

## WORKSHOP PROPOSAL

# Addressing Radical Content on Social Media

Nidhi Rastogi

This project proposes that universities should run workshops with college students on how to navigate social media platforms critically and safely. This proposal provides an overview of what these workshops could look like. For more information on this proposal, please see this memo [here](#).

### Learning Objectives

The purpose of this workshop is to equip students with the essential skills and tools required to navigate social media platforms safely and critically. At the end of this workshop, students will (a) demonstrate critical thinking skills to distinguish between reliable and unreliable online sources; (b) understand how to report misinformation and disinformation instances to university faculty; and (c) understand best practices for safe online interactions.

This workshop is divided into four main sections: an introduction, a section on identifying radical content, a section on strategies for navigating the digital sphere, and a concluding section.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### Suggested Plan

- ▶ **Welcome:** Briefly welcome students and introduce them to the workshop's purpose and goals.
- ▶ **Overview:** Preview the workshop's content, including:
  - ▶ **The Rise of Digital Platforms:** Quickly review popular platforms like TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram.
  - ▶ **The Double-Edged Sword:** Highlight both the positive impact (communication, learning, entertainment) and the challenges posed by these platforms, such as the spread of radical content.
- ▶ **Highlight on Mental Health:** Discuss mental health issues in youth resulting from engagements on social media platforms like TikTok.

### Learning Objectives

- ▶ Recognize the dual nature of social media platforms.
  - ▶ Understand specific mental health challenges and the potential to develop a radicalized mindset.
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## II. IDENTIFYING RADICAL CONTENT

### Suggested Plan

- ▶ **Overview of Types of Radical Content:** Differentiate among misinformation, extremist ideologies, conspiracy theories, and content promoting harmful behavior.
- ▶ **Real Life Examples:** Showcase a few examples of such content that students might encounter.
- ▶ **Discussion of Key Indicators to Identify Misinformation:** Discuss common markers or red flags to be wary of.

### Learning Objectives

- ▶ Recognize and analyze real life instances of radical content that students might come across.
  - ▶ Identify and understand key indicators or red flags associated with misinformation and other radical content.
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## III. STRATEGIES FOR NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL SPHERE

### Suggested Plan

- ▶ **Critical Thinking:** Encourage a questioning mindset: “Who? What? Why? When? Where? How?”
- ▶ **Verification Tools:** Introduce some basic online tools and methods to verify information.
- ▶ **Safe Browsing:** Offer tips on maintaining privacy and security while surfing the web.
- ▶ **Scenario Simulation:** Present a piece of questionable online content and let participants determine its credibility.

### Learning Objectives

- ▶ Analyze and independently assess the credibility of questionable online content using a combination of critical thinking and verification tools.
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## IV. WRAP-UP

### Suggested Plan:

- ▶ **Faculty Contacts:** Provide contact information of faculty members open to gathering examples of radical content (for research on mis- and disinformation, mental health, and algorithmic decisionmaking on social media platforms).
  - ▶ **Review:** Recap the main takeaways from the workshop.
  - ▶ **Introduction of the 1-Credit Course:** If planned, briefly mention an upcoming course for those interested in delving deeper into the subject.
  - ▶ **Feedback Collection:** Encourage participants to fill out a feedback survey to evaluate the workshop's effectiveness and gather suggestions for future sessions.
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## **ASPEN TECH POLICY HUB**

### **OPERATIONAL DOCUMENT**

#### **ABOUT THE HUB**

The Aspen Tech Policy Hub is a Bay Area policy incubator, training a new generation of science and tech policy entrepreneurs. We take science and tech experts, teach them the policy process, and support them in creating outside-the-box solutions to society's problems.

