

Social Media Planning & Mgmt.

STRM 4210-M50

Fall 2025

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Explores the role of social media in public relations and related fields. Through hands-on experience, develops skills and abilities for social media management including social media strategy, account management, content creation and curation, and evaluation of social media campaigns using platform & other industry-standard analytics tools.

Prerequisites

PBRL 3441 or STRM 3213

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

- No required textbook.
- Readings and supplemental materials will be assigned and posted to Canvas.

Classroom format

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format. In other words, we have no scheduled meeting time. This can be convenient for you, but it also means that it is essential for you to be an organized, motivated student.

You must have internet access and Microsoft Word or other word processing software that generates a “.doc” or “.docx” extension. All assignments MUST be filed in a “.doc” or “.docx” format; type must be double-spaced with indented paragraphs.

I must be able to open your work and review it using track changes to grade it. Work submitted in a software package not noted as acceptable may result in point deductions.

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <https://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. On your course dashboard, click on the course card for STRM 4210-M50.

COURSE INTENTIONS & EXPECTATIONS

Course Goals

1. Develop strategic social media campaigns
2. Enhance professional social media writing and content creation
3. Utilize social media management and analytics tools
4. Apply ethical and inclusive communication practices
5. Collaborate effectively in a professional team environment

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- apply strategic thinking to create, execute and evaluate a social media campaign for an organization.
- produce professional, platform-specific social media content that aligns with an organization's brand voice, audience expectations, and communication goals.
- demonstrate proficiency in using industry-standard tools for content scheduling, community engagement, social listening, and performance measurement of a social media campaign for an organization.
- integrate ethical considerations, cultural competence, and accessibility principles into social media strategies to promote fair, accurate, and responsible communication.
- work in teams to solve social media communication channels, develop creative solutions, and manage projects efficiently.

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) (i.e., ChatGPT)

Certain assignments in this course may require you to use ChatGPT for specific purposes and follow specific instructions. For those assignments, you may utilize ChatGPT as directed. For all other assignments, you are not allowed to submit any work that is created, in whole or in part, by ChatGPT or any other AI tool. Assignment submissions may be checked using AI detection software. Unauthorized use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, may result in a failing grade or a request to resubmit the assignment.

Grading

While a large portion of your grade in this capstone course is from a team project, there are several opportunities throughout the semester for individual points.

Written assignments will be graded based on AP style, grammar, spelling, punctuation, content, and presentation. When an assignment calls for secondary sources, use APA 7th edition style for in-text citations and the reference list.

Your success in this course will depend on your willingness to read the textual and supplemental learning materials, complete assignments, participate in class discussions, and work well with a team of your peers.

Your grade in this class will consist of:

- Individual assignments – 25%
- Team assignments – 50%
- Blog posts – 25%

Below is a general guideline for the major assignments within the class. More details will be provided in class and on Canvas. Deadlines will be listed on each assignment. Unless otherwise noted, all work should be turned in as a Word document on Canvas.

Blog posts, 25%. Blogs are a well-established form of online media among strategic media professionals. Blog content is frequently posted on LinkedIn and shared across other social media platforms. Some weeks, you will compose a 300–400-word discussion post in a blog format. These posts will help you practice your writing skills, stay current with industry trends, and critically reflect on course topics and those trends.

Individual assignments, 25%. Throughout the semester, there will be some individual assignments, including, but not necessarily limited to, a campaign case study, a draft of client communication, a content audit, and a crisis simulation assignment.

Team assignments, 50%. You will be randomly assigned through Canvas to two teams of five. Your team will develop, implement, and evaluate a social media strategy/campaign for a client. This semester's client is [PRSSA Memphis](#).

Final grades are calculated as follows:

A = 90% - 100%; B = 80% - 89.9%; C = 70% - 79.9%; D = 60% - 69.9%; F = Below 60%

Grading philosophy

A = Professional quality work that could be used with little or no modification; B = Good to excellent work and exceeds requirements but would require revision to be used professionally; C = Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirements but would need significant revision; D = Barely satisfies minimum requirements and below average quality; F = Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirements.

Contacting me. The best and quickest way to contact me is via email (ksmarks@memphis.edu). Do not use the email within Canvas. Use my Memphis.edu email. I will respond within 24 – 48 hours. If you have a problem, do not let it snowball. Contact me ASAP.

Schedule

This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. The official schedule will be maintained on Canvas. Always refer to Canvas for the most up-to-date information.

Week 1, Aug. 25 – 31: Onboarding

Key tasks: Client introduction. You'll learn about the client, its goals, and its current social media presence. Get to know your teams.

Week 2, Sept. 2 – 7: Social Media Audit + Competitor Analysis

Tuesday, start. Monday is Labor Day.

Key tasks: You'll analyze the client's social media, identify strengths & weaknesses, and review competitor strategies.

Week 3, Sept. 8 – 14: Developing a Content Strategy + Content Calendar

Key tasks: You'll identify objectives, consider how insights gleaned from the social media audit inform strategy, and your team will draft a content strategy and calendar.

Week 4, Sept. 15 – 21: Client Communication + Stakeholder Management

Key tasks: You'll schedule Weeks 5 + 6 of content and provide an update to your client with links for them to review the initial scheduled content and provide feedback.

Week 5, Sept. 22 – 28: Content Creation, Brand Voice + Accessibility

Key tasks: You'll *draft* content for Weeks 7 + 8 and learn about best accessibility practices, developing brand-consistent, platform-optimized content.

Week 6, Sept. 29 – Oct. 5: Community Engagement

Key tasks: You'll learn about community engagement best practices. You'll audit the draft content for Weeks 7 + 8 and incorporate changes. Your team will create an engagement strategy and identify someone to be responsible for each platform's engagement weekly for the rest of the campaign, beginning with Week 7. Your team will also schedule Weeks 9 + 10 content.

Week 7, Oct. 6 – 10: Crisis & Rapid Response Simulation

Monday – Friday, Fall Break begins on Sat., Oct. 11

Key tasks: Engagement will begin on all platforms this week. One person from your team will be responsible for engagement each week. This should rotate to allow everyone a chance to work with engagement on each platform throughout the campaign. This is a short week. You'll be participating in an individual crisis simulation assignment.

Week 8, Oct. 15 – 19: Analytics + Performance Optimization

Wednesday – Sunday. Fall Break is Mon. & Tues., Oct. 13 – 14

Key tasks: You'll brush up on social media analytics and performance optimization and think through which metrics you will want to review from the campaign's analytics and how insights might inform adjustments to your team's strategy. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms. This is a short week.

Week 9, Oct. 20 – 26: Mid-point Client Check In + Campaign Adjustments

Key tasks: Your teams will prepare an analytics report and do a mid-point check-in with the client. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms.

Week 10, Oct. 27 – Nov. 2: Social Media Advertising + Paid Strategies

Key tasks: You'll schedule content for Weeks 11 + 12 and create a paid media proposal for the client. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms.

Week 11, Nov. 3 – 9: Advanced Social Media Management + Automation

Key tasks: You'll schedule content for Weeks 13 + 14. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms.

Week 12, Nov. 10 – 16: Work Week: Client Report + Peer Evaluation

Key tasks: This will be a work week for your teams to work on the final analytics and client report, and your individual peer evaluations. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms and schedule content for Weeks 15 + 16.

Week 13, Nov. 17 – 23: Work Week: Campaign Case Study for Portfolio

Key tasks: This is a work week. You will work on your campaign case study for your portfolio. This is an individual assignment. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms.

Week 14, Nov. 24 – 30: Work Week: Client Presentation Development

Thanksgiving Week

Key tasks: This is a short week and a work week. Your teams will work on the client presentation. You should continue to work on your individual campaign case study for your portfolio. Your teams will continue with engagement on all platforms.

Week 15, Dec. 1 – 3: Client Presentation + Portfolio Readiness

Monday – Wednesday. Last day of classes is Wed., Dec. 3

Key tasks: This is our final week – well, three days together. Your team's client presentation is due, as well as your individual campaign case study and a link to your portfolio.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in STRM 4210

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in a global context and in the United States.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- 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, and fairness.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- 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)

- Apply strategic thinking for communicating an organization's message through various social media platforms.
- Produce professional social media content that can be used by an organization.
- Use industry-standard tools that support social media management and measurement.
- Learn techniques for writing in brand voice across multiple social media platforms.

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

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of planning, managing, and evaluating an organization's social media channels.
- Work effectively in teams to solve problems and complete projects.
- Complete a semester-long project involving planning, executing, and evaluating social media for a class client.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Recognize strategies for setting goals and determining what to measure on social media.
- Recognize how to strategically use new and social communication technologies for business and organizations, as well as for individual career advancement.

Understanding

- Give examples of best practices for managing an organization's social media channels.
- Discuss optimization strategies to maximize potential exposure to and engagement with content on social media channels.
- Explain the importance of having a social media content calendar to plan and execute an organization's social media presence.
- Discuss the various tools available for identifying, cultivating, monitoring, and analyzing information on the social web.

Application

- Complete a semester-long project involving planning, executing and evaluating social media for a class client that will include secondary research of the client's current social media presence, planning a social media strategy, creating a content calendar and content for social media channels, creating an evaluation plan and evaluating social media channel performance and engagement with the audience on social media platforms.

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.