

Advanced Social Media

JRSM 4910-001

Fall 2017

Wednesday, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

112 MJ

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Advanced skills in social media content creation, apps, and analytics. Emphasis on messaging strategies for news and strategic communication. Evaluation of capabilities and tactics for existing and emerging media platforms.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Social media is altering how journalists and persuasive communication professionals do their jobs and how we communicate. We will be using many apps and social platforms to produce and curate content and interact with our audiences.

It's important to note that particular sites like Twitter, Facebook or Snapchat may come and go in this fast-changing environment, but the need for high quality digital content is a constant. Ultimately, this course will help you apply the core values of journalistic practice to new media forms in productive, creative, and intelligent ways.

PREREQUISITE:

None

TEXTBOOK:

Humphreys, Ashley. *Social Media: Enduring Principles*, Oxford University Press

A variety of additional articles will be assigned and will be available online, distributed to you via email or the class Facebook group. I know books are expensive. Feel free to buy used, share with a friend or pick up an electronic copy for whatever device works for you.

While not required, it's highly recommended that you have (or have regular access to) some sort of mobile device (smart phone, tablet, iPhone, Android). You're also going to need reliable internet access. These sorts of things can get expensive, and I respect your financial situation. However, this is web-based class, and learning to publish from (and for) these devices is a huge part of our class and your future as digital content creators.

In order to get the most out of this class and prepare for your future career, it's important to be a digital native, which means that you should constantly reading, interacting, playing and creating online. It's nearly impossible to learn online news values and produce quality online content without consuming it. Consider the time you spend online (even scrolling through Facebook) an investment in your future.

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

Lecture/Lab

COURSE POLICIES:

Reading / Participation

Be sure that you've read all assigned material and are prepared to discuss it before you come to class. **You will be asked to comment on the readings and to discuss your thoughts about them in class.**

In addition to reading the assigned materials, please get in the habit of paying attention to developments in social media, technology and news. You may be called on to share something interesting that you've seen in your independent reading. In addition to being involved on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other social networks, I suggest reading Mashable and Techcrunch and keeping up with local and national news.

Assignments

You will have a variety of assignments throughout the semester, most of which will involve you using or discussing social and digital media. **All assignments are to be turned in to me via email. NO PAPER.** Please use relevant subject lines on your homework emails, as I get a ton of mail.

Late Work

Journalism is a deadline business and so is this class. Assignments are due at the assigned time on their due date. **I DO NOT accept late work.** If you know that you won't make a deadline, I will work with you, provided you let me know either in person or via email at least 24 hours in advance.

Extra Credit

There will be a handful of extra credit opportunities offered throughout the semester.

Attendance Policy

Because this class only meets once a week, it's important that you show up. I understand that life stuff happens. That's why you get one free pass on missing class, no questions asked. **If you need to miss more than once, you must let me know via email, IM, phone call, text, semaphore, Twitter, singing telegram, etc. by 2 p.m. on Wednesday. For every class you miss without letting me know first, two points will be deducted from your final grade.**

Communication

Get in the habit of checking your email, Facebook and Twitter at least once per day. I will use them frequently to communicate with you, and you'll need them to communicate with each other.

GRADING:

Your final grade will consist of:

- Assignments (many and varied, including weekly assignments and quizzes): 60 percent
- Final: 15 percent
- Reading and Participation: 10 percent
- Daily Photo Assignment: 10 percent
- Online Portfolio Assignment: 5 percent

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

Week 1: Introduction to the Course / Social Media and the Changing Journalistic Landscape

- **We'll cover:**
 - Explanation of the course and syllabus
 - How digital media has changed journalism and branding
 - What happens when everyone is a content producer
- **Assignments:**
 - **Join class Facebook group**, introduce yourself to the class [Details TBA]
 - Start your Daily Photo project (optional hashtag #j4910)
 - If you haven't already, **set up Twitter and Instagram accounts. Send me links to your accounts in the email with your topic of focus.**
 - **Examine your online and social media habits for 48 hours. Then, write a three-page (minimum) paper, where you analyze your online and social media habits.** Answer the following questions: What are your social media habits? How often do you use social media? How are you using it - is it active, passive, a means of communication, etc.)? Why do you use it the way you do? Is there anything you've noticed about the types of people / accounts you follow? What do they say about you? What would you like to change about your online habits. I expect you to be thorough and thoughtful. *The paper should be at least three pages with 1.5 line spacing. You may use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Helvetica, Calibri or Arial. Points will be deducted for line spacing over 1.5 and typefaces outside of the approved list.*

Week 2: Models, Messages and Blogging Basics

- **We'll cover:**
 - What communication models do we use on social media?
 - Common message types
 - Choosing a niche and other blogging best practices
 - Developing content ideas
 - Choosing the right platform(s) for your content

- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys: Chapters 2-3
 - How to Use Medium <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-use-medium#sm.0000qwaait2uieqlrwj1idupqijw5>
- **Assignments:**
 - **Set up your blog.** We'll go over how to do this in class. You may use Wordpress or Medium - it's up to you.
 - **Choose a topic for your blog.** Write a paragraph that explains your topic and why it's important to you. Then, **make a list of at least 10 story/post ideas.** Think about questions you want to answer, your opinions, current topics related to your area. The ideas can be for content in any format (text, videos, interviews, photos, etc.) They don't have to be refined or perfect - just make a list of initial content ideas. **Email both to me.**
 - Develop a list of at LEAST three other blogs/websites/publishers that meaningfully address or influence your chosen beat. They don't have to be bloggers, but they do have to actively publish content to more than one platform. **Write a blog post that includes an introduction (why these accounts/people are influential), then for each account, include a link and a paragraph that answers the following questions:** What kind of problem do these websites/blogs help solve for their audience and/or what needs do they fulfill? What do they do well? What could they improve? Can you identify any gaps in their content or features that a competitor could fill, and how is what you could offer different or better? Look at their comments or interaction via social media: Are they cultivating an active community around their site? I will tell you how to structure this post in class. **Send a link to your post via email.**
 - **Email me the link to your blog, and post it in the class Facebook group**
 - **Continue your photo-a-day assignment**

Week 3: Why Do We Use Social Media?

- **We'll cover:**
 - Why people use social media
 - The benefits of social media
 - Behavior enabled by social media
- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 6
 - Why Americans Use Social Media (Pew Research Center) <http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/11/15/why-americans-use-social-media/>
- **Assignments:**
 - Blog post: Write a blog post using one of the ideas you sent me last week.
 - Continue your photo a day assignment

Week 4: Measuring Social Media

- **We'll cover:**
 - The importance of showing value through metrics and analytics
 - Learn Basic SEO
 - Understand metrics, how to find them and how to improve them
 - Understanding social influencers and their importance
- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 4: "Measuring Social Media"
 - How To Track Social Media Traffic with Google Analytics - <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-track-social-media-traffic-with-google-analytics/>
 - Mashable: Metrics that Matter - <http://mashable.com/category/metrics-that-matter/>
- **For Reference:**
 - How to Get Started on Google Analytics - <http://mashable.com/2011/05/23/how-to-use-google-analytics/>
- **Assignments**
 - **Make a specific list of the metrics you want to track** for the rest of the semester. Include details of how you're going to track them.
 - **Answer the following questions:** What insights are you hoping to derive from your metrics? What do you want to know about your users? What's your initial hypothesis on what types of content or engagement you think will work or not work towards growing your metrics?
 - **Implement a metrics system on your site and social networks.** We'll talk about how to do this in class and which services are free. Do this now - you'll need it for your next assignment.
 - Take one of the content ideas you turned in a few weeks ago and turn it into a blog post.

Week 5: Digital Inequality and Social Media

- **We'll cover:**
 - Social media demographics
 - Digital inequality
 - How class and age change how people use social media
- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 7
 - Pew Research Center - Social Media Update 2013: <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Social-Media-Update/Main-Findings/Demographics-of-key-social-networking-platforms.aspx>
 - Farhad Manjoo: How Black People Use Twitter - http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2010/08/how_black_people_use_twitter.html
 - Poynter: How Social Media Can Help Journalists Reach Ethnically Diverse Groups - <http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering->

storytelling/diversity-at-work/104224/how-social-media-can-help-journalists-reach-ethnically-diverse-groups/

- NYT: Does Social Networking Breed Social Division? - <http://gadgetwise.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/does-social-networking-breed-social-division/>
- Boyd, Danah: Viewing American Class Divisions Through Facebook and MySpace - <http://www.danah.org/papers/essays/ClassDivisions.html>

- **Assignments:**

- Interview a person outside of your age demographic about their feelings and use of social media. **We'll develop a set of questions in class.** Write a two-page paper about your findings. Describe the person, use their quotes, talk about your assumptions before the interview and what you learned from the interview. The paper must be 1.5 spaced and in Times New Roman, Calibri, Helvetica or Arial.
- Blog post on your topic. Your choice.

Week 6: Social Photo and Video

- **We'll cover:**

- Best practices and different ways to using photography on social media platforms.
- Using "Stories" features on apps like Instagram and Snapchat for digital storytelling
- Basics of taking quality photos
- What happens when everyone is a photographer?

- **Reading**

- Learn How to Shoot Decent Photos - <http://mindymcadams.com/tojou/2009/rgmp-7-learn-how-to-shoot-decent-photos/>
- 14 Instagram Photojournalists Who Will Open Your Eyes to the World - <http://mashable.com/2013/12/26/instagram-photojournalism>
- Neiman Lab Snapchat Stories (Select three that look interesting to you, read those) <http://www.niemanlab.org/tag/snapchat/>

- **Assignment**

- **In-Class Assignment**
- **Blog post: Write a post about a topic related to your beat that includes either at least five photos or one video (at least 90 seconds long).** Email a link to the post to me. Share the post on Facebook and Twitter.
- Continue your photo-a-day assignment

Week 7: Social Networks

- **We'll Cover**
 - What are social networks?
 - How is connection built and sustained between networks?
 - Who holds power in social networks?
 - How do your social networks influence the way you receive information?
- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 9
- **Assignments:**
 - Blog post: Your choice.
 - Continue your photo a day assignment

Week 8: Crowdsourcing and Co-Creation

- **We'll Cover:**
 - What is crowdsourcing?
 - Participatory Culture
 - Co-creation
- **Reading**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 5: "User Interaction and Co-Creation"
 - 12 Community Managers Share Their Tips for Better Engagement - <http://mashable.com/2012/03/15/community-manager-engagement-tips/>
 - **Columbia Journalism Review - Crowdsourcing Done Right** - http://www.cjr.org/data_points/crowdsourcing_done_right.php?page=all
- **Assignment**
 - **Do the exercise** from the end of Chapter 5 in your textbook. Turn it in via email.
 - **Blog post:** Choose one of the five content ideas you turned in a few weeks ago and turn it into a blog post. When creating the blog post, find a way to crowdsource or co-create your content.
 - Continue your photo a day assignment

Week 9: Communities and Influencers

- **We'll cover:**
 - Online communities
 - Making the most of the communities you build and participate in
 - Influencers and their influence on marketing and news
 - What defines an influencer
- **Reading:**
 - Humphreys, chapter 10
 - Here's How Much Celebrities Make in the Instagram Product Placement Machine <http://jezebel.com/heres-how-much-celebrities-make-in-the-instagram-produc-1740632946>
 - Slate: "Haters are Gonna Hate, Study Confirms" http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/08/28/haters_are_gonna_hate_dispositional_attitude_study_confirms_it.html
 - Meet the Prom Queen of Instagram <http://nymag.com/thecut/2015/09/lilli-hymowitz-prom-queen-of-instagram.html>
- **Assignments:**
 - **Blog post:** Think about the elements of community we discussed in class. Write a blog post that appeals to a specific community (and is still within your beat). After you write the post, share it with that community.
 - In your email where you turn in your assignment, **let me know how sharing the post with the community worked out.** Answer these questions: where did you share it? What results were you expecting? What results did you get? Was there conversation around your post? Why or why not? Please send me a screenshot of the post being shared in a community.
 - Continue your photo a day assignment.

Week 10: Going Viral and Social Sharing

- **We'll cover:**
 - The basics of viral content
 - Can you make content go viral?
 - Pinterest (and other social sharing sites)
 - Where is your information coming from? The ways social sharing can limit experiences.
- **Reading**
 - Humphreys: Chapter 12
 - Why Content Goes Viral: What Analyzing 100 Million Articles Taught Us <http://okdork.com/2014/04/21/why-content-goes-viral-what-analyzing-100-millions-articles-taught-us/>
 - Why 'Viral Mills' Like BuzzFeed and Upworthy Are Content Marketing at its Worst - <http://venturebeat.com/2013/12/24/why-viral-mills-like-buzzfeed-upworthy-is-content-marketing-at-its-worst/>
 - How to Make That One Thing Go Viral (Just Kidding) - <http://www.upworthy.com/how-to-make-that-one-thing-go-viral-just-kidding>

- Why That Video Went Viral - New York Times
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/20/science/why-that-video-went-viral.html?_r=0

- **Assignment**

- **Try to make something go viral.** Create a new piece of content related to your beat (it can be any type of content). Attempt to make it go viral. Track the number of shares, retweets, views, or comments it gets using the metrics systems you set up last week.
- **Blog Post:** Reflect on your experience with viral content. Did it work? What did you do to try to make your content go viral, and what (if anything) should you have done differently? Consider viral content you've seen recently. What about it made you want to click, share or like? Why?

Week 11: Social Media Marketing

- **We'll cover:**

- The basics of social media marketing
- How marketing has changed because of social media

- **Reading:**

- Humphreys, Chapter 11

- **Assignment:**

- TBA

Week 12: Location Based Media and Live Event Coverage

- **We'll cover:**

- Uses for location-based social media
- Location rules everything around you: how brands (and news sites) are using location as a means of providing content.
- Live event coverage
- Location-based coverage
- What influence does social media have on a location?
- Mobile apps and the future of journalism. How does mobile change what we do? How does mobile change how people consume content?

- **Reading**

- Suggestions (but Not Standards) for Live Tweeting -
<http://stevebuttry.wordpress.com/2011/09/06/suggestions-but-not-standards-for-live-tweeting/>
- Snapchat Adds Filters that Unlock Art Based on Your Location
<http://mashable.com/2014/07/15/snapchat-geo-location-filters/>
- Mobile Journalism Toolbox -
<http://www.journaliststoolbox.org/archive/mobile-journalism/>
- How Smart Devices and Social Media Impact Your Shopping Habit
<http://mashable.com/2012/10/02/smart-devices-social-media-shopping/>

- **Assignments**
 - **Live event coverage assignment** using all of the social networks and skills we've covered up to this point. Details TBA (We'll discuss this in class.)
 - Continue your photo-a-day assignment

Week 13: Race and Gender

- **We'll Cover:**
 - The ways race and gender inform digital experiences
- **Reading**
 - Humphreys, Chapter 8
 - Lauren Duca: We Need to Talk About Online Harassment
<http://www.teenvogue.com/story/online-harassment-lauren-duca-high-high-politics>
- **Assignment:**
 - Revisit the paper you wrote the first week of class. Re-do it.

Week 14: Course Overview and Final prep

- **We'll cover:**
 - Review main themes of the course
 - Prepare for final
 - Discuss anything that we missed or need to spend more time with.
- **Assignment:**
 - Prepare your portfolio
 - Study for your final

FIVE PILLARS OF JRSM4910

- *Professionalism*: Students learn the professional standards and routines of creating and maintaining content for social media sites.
- *Writing*: Students write content and plans of action for social media campaigns.
- *Multimedia*: Students create content with photographs and videos for social media.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students must demonstrate an understanding of the audience that will consume work.
- *Media Literacy*: Students learn the vocabulary and tools of social media. Students learn how content and platforms are researched, planned, and created.

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JRSM4910:

- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically):

- Learn about the many ways the use and presentation of images and information are shifting in the new media landscape, and how these changes affect journalism, public relations, advertising, and society as a whole
- Develop the ability to use numerous tools and technologies that have become vital to advertising, journalism and public relations
- Hone their written and visual communication skills through content production in multiple media
- Apply knowledge of best practices and core values of journalism, public relations, and advertising to new contexts
- Learn about the ethical implications of social network use, such as the concerns surrounding privacy

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies):

- Read and critically reflect, both orally and in writing, on a number of contemporary texts that explore how social networking is changing the use and presentation of images and information
- Complete numerous assignments that will require them to master the basics of how to use social networking tools and to improve their written and visual skills to create content for these sites
- Interact with other journalism students, professors, and professionals worldwide to enhance their understanding of the collaborative power of social media
- Complete a final project that allows them to apply and advance the skills they learned in the course

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET:

Awareness

- Becoming aware of social media tools, resources and ethics.

Understanding

- Understanding the process of creating content driven to a specific audience and brand channel.

Application

- Creation of multiple content posts for varying social media platforms.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

EMAIL:

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/his specific class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DEADLINES:

Remember there's a reason "DEAD" makes up half the word "deadline." All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact your instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

DIVERSITY:

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

WEATHER POLICY:

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.