

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Touro University California • Graduate School of Education



Research Proposal

Faculty: Email this form to: tuc.gsoeirb@tu.edu **Students:** Only your Advisor may forward this form for review. Forms submitted directly by students will not be processed.

Click all checkboxes that apply. Form fields will expand as needed.

- ☐ This proposal includes all consent forms and survey questions (if applicable) in the body of this document. Insert page/section breaks as necessary to place these on separate pages below the proposal section.
- ☐ This is a faculty proposal.
- ☒ This is a student proposal. NOTE: All student proposals must be emailed by the faculty advisor who, by submission, indicates that (1) s/he has reviewed the proposal, (2) it has his/her full approval, and (3) affirms that the student has passed a Human Subjects course.

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Program of Study:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ EdLeadership | ☐ Teaching & Learning |
| ☐ Educational Technology | ☐ Teaching Math |
| ☐ Special Ed | ☐ Teaching Science |
| ☐ Urban Education | ☒ Innovative Learning |

Title of the Research

Effects of Social Networks on Student Activism.

For exempt research only: Check the category of exemption (definitions below): X 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6

EXCEPTIONS: Research involving vulnerable populations such as the mentally or cognitively impaired, prisoners, parolees, pregnant women, and fetuses, cannot be exempt from review even though it meets the criteria of one of the categories below.

EXEMPTION CATEGORIES (45 CFR 46.101(b)): Research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories:

- Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricular or classroom management methods.
- Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employment or reputation. **Research using survey procedures or interview procedures upon children cannot be exempt. Research involving observation of children's behavior cannot be exempt if the investigator is a participant in the behaviors observed.**
- Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b) (2) of this section if (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter. Research which deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol, cannot be exempt from review.
- Research involving the collection or study of **existing** ("in existence on the day the study is approved") data, documents, records, pathological specimens or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly, or through identifiers linked to the subjects.
- Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of **federal** department or agency heads and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (iv) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
- Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food and Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

CONTINUING STUDIES:

Is this a continuation of or change to an existing TUC IRB approved study? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, attach a copy of last year's approved exempt study and indicate the date of submission/approval.

JUSTIFICATION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Type your answers in the boxes provided which will expand as needed. Describe your research study. If you are applying for exemption, you must justify how your study qualifies for exemption by addressing the **critical elements** of the exemption category you choose in item 7. To be sure you answer the issues typically examined by the reviewers, please review the "IRB Review Form" available at: <http://cehs.tu.edu/gsoe>

1. Provide an Abstract or Summary for the proposed study. **Brief - 250 words at the most. Less is OK.**

The purpose of this study is to determine whether Social Network Sites can influence students to become more proactive in politics. As we move towards the 21st century, Social Network Sites such as Facebook and Twitter has grown exponentially, while voting has decreased. My study seeks to find a correlation between increased social awareness of political issues through the use of Social Network Sites and voter registration for the age group of 18-25. I will be using the students in my classes as the sample of my study. A questionnaire will be given both at the onset and the conclusion of my study to measure their level of social awareness regarding politics through the use of Twitter. The survey will also measure the level of interest regarding voter registration and their desire to vote. The activities to raise their awareness of political issues revolve around their frequent monitoring of such issues on SNS, such as Twitter, and the sharing of such issues in class on a daily basis.

2. Describe the specific aims/purpose. What is your research question? State your hypothesis and research questions or project goals and objectives. (Driving question here...What do you think this will reveal? What are your need to knows?)

Purpose:

The purpose of this research is to use Social Network Sites, such as Twitter, to get more students involved with their communities and to promote civil service. My goal is to determine if Twitter promotes social activism within their communities, promotes and strengthens social capital, and motivates students to become more proactive with social causes by registering to vote.

In Magruder's American Textbook it states that some people cannot vote for various reasons, such as physical or mental illness, unexpected travel, and resident alien citizenship status. However, most nonvoters do not vote because "voting is in some way inconvenient, they do not believe that their vote will make a difference, or they distrust politics and political candidates." (McClenaghan, 2014)

Voting is a fundamental right that every American citizen has and use to ensure their voices are heard and respected, despite their age, especially for our young voters. That is why recently in California Governor Brown just signed a bill into law "legislation that will automatically pre-register all 16 and 17 year olds to vote when they receive a California driver's license or state identification card," (Entralgo, 2018). The logic of this bill is for "California lawmakers see this move as a way to address the significant disparity in registered voters in the state. During the 2012 presidential election cycle, "California ranked 38th out of all 50 states when it came to the number of eligible but unregistered voters, with roughly 7 million voters in this category." (Satzman, 2016) This law in California comes in the time where California high school students wants to have their voice heard especially what is happening in the White House, school shootings, and the passage of legalizing marijuana.

DQ:

How will the use of SNS, like Twitter, effect social awareness of political issues that will then inturn encourage the youth between the ages of 18 -25 to register to vote?

My Needs to Know:

- Define Social Capital?
- Can SNS raise awareness of social issues?
- What percentage of registered voters actually voted between the ages of 18-25?
- What perentage of our government has used SNS and has it increased or decreased in voting?

3. **Describe background information and rationale for conducting the study and the importance of the knowledge to be gained. Provide references, if available.**

Aaker and Chang (2009) examined the presidential election of 2008 with Democratic Senator Barack Obama versus Republican Senator John McCain. They found that many factors contributed to Obama's success to become president, but a major one was the way he and his campaign team used social media as an key component of "their campaign strategy, not only to raise money, but also more importantly, to develop a groundswell of empowered volunteers who felt that they could make a difference." (Aaker, 2009) President Barack Obama in the 2012 Presidential election used this same technique by using Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets to reach and educate younger voters about the upcoming election. "He focused on 15 social networks. Obama was the first presidential candidate to have profiles on AsianAve.com, MiGente.com, and BlackPlanet.com. These social networks are shopping malls that have millions of people already hanging out in them." (Aaker, 2009)

In a national survey of 1,520 nearly "eight-in-ten *online* Americans (79%) now use Facebook, more than double the share that uses Twitter (24%), Pinterest (31%), Instagram (32%) or LinkedIn (29%)." (Perrin, 2016) On a total population basis (accounting for Americans who do not use the internet at all), that means that 68% of all U.S. adults are Facebook users, while 28% use Instagram, 26% use Pinterest, 25% use LinkedIn and 21% use Twitter. However, according to a report by CNN in 2016 voter turnout dropped to its lowest in nearly two decades at 53.5%. "That measure of turnout is the lowest in a presidential election since 1996, when 53.5% of voting-age citizens turned out." (Wallace, 2016) In today's world, more people are registering and creating online profiles for Social Network Sites (SNS) compared to registered to vote in America.

In California alone, despite the total voter registration increased from 18,245,970 to 19,411,771, according to The Secretary of State's office released its final registration statistics, only about 13% of registered voters of the age of 18 - 25 years old voted. (Padilla, 2016) This is by far the lowest age group that voted in California compared to the next age range of 26 -35 that voted roughly at 18% and the highest age group of 66+ that voted at roughly 20%.

Gerber, Karlan, and Bergan (2009) conducted a field experiment to measure the effect of exposure to newspapers on political behavior and opinion. They wanted to examine how mass media, pre-social network sites (SNS) such as Facebook or Twitter, can shape the public's political knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. Through their research of only using newspapers as their mass media, they concluded "that the effect of newspapers on political attitudes, behavior, and subject knowledge of news events found that even short exposure to a daily newspaper appears to influence voting behavior and may affect turnout behavior." (Gerber, 2009)

In Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) research they explored the relationship between use of Facebook, a popular online social network site, and the formation and maintenance of social capital. During their research they discovered "by 2007 Facebook was reported to have more than 21 million registered members generating 1.6 billion page views each day" (Ellison, 2007) Where newspapers used to be the norm of knowing the political scene, social network sites such as Facebook or Twitter has taken the lead. While also using SNS as a source of information for political news, SNS can lead to more social participation and more social capital compared to other mass media devices.

According to Samaneh Naseri's (2017) study on social network sites and their impact on social capital, she focused on the fundamental mechanisms that can clarify how social network sites contribute to social capital formation. In the research it conducted a study among 400 young Cape Verdeans and Angolans (18-30 years old) living in Portugal, she concluded that the use of SNS did increase social capital and SNS are becoming a powerful replacement for a newer form of virtual socializing.

References

Aaker, J., & Chang, V. (2009). Obama and the Power of Social Media and Technology. 1-40. Retrieved from <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/case-studies/obama-power-social-media-technology>.

Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The Benefits of Facebook "Friends:" Social Capital and

College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(4), 1143-1168. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x

Entralgo, R. (n.d.). California expands automatic voter registration to teens. Retrieved March 11, 2018, from <https://thinkprogress.org/california-law-registered-voters-each-year-55c95e979bc9/>

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Satzman, D., Feinzimer, B., Glaser, C., Shamberg, C., & Coyle, M. (n.d.). Can a new law get California's 7 million unregistered voters to register? Retrieved March 11, 2018, from <https://curious.kcrw.com/2016/05/can-a-new-law-get-californias-7-million-unregistered-voters-to-register>

Wallace, G. (2016, November 30). Voter turnout at 20-year low in 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2016/11/11/politics/popular-vote-turnout-2016/index.html>

4. Describe the research methods and procedures.

- a. **How do you plan to do it?** What kind of study is it? How will it answer your research question? **Be specific. Describe your sample:** Who/what will be included/excluded and why? (What are recruitment/exclusion criteria? Be sure to include women, minorities, other groups if appropriate, and how they will be recruited). Randomization and/or controls? What data/artifacts will you collect? Is this the best, safest way to collect it? Who will perform the collections/analyze the data? Will any tests be involved? Will any remuneration be provided? Address confidentiality.

My study will focus the use of SNS, like Twitter, to help increase social awareness of political issues that will then in turn encourage the youth between the ages of 18 -25 to register to vote. This a mixed method research study with descriptive designs. I would also use qualitative and quantitative research using self-assessment with my students on *their social media participation in social and political issues*. I will be using my 170+ students for this research and data collecting. The demographics of my students are 7% Asian, 18% Pacific Islander, 18% African American, 47% White, 10% other, 5% SPED, and 4% EL students. There would be no randomization or control in my study. I will be the only one collecting and analyzing the data, with assessment to be included in that as well. There will not be any remuneration provided during the course of my study. To answer the confidentiality aspect, the data will be stored onto Google and I will be the only one with access to the password.

In the pre and post tests, there would be questions asking both quantitative and qualitative data. Questions such as asking students to rate themselves on their political awareness and asking students how many of them are planning to register to vote? Questions would also ask which SNS do they currently use and are they politically active on their SNS? There would also be open ended questions where the students can answer freely such as asking students their experience of political activism? During the study I would plan for my student to engage themselves in activities to visit Twitter, read a

political issue on Twitter, and report on what they have read and what they have learned. Through the repetition of this activity my hope is that social awareness of political issues will increase.

Statistics show that there is low voter turnout for the age group between 18 and 25 years old. Statistics also show that this age group are digital natives and receive majority of their information through Social Network Sites. Entering the 21st century, for our society to be successful, we can not just be satisfied with being technologically savvy but also need to be more aware of social and political issues and feel the need to vote.

- b. **What are the potential risks and benefits to your human subjects?** Be sure to be as specific as possible; include loss of time or other inconveniences to participants. Don't overstate benefits; if they are hypothetical benefits this must be clearly stated. How will you obtain consent? Provide for translation, reading for illiterate participants; whatever else may be necessary? (Be sure to address the risk to students).

The risks are none since this study fits the exempt category. No loss of time or inconvenience will be involved because the study will be part of the regular school day. Benefits are unknown. Consent will be obtained from parents. Translation will be provided where necessary.

- c. **What will you do with the data?** Where and how will it be stored and for how long? Who will have access to it? How will it be analyzed? Will there be follow-up? (Reinforce that the data will be secured and anonymous and that no one else will have access to the data.)

The data will be anonymous. Only the teacher and I will have access to the data. Data will be stored in the password protected DIBELS website. I will not publish student names connected to this action research. When I share the outcome of the action research with my staff, student names will be excluded. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative analysis will be provided through the constant comparative method.

- d. **Appendices.** Paste questionnaires, focus group questions, consent forms, parental handouts at the end of this document.

5. List the specific location of the study (building, etc.).

The research will be conducted at Fairfield High School, Fairfield CA 94533 Room G-10

6. Indicate the proposed duration of the study.

The study will be two weeks in April 2018.

7. Indicate the exemption category above and provide justification for exempt review here.

Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricular or classroom management methods.

Student investigators only: Once your IRB proposal has been approved by your advisor, email the document to them for submission along with proof that you completed a human subjects course. The Human Subjects course may be accessed at: <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>

TOTAL NUMBER OF COPIES REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION:

Faculty PIs and Advisors: Please email original .doc file **and all appendices** to: gsoeirb@tu.edu A single all-inclusive file is preferred.

GSOE IRB Administration
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