This minitrack addresses issues of theory, design, and analysis of social networking and communities. More specifically, it focuses on the way social networks and social media enhance or disrupt communal, interpersonal, and personal networking behaviors. This minitrack is one of the most successful minitracks at HICSS. It attracts a high number of papers and at the same time with high quality. The acceptance rate of this minitrack is rigorous and lower than the average HICSS conference. This year, the acceptance rate was 42% and we accepted only 12 papers of the 28 papers that were submitted. The papers exhibit various methodologies: e.g., SEM (Structural equation modeling), SNA (Social network analysis), survey, content analysis and rhetorical analysis. They focus on different types of social media and online social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia and Virtual Communities for Innovations. Across the papers we find a number of themes, including attention to value systems and cultures and their role in online communities and social media, uncovering and analyzing the effect of different use patterns and different interactions in social media, and the effect of motivation and behaviors on commitment to the community.

The role of value systems and culture in online communities and social media is demonstrated in the papers: The Influence of Self-Concept Improvement on Member Loyalty to Online Communities: An Empirical Comparison between Social Networks and Virtual Worlds by Young Eun Lee, Aditya Saharia, and also the paper: Negotiating Cultural Values in Social Media: A Case Study from Wikipedia by Jonathan Morgan, Robert Mason, Karine Nahon.

A focus on understanding different use patterns, including. This includes understanding usage by users with high level of addictions as in the paper: System Use Antecedents and Outcomes of Facebook Addiction by Ofir Turel. It also includes rhetorical practices in open environments, as in Social media as a driver for new rhetorical practices in organizations by Joao Baptista, Jimmy Huang, Robert Galliers. Linguistic markers to secrets and sensitive self-disclosure in Computer-Mediated Communication by David Houghton, Adam Joinson, analyzed linguistic differences between secret and non-secret tweets.

Some of the papers specifically addressed the structures of interactions while studying use patterns. For example, the paper Uncovering Associations in Socio-Technical Networks by Kar-Hai Chu, Daniel Suthers, Devan Rosen and the paper Political Deliberation and Influence through Microblogging: An Empirical Analysis of Sentiment in Twitter Messages and Retweet Behavior by Stefan Stieglitz, Linh Dang-Xuan.

Some papers focused on how motivation of behaviors and behavior of individuals affect the commitment to the community, such as: Categorizing Behavior in Online Communities: A Look into the World of Cake Bakers by Dale Ganley, Christine Moser, Peter Groenewegen; Social Capital and Knowledge Sharing in Online Communities: A Mediation Model by Sally Pui-Man Law, Man Kit Chang. The paper Self Discrepancy, Perceived Privacy Rights, and Contribution in Virtual Communities by Ayoung Suh, Kyung-shik Shin focused on how taking different identities impacts the quality and quantity of contribution to the community. And, the paper: Idea Generation in Virtual Communities for Innovation: The Influence of Participants’ Motivation on Idea Quality by Ulrich Bretschneider, Balaji Rajagopalan, Jan Marco Leimeister, explored how motivations of customers contribute to virtual communities of innovations.

Finally, one paper, emphasized the methodology of sampling in online social networks: Purposive Sampling on Twitter: A Case Study by Christopher Sibona, Steve Walczak.