

Social Media Journalism

JOUR 4535/6535-001

Fall 2023

Meeting: MW, 12:40-2:05

Meeman 202

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Students will learn to cover news and information, track analytics, and search out the newest news trends on popular social media platforms.

Prerequisites

JOUR 3120 or 3629

JOUR 3526

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Adornato, Anthony (2017). *Mobile and Social Media Journalism: A Practical Guide*. Sage Publications.
ISBN: 9781506357157

Classroom format

This class will be a mix of theory and practice. We will cover social media from as many angles as possible during the lectures then we will use that information to guide our field work. A typical class period might include a short lecture focused on a social media platform or concept and then a short practice session. One day we might live tweet a campus event and the next we may post silly TikTok videos. Attendance will be important. If you miss a day, you may miss some good information or maybe just a good time.

AI Usage

Certain assignments in this course may direct you to use ChatGPT for specific purposes and with specific directions. On those assignments, you may use ChatGPT as directed. On all other assignments, you are not permitted to turn in any work that is created, completely or partially, by ChatGPT or another AI tool. Assignment submissions may be run through AI detection software. Unauthorized use of AI tools like ChatGPT may result in a failing grade or a request to resubmit an assignment.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>

2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 4535/6535-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Course Objectives

By the end of this class, students will be able to:

- Share thoughtful, informative information on X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok as a journalist/media professionals.
- Discuss operating a social media account for a journalistic publication.
- Feel confident covering a live event or breaking news on various social media platforms.
- Post Instagram stories and reels as a journalist.
- Broadcast a Facebook/Instagram Live video from an event.
- Identify trending social media-friendly journalistic stories.
- Use social media as a news/information gathering tool.
- Use social media to crowd source ideas and sources.

How the Class Works

You'll have weekly modules focused on the various social media platforms. Starting early in the semester, you'll be tweeting about news from your personal X (formerly Twitter) account. If you already have an X (formerly Twitter) account, great! Use it. If you don't, please create one for the class. "News" can be anything you can imagine being published in a metro newspaper. So hard news, local news, sports, movies, food, travel, fashion, etc. are all game. You will post what *you* care about.

Assignments & Grading

Assignment categories and points or percentage weights.

A+ = 96.5-100%; A = 92.5-96.4%; A- = 89.5-92.4%
B+ = 86.5-89.4%; B = 82.5-86.4%; B- = 79.5-82.4%
C+ = 76.5-79.4%; C = 72.5-76.4%; C- = 69.5-72.4%
D+ = 66.5-69.4%; D = 59.5-66.4%
F 0-59.4%

Social Media Assignments

1. Create & Follow
2. Social media audit
3. Crowdsourcing X (formerly Twitter)
4. Social media story ideas
5. Datamining social media
6. Live tweet (X) practice
7. Instagram Post
8. Instagram Live
9. TikTok Short
10. LinkedIn Profile

Social Media Projects

1. Crowdsourcing story
2. Live Tweet (X) Project
3. Instagram Project
4. TikTok or Instagram Reels project
5. Final Social Media Project (200 points)

Grade distribution

Assignments	Number	Points
SM assignments	10	200 (20 points each)
SM projects	5	600 (1-4 100 points each & 5, 200 points)
Participation	1	50
Portfolio	1	100
SM Engagement	1	50
Total		1,000

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One, Aug. 28: Course introduction.

Homework: SMA1

Week Two, Sept. 4: Getting to Know Social Media (really get to know it)

Homework: SMA2

Week Three, Sept. 11: Crowdsourcing and the Mobile-First Newsroom

Homework: SMA3 & SMA4

Week Four, Sept. 18: Your Social Media Brand: Who Do You Want to Be?

Homework: SMP1

Week Five, Sept. 25: AI In Content Creation

Homework: SMA5

Week Six, Oct. 2: The Big Picture

Week Seven, Oct. 9: X (formerly Twitter)

Homework: SMA6, Initial Project Report, & Journal Entry 1

Week Eight, Oct. 16: X (formerly Twitter) Continued (Week of Fall Break, no Monday class)

Homework: SMP2 Live Tweeting, Journal Entry 2

Week Nine, Oct. 23 Instagram Reporting

Homework: SMA7 & SMP8

Week 10, Oct. 30: LinkedIn Branding/Reporting

Homework: SMP3 & SMA10

Week 11, Nov. 6: TikTok

Homework: SMA9

Week 12, Nov. 13: What's Next

Homework: SMP4

Week 13, Nov. 20: Project Work Week (Thanksgiving Week, no class on Wednesday)

Week 14, Nov. 27: Work on Projects

Week 15, Dec. 4: Presentation of Projects

Homework: SMP5

Final exam: Turn in your online portfolio by the scheduled Final date and time.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in JOUR 4535

- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

How professional values and competencies will be met

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

- Gain familiarity with ethical issues in reporter neutrality and objectivity in social media coverage.

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

- Relate social media posts to intended audience
- Think critically regarding social media sources and information gathering
- Demonstrate an ability to prepare social media content about controversial issues, features, legal issues, and historical situations.
- Acquire ability to gather information, disseminate information and self-brand via social media platforms.
- Demonstrate basic video shooting and editing skills

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Become aware of the professional protocol in social media spaces.
- Learn about the importance of critical thinking in social media storytelling.

Understanding

- Understand the ethical and professional challenges facing a journalist today.
- Appreciate the role of social media and the internet in today's journalism industry.
- Study the principles of effective storytelling.

Application

- Develop story ideas, setting up interviews, selecting appropriate sources for stories, writing news and information posts in various formats, editing text and audio-visual pieces for social media.
- Conduct regular social media audits of professional journalists, classmates and self.
- Give and receive criticism by peers when social media posts are presented.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSM 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

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
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you

are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

AI/Chat GPT

The use of artificial intelligence software, such as Chat GPT, is prohibited in some courses and required in others in Journalism & Strategic Media. Please refer to specific guidelines for this course in the course-specific part of the syllabus.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

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

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws 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 rating originality of your ideas and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted

according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

Weather policy

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather.

Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.