine as long as they are legible.

b) [15 points] What specific features have you included or changed in your design and why? How will these features work in your design? Please include a discussion of feasibility and ethical implications of the changes you have made.

c) [5 points] What features you have made sure your design(s) do(es) not have? Are there features of the platform that you removed? And if so, why?

d) [10 points] Does identity curation (including deception) play a role in your design? In other words, would your design actively attempt to prevent deception, or would it allow it in some circumstances? Justify your rationale by drawing on Donath's work [3].

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e) [25 points] Propose a study design, of any type, through which you will assess if your designed features, if implemented on the platform, would be successful in achieving the two goals described above.

f) [15 points] Provide your rationale behind this study design, the challenges in execution of the study, and possible ways to mitigate these challenges. Assume you have unlimited time and resources to conduct this study.

References:

[1] The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life: Introduction (PDF file pgs. 6-10) [link]
[2] The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media: Distinguishing Performances and Exhibitions Online [link]
[3] Identity and Deception in the Virtual Community [link]