

# MMC 5436 Messaging Methodologies and the Practice of Conversion Optimization

Fall 2016  
3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Andrew Selepak, Ph. D.

Email: [aselepak@ufl.edu](mailto:aselepak@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Google Hangout (aselepak) by appointment

Course Website: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Teaching Assistant: Greg Hamilton

Email: [g.hamilton@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:g.hamilton@jou.ufl.edu)

## Course Overview

The essence of marketing is the message. So, what makes an effective message? What makes a headline impactful? What makes a call-to-action powerful? How can copy be crafted so as to generate the greatest number of responses from customers?

This course provides a systematic methodology for increasing the probability of a customer response. Students will learn to apply the critical concepts and theories of offer response optimization, including techniques for creating compelling offers, in order to optimize responses in both digital and mobile environments.

## Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Summarize the Conversion Heuristic and label the key elements of offer response optimization
- Explain the sequence for properly optimizing a message through the Offer Optimization Sequencing Heuristic
- Extrapolate a customer's core motivation in response to a particular offer
- Distinguish between rational and irrational anxiety in message response
- Eliminate the elements of an offer that generate psychological friction or anxiety in customers' minds
- Determine the ideal incentive for a particular audience as well as the appropriate stage to employ it to increase customer motivation

- Compose copy that effectively conveys a company's value proposition argument in both long and narrative forms from a short-form argument
- Conduct a Conversion Index Analysis (CIA) on marketing collateral

## Required Texts

- McGlaughlin, Flint. *The Marketer as Philosopher: 40 brief reflections on the power of your value proposition*, 2014.
- McKee, Robert. (1997). *Story: Style, Structure, Substance and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Additional readings are assigned throughout the term and are available in digital format on Canvas in their respective assigned weeks.

## Course Philosophy and Expectations

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class, be on time, and meet all deadlines. Work assigned should be completed as directed. Full participation in online discussions and activities is required.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct students to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing student performance and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for students to have confidence that they have mastered the material and for me to determine that students are meeting all course requirements.

At all times, it is expected that students will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that students will treat fellow students, instructors and assistants with respect, and that students will contribute to the success of the class to the best of their abilities.

### **Netiquette**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy along with applicable university policies in all online activities, as these are extensions of the course. The University's Netiquette guide can be found at: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary measures, ranging from grade reduction to course expulsion.

## Ownership Education:

As graduate students, you are not passive participants in this course. This class allows you to not only take ownership of your educational experience but to also provide your expertise and knowledge in helping your fellow classmates. The Canvas shell will have an open Q&A thread where you should pose questions to your classmates when you have a question as it relates to an assignment or an issue that has come up at work. Your classmates along with your instructor will be able to respond to these questions and provide feedback and help. This also allows everyone to gain the same knowledge in one location rather than the instructor responding back to just one student which limits the rest of the class from gaining this knowledge.

## Course Measurement

### Measurement Breakdown

Students' progress in this course will be evaluated according to the following distribution:

Item	Percentage
Lecture Reinforcement Assignments	35%
Reflection Projects	15%
Reading Discussion Post	15%
Reading Discussion Comments	10%
Quizzes	5%
Conversion Index Analysis Project (Final Project)	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading Scale

A (93-100)	B (83-86)	C (73-76)	D (63-66)
A- (90-92)	B- (80-82)	C- (70-72)	D- (60-62)
B+ (87-89)	C+ (77-79)	D+ (67-69)	E (Below 61)

The university policies concerning this grading scale can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## Course Work

This course is comprised of readings, lectures, online discussions, class assignments, quizzes, activities and a final research project. Students are expected to watch all lectures and contribute to class discussions by citing examples drawn from professional experience, personal experience and course readings. Additionally, students are expected to complete course assignments, activities and reading discussions. Lastly, a

final research project, due at the end of the term, will measure students' mastery of Conversion Optimization through the examination of a real-world business case.

## Lectures

The instructor will post a lecture video to Canvas for each of the 12 weeks as well as at least two supplementary videos. The first supplementary video will cover the syllabus, and the second will provide an overview of concepts that students may find informative when completing lectures and readings. These videos will vary in length depending on the material but are targeted to take between 1 hour and 1.5 hours to complete.

It is the responsibility of the student to watch each of the lecture videos during the week identified in the course schedule. Although it is possible to watch the videos at any time and at any pace, keeping up with the videos week to week according to the schedule is vital. The videos are designed to build off each other as well as correspond with the weekly readings and assignments. Lastly, students should be aware that it will be extremely difficult to complete the Lecture Reinforcement Assignments without having first viewed the lecture video.

## Lecture Reinforcement Assignment

There are a total of SEVEN Lecture Reinforcement Assignments during the 12-week semester. These assignments provide students with theoretical and real-world contexts for applying the material learned from the lectures. Specific details about each assignment are provided within the "Assignments Tab" of Canvas. The Lecture Reinforcement Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. EST of the Wednesday of the week assigned. Additionally, students may be required to use programs and websites outside of Canvas to complete the activity.

Each Lecture Reinforcement Assignment is awarded points according to quality of work and completion:

	<b>100-90 Excellent</b>	<b>89-80 Good</b>	<b>79-70 Satisfactory</b>	<b>69-60 Less than Satisfactory</b>	<b>Less than 60 Unsatisfactory</b>
Analysis (30%)	Expertly draws from lectures and outside material using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject	Competently evaluates lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of analysis and synthesis	Provides basic evaluation of lectures and outside material with some analysis, if not synthesis	Minimal evaluation of lectures and outside material with little analysis or synthesis of material	Related lectures and outside material are presented without analysis or synthesis
Argument	Compelling and	Writing is	Writing falters	Writing is	Argument is

(30%)	persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization	supported by capable argumentation including conceptualization and understanding of topic	at times when making a compelling argument, but the main point is clear and supported by competent writing	haphazard with minimal evidence used to support argument	unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments
Examination (20%)	All questions or assignment components have been addressed	Almost all questions or assignment components have been addressed	Three-quarters of questions or assignment components have been addressed	Between three-quarters and half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed	Half or less than half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed
Sourcing (10%)*	Demonstrates superior sourcing of lectures and outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates competent sourcing of lectures and outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates basic sourcing of lectures and/or outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Minimal sourcing of either lectures or outside material thus insufficient to substantiate an argument	Sourcing of lectures and outside material is absent and thus insufficient to substantiate an argument
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling	Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficulty in understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding

\* For any assignments that do not require sourcing written material, full credit will be granted for this category

## Reflection Projects

There are THREE Reflection Projects throughout the semester. These activities challenge students to apply material they have learned beyond the context in which they were presented. As such, these activities are assessed for critical thinking and the ability to tie together major concepts learned during the semester which will provide students with an opportunity to explore a topic or develop a better understanding of the course objectives. Specific details about each assignment are provided within the "Assignments Tab" of Canvas. All activities are due by 11:59 p.m. EST the Wednesday of the week assigned.

Each Reflection Project will be awarded points according to quality of effort and level of completion:

	<b>100-90 Excellent</b>	<b>89-80 Good</b>	<b>79-70 Satisfactory</b>	<b>69-60 Less than Satisfactory</b>	<b>Less than 60 Unsatisfactory</b>
Analysis (20%)	Expertly draws from lectures, readings, and outside material using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject	Competently evaluates lectures, readings, and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of analysis and synthesis	Provides basic evaluation of lectures, readings, and outside material with some analysis, if not synthesis	Minimal evaluation of lectures, readings and outside material with little analysis or synthesis of material	Related lectures, readings, and outside material are presented without analysis or synthesis
Argument (30%)	Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization	Writing is supported by capable argumentation including conceptualization and understanding of topic	Writing falters at times when making a compelling argument, but the main point is clear and supported by competent writing	Writing is haphazard with minimal evidence used to support argument	Argument is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments
Personalization (10%)	Superior linking to real-world scenarios or experiences to illuminate analysis and argument	Analysis and argument provided with a general connection to real-world scenarios or experiences	Analysis and argument draws on little personal experience	Does not link to real-world through personal examples and instead relies on hypotheticals	Analysis and argument lacks a demonstrated understanding of how assignment links to real-world experience
Examination (20%)	All questions or assignment components have been addressed	Almost all questions or assignment components have been addressed	Three-quarters of questions or assignment components have been addressed	Between three-quarters and half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed	Half or less than half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed
Sourcing (10%)*	Demonstrates superior sourcing of lectures and outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates competent sourcing of lectures and outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates basic sourcing of lectures and/or outside materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Minimal sourcing of either lectures or outside material thus insufficient to substantiate an argument	Sourcing of lectures and outside material is absent and thus insufficient to substantiate an argument
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling	Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is at times garbled with errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficulty in understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding

\* For any assignments that do not require sourcing written material, full credit will be granted for this category

## Supplementary Reading Discussion Boards

Readings enhance students' understanding of the specific topics covered during the weekly lectures. Students should complete the readings during the week identified in the course schedule. Assessment of student understanding of the readings is accomplished through discussion boards.

### Reading Discussion Post

In order to cultivate an ongoing dialogue about the supplementary reading material within the course, students will generate between 300-500 words of reaction to the material per week. While these reaction posts should provide a short summary of the readings along with proper citations, posts should overwhelmingly be comprised of analysis or insights students have gained from the material. Students are required to link reactions to outside readings or experiences in their organizations. Discussion posts should cover ALL the readings assigned for the week to demonstrate the student has fully completed the assigned readings.

Students are also required to generate two (2) questions on their own, related to the readings, and pose them along with their post. Students will monitor the responses to the questions they have posed and will reply should another student or the instructor respond to their posed questions. These processes will enable students to learn, not only from the instructor and the course material, but also from each other.

To achieve full credit, students' reading reaction posts and questions must be posted to Canvas by 11:59 p.m. EST on the Monday of the week assigned.

Each Supplementary Reading Discussion Post is awarded points according to quality of effort and level of completion:

	<b>100-90 Excellent</b>	<b>89-90 Good</b>	<b>79-70 Satisfactory</b>	<b>69-60 Less than Satisfactory</b>	<b>Less than 60 Unsatisfactory</b>
Analysis (30%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings and provides an insightful assessment of topics covered	Provides sufficient evaluation of readings to demonstrate a reasonable level of analysis and synthesis	Competent evaluation of readings and provides a sufficient assessment of topics covered	Minimal evaluation of readings and provides limited assessment of content	Little evaluation of readings other than brief mentions

Argument (30%)	Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior use of outside material and experiences outside of readings and lectures	Argument is supported by relevant outside material or relevant experiences	The argument falters due to a lack of outside examples or experiences	Weak argument is made due to a haphazard and minimal use of outside examples or experiences	Argument is poorly made due to the lack of any outside materials or experiences
Sourcing (10%)	Demonstrates superior sourcing of readings that supports the discussion's main arguments	Argument supported through readings and outside material	Demonstrates competence sourcing readings that support the discussion's main argument	Haphazard sourcing of readings and outside material that supports the discussions' main argument	Sourcing of readings or outside material is absent and thus insufficient to sustain an argument
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling	Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficulty in understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding
Questions posed (20%)	Offers two (2) insightful and compelling questions that encourage debate and discussion	Offers two (2) questions but does not lead to a robust discussion of the topic	Offers one (1) to (2) questions but does not encourage debate due to a minimally demonstrated understanding of the readings	Questions posed lack a clear connection to the readings and therefore do not encourage debate	Questions do not demonstrate an evaluation and understanding of the readings

## Reading Discussion Comments

In addition to the reading reaction posts, students will also be required to comment on two (2) reading discussion posts by fellow students. To be counted, a comment must appear on the other student's reading discussion post in Canvas by 5 p.m. EST on the Friday of the week assigned. No more than two (2) comments will be counted in any single week. Comments must add something of value to the conversation thread (be thought-provoking). Comment posts must be at least 100 words in length.

The instructor will evaluate the degree to which your posts add to the conversation instead of simply being done to fulfill the grade requirement.

To achieve full credit, student discussion comments must be made by 11:59 p.m. EST on the Friday assigned.

Reading Discussion Comments are awarded points according to quality of effort and level of completion:

	<b>100-90 Excellent</b>	<b>89-90 Good</b>	<b>79-70 Satisfactory</b>	<b>69-60 Less than Satisfactory</b>	<b>Less than 60 Unsatisfactory</b>
Argument (40%)	Compelling and persuasive response offered through superior writing and conceptualization of topic in agreement or disagreement to questions posed	Writing falters at times in making a compelling response to the questions posed, but the main point is clear and supported by competent writing in agreement or disagreement to questions posed	Responses provide minimal response to questions posed or simply signals agreement without further support	Response is haphazardly written lacking an evaluative response of the questions posed and the significance of the points made by neither indicating agreement or disagreement	Response is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments and does not address questions posed
Supportive Analysis (40%)	Compelling and persuasive support of argument through superior use of outside material and experiences to move conversation forward	Analysis is supported by relevant outside material or relevant experiences	The analysis falters due to a lack of outside examples or experiences to move conversation forward	Analysis minimally supported due to minimal use of outside examples or experiences	Analysis is poorly made due to the lack of any related outside materials or experiences
Sourcing (10%)	Demonstrates superior sourcing of readings and outside material that supports the discussion's main arguments	Argument supported through outside materials and some outside material	Demonstrates competence sourcing readings and outside materials that support the main argument	Minimal sourcing of readings and outside material that supports the assignment's main argument	Sourcing of readings and outside material is absent and thus insufficient to sustain an argument
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling	Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficulty in understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding

## Quizzes

Twice during the semester, students must complete quizzes intended to measure the student's ability to retain key concepts from the course material. These quizzes can be completed at any time up till the date they are due. See the course schedule for due dates. Quizzes must be completed in Canvas.

## Conversion Index Analysis Project (Final Project)

Students will demonstrate their mastery of conversion optimization performing an in-depth analysis of a web page (Page of Focus), providing recommendations based on the concepts taught during the course and creating a basic web page wireframe that illustrates their recommendations.

In order to complete their project students will receive a company brief consisting of:

- Business background and problem
- Value proposition: question, statement, evidentials, and other claims of value
- Product documentation via web page screen shots
- Metric options
- Incentive documentation
- Web page wireframe examples

Students' work throughout the semester must be compiled into a wireframe prototype for the Page of Focus and video-recorded research presentation.

### *Mock Web Page Wireframes*

Students must create a wireframe mockup for their "Page of Focus". This wireframe should incorporate various recommendations that they have made throughout the semester. Students will not need any coding or development experience to create wireframes, as digital copies of hand-drawn sketches are acceptable for this project. Students with more advanced skills are welcome to submit their wireframes using common wireframe software, however, students will not receive additional points/credit for using digital software.

### *Research Presentation*

Students will compile their work throughout the semester into an informative presentation with a minimum length of 15-minutes. This presentation should be video-recorded and will consist of the following components: (1) A summary of key critique and analysis points from all Reinforcement Assignments (Weeks 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 10), and (2) Detailed recommendations for future testing as synthesized directly into the wireframe prototype. Students are encouraged to provide in-depth analysis of the similarities and differences between the Page of

Focus and their wireframe prototype including explanations of the reasoning behind the changes.

Students may submit their video presentations in Canvas via direct file upload, cloud storage link or YouTube video link. **The final project is to be submitted to Canvas in its entirety by the Friday of WEEK 11 at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

The Conversion Index Analysis Project is awarded points according to the following scale:

	<b>Excellent (100-90)</b>	<b>Good (89-80)</b>	<b>Satisfactory (79-70)</b>	<b>Less than Satisfactory (69-60)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (less than 60)</b>
Wireframe Design (20%)	Offers superior analysis of web page layout and structure	Good analysis of web page layout and structure	Adequate analysis of web page layout and structure	Insufficient analysis of web page layout and structure	Little to no evaluation is offered and/or otherwise fails to effectively layout web page structure
Heuristic Application (20%)	Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior use of heuristic	Capable argumentation offered through conceptualization and understanding of heuristic	Reasoning falters at times making a compelling argument due to lack of complete understanding of heuristic	Argumentation offered is haphazard with minimal evidence used to support an understanding of heuristic	Argument is unclear due to a lack of understanding heuristic
Presentation (20%)	Superior presentation that covers all of the material from the analysis in a professional and well-thought-out manner	Competently presents all of the material from the analysis in a professional and well-thought-out manner	Presents all of the material from the analysis in a semi-professional but well-thought-out manner	Presentation is unclear at time of the analysis but conducted in a semi-professional and somewhat well-thought-out manner	Haphazard presentation that hampers ability to present analysis and done in a less-than-professional manner
Examination (20%)	All components and length requirements have been addressed/met	Almost all components and length requirements have been addressed/met	Three-quarters of all components and length requirements have been addressed/met	Half or less of components and length requirements have been addressed/met	Project components and length requirements have not been addressed/met
Sourcing (10%)	Demonstrates superior sourcing of materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates competent sourcing materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Demonstrates basic sourcing of materials that are sufficient to substantiate an argument	Minimal sourcing of material thus insufficient to substantiate an argument	Sourcing of material is absent and thus insufficient to substantiate an argument

Grammar and syntax (10%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling	Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is at times garbled with errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficulty in understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding
--------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## University Policies

### **Late Work Policy:**

Students are expected to complete assignments by the day they are scheduled. The following penalties will be applied to all work that is late for any reason other than those identified by the university policies, which can be found online at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

<b>Point Deduction</b>	<b>Duration of Lateness</b>
5 Points	Less than an hour
10 Points	Greater than one (1) hour but less than 24 hours
15 Points	Greater than 24 hour but less than 48 hours
25 Points	Greater than 48 hours but less than one (1) week
Not Accepted	Greater than one (1) week

### **Attendance**

Requirements for class attendance, exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies unless specifically stated within this syllabus.

These university policies can be found in the online catalog at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:**

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not

retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

University counseling services and mental health services:

Counseling and Wellness resources

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

352-392-1575

**\*\*Netiquette: Communication Courtesy:**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

### **Class Demeanor:**

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class, be on time, and meet all deadlines. Work assigned in advance of class should be completed as directed. Full participation in online and live discussions, group projects, and small group activities is expected.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct you to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing your performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for you to have confidence that you have mastered the material and for me to determine that you are meeting all course requirements.

At all times it is expected that you will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that you will treat your fellow students and me with respect, and that you will contribute to the success of the class as best as you can.

### **Getting Help:**

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

\*\* Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>  
352-392-1575

- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process> to submit a complaint.

### **Course Evaluation:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

### **University Policy on Academic Misconduct:**

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community.

Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the

success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

**Cheating:** Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes, in physical or electronic form, in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.

**Misrepresenting Research Data:** The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic

integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

**Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.**

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Florida Code of Conduct <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

If you have additional questions, please refer to the Online Graduate Program Student Handbook you received when you were admitted into the Program.

## Course Schedule

### Calendar

Week	Lecture	Reinforcement	Reflection	Reading Discussion	Reading Comments	Quiz	Project
	Syllabus Introduction and Supplementary Material						
1	Introduction to Offer-Response Optimization			8/24*	8/26		
2	Defining Conversion	8/31		8/29	9/2		
3	Understanding the Impact of Customer Motivation	9/7		9/6**	9/9		
4	Value Proposition Fundamentals		9/14	9/12	9/16		
5	Value Proposition Expression	9/21		9/19	9/23	9/23	
6	Addressing Psychological Friction	9/28		9/26	9/30		
7	Addressing Rational and Irrational Anxiety	10/5		10/3	10/7		
8	Finding and Adding the Ideal Incentive	10/12		10/10	10/14		
9	Crafting Effective Copy — Part 1		10/19	10/17	10/21		
10	Crafting Effective Copy — Part 2	10/26		10/24	10/28	10/28	
11	Optimization of Live Webpages			10/31	11/4		11/4
12	Leveraging the Web as a Living Lab		11/9	11/7	11/12***		

\* Week One Reading Discussion Due on Wednesday

\*\* Due Tuesday 9/6 in honor of Labor Day

\*\*\* Due Saturday 11/12 in honor of Veteran's Day

## Weekly Detail

### *Course Introduction and Syllabus Video*

Introduction to course, instructor, lecturers and grading assistants

### *Week 1: Introduction to Offer-Response Optimization*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week will be an introduction to the concept of offer-response optimization. The class will learn what offer-response optimization entails and why it is important. Students will be introduced to the conversion heuristic and how it can be used.

#### **Readings**

- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflections 5 & 7
- Norman, Don. [The Future of Design: When you come to a fork in the road, take it](#)
- Pernice, Kara. [Difficult Designs Are Better](#)
- Norman and Toganzzini. [How Apple Is Giving Design A Bad Name](#)
- Norman, Don. [The "science" in the science of design.](#)
- Nodder, Chris. [User Experience Fundamentals for Web Design](#)

### *Week 2: Defining Conversion*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week will be an introduction to the concept of conversion as it exists in the marketing context. Students will learn to define conversion and the factors that influence it.

#### **Readings**

- Nielsen, Jakob. [Conversion Rates](#)
- Loranger, Hoa. [Minimize Design Risk by Focusing on Outcomes not Features](#)

#### **Reinforcement Assignment**

Propose an argument as to which metrics would best fit the “necessary” and “sufficient” conversions for your organization’s Page of Focus

### *Week 3: Understanding the Impact of Customer Motivation*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week focuses on the impact of customer motivation on conversion. Students will learn why it is weighted so heavily in the conversion heuristic and how to leverage data to identify and intensify customer's core motivation.

#### **Readings**

- Close, A. G., and Kukar-Kinney, M. (2010). Beyond buying: Motivations behind consumers' online shopping cart use. [\*Journal of Business Research\*](#), 63(9), 986-992
- Meyer, Katie. [\*Designing for Young Adults \(Ages 18–25\)\*](#)
- Sherwin, Katie. [\*Fresh Start Effect: How to Motivate Users with New Beginnings\*](#)

#### **Reinforcement Assignment**

Interpret the degree and nature of visitors' motivation to your Page of Focus and identify what you would do to intensify the prospects motivation

### *Week 4: Value Proposition Fundamentals*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week, students will discover a working definition of the “value proposition” concept. In addition, students will learn how to leverage the force of a value proposition in marketing collateral. Students will learn how not only to identify a value proposition, but also express it holistically in marketing collateral

#### **Readings**

- Kotler, P., Rackham, N., and Krishnaswamy, S. (2006). Ending the war between sales and marketing. [\*Harvard Business Review\*](#), 84(7/8), 68.
- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection 15-18, and 32

#### **Reflection Project 1**

Compare and contrast the force of a given value proposition based on two variables: the prospect and the alternative

### *Week 5: Value Proposition Expression*

#### **Lecture Description**

Students begin to understand the importance of, and difference between, continuity and congruence when expressing a value proposition. Additionally,

students will learn how to holistically express a value proposition on a web page and across a website through the principles of continuity and congruence.

### **Readings**

- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection 34
- Edelman, B., and Brandi, W. (2014). Risk, Information and Incentives in Online Affiliate Marketing. [Journal of Marketing Research](#), Forthcoming.
- Schade, Amy. [Customization vs. Personalization in the User Experience](#)

### **Reinforcement Assignment**

Critique the force of the value proposition(s) as expressed on your organization's web page and provide recommendations for improvement.

### **Quiz One**

First Quiz due by Friday 9/23 at 11:59 p.m. EST.

## ***Week 6: Addressing Psychological Friction***

### **Lecture Description**

This week focuses on psychological friction. Students will learn what friction is and how it impacts the customer's thought sequence in the conversion process. Additionally, students will discover the two most common forms of friction as well as how to reduce them.

### **Readings**

- Bauer, H. H., Barnes, S. J., Reichardt, T., and Neumann, M. M. (2005). Driving consumer acceptance of mobile marketing: A theoretical framework and empirical study. [Journal of electronic commerce research](#), 6(3), 181-192.
- Smutkupt, P., Krairit, D., and Esichaikul, V. (2010). Mobile marketing: Implications for marketing strategies. [International Journal of Mobile Marketing](#), 5(2), 126-139.
- Pernice and Budiu. [Hamburger Menus and Hidden Navigation Hurt UX Metrics](#)
- Norman, Don. [Apple's products are getting harder to use because they ignore principles of design.](#)

### **Reinforcement Assignment**

Examine your organization's Page of Focus and provide specific recommendations as to how to minimize any unnecessary length-oriented or difficulty-oriented friction.

## *Week 7: Addressing Rational and Irrational Anxiety*

### **Lecture Description**

This week focuses on anxiety and the emotional response of the customer to elements on a webpage. Students will learn the two forms of anxiety experienced by prospects and how to minimize their effect.

### **Readings**

- Sherwin, Katie. [Hierarchy of Trust: The 5 Experiential Levels of Website Commitment](#)
- Budiu, Ralca. [The Reciprocity Principle: Give Before You Take in Web Design](#)
- Sherwin, Katie. [Cultural Nuances Impact User Experience: Why We Test with International Audiences](#)
- Soutar, G. N., and Sweeney, J. C. (2003). Are there cognitive dissonance segments?. *[Australian Journal of Management](#)*, 28(3), 227-249.
- Constantinides, E. (2004). Influencing the online consumer's behavior: The Web experience. *[Internet research](#)*, 14(2), 111-126.

### **Reinforcement Assignment**

Examine your organization's Page of Focus and provide specific recommendations as to how to mitigate any rational or irrational anxiety that could exist in the mind of prospective customers.

## *Week 8: Finding and Adding the Ideal Incentive*

### **Lecture Description**

This week focuses on the proper use of incentives in the optimization process. Students will learn what an incentive is in the context of marketing and how to use incentives effectively.

### **Readings**

- Deng, L. (2010). Affect in web interfaces: a study of the impacts of web page visual complexity and order. *[Urbana](#)*, 51, 61801.
- Kalbach, J. (2006). "I'm feeling lucky": The role of emotions in seeking information on the Web. *[Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology](#)*, 57(6), 813-818.

## **Reinforcement Assignment**

Examine your organization's Page of Focus and provide specific recommendations for arriving at an ideal incentive.

### *Week 09: Crafting Effective Copy — Part 1*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week students will take the methodology taught up this point in the course and apply it to the writing of copy. Students will learn how to align the customer's thought sequence with the copy on the page through the use of story.

#### **Readings**

- Marketer as Philosopher — Reflection 9 & 11
- Rohm, A. J., Gao, T. T., Sultan, F., and Pagani, M. (2012). Brand in the hand: A cross-market investigation of consumer acceptance of mobile marketing. [\*Business Horizons\*, 55\(5\), 485-493.](#)
- Meyer, Katie. [How Chunking Helps Content Processing](#)
- Nielsen, Jakob. [Legibility, Readability, and Comprehension: Making Users Read Your Words](#)

#### **Reflection Project 2**

Simulate a moderated user testing session in order to experience a webpage through the eyes of another "user".

#### **Quiz Two**

Second Quiz due by Friday 10/28 at 11:59 p.m. EST.

### *Week 10: Crafting Effective Copy — Part 2*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week students will continue to deepen the understanding of writing copy for marketing collateral. Students will learn how to match customer motivations through story.

#### **Readings**

- Principles of Screenwriting — Chapter 1 (p. 11-30) and Chapter 3 (p. 67-78) and Chapter 6 (p. 110-134)
- Laubheimer, Page. [B2B vs. B2C Websites: Key UX Differences](#)
- Whitenton, Kathryn. [Website Logo Placement for Maximum Brand Recall](#)
- Budiu, Raldua. [Mobile Websites: Mobile Dedicated, Responsive, Adaptive, or Desktop Site?](#)

## **Reinforcement Assignment**

Craft elements of copy for your organization's Page of Focus including headlines, sub-headlines, body copy, and the Call-To-Action

### *Week 11: Optimization of Live Webpages*

#### **Lecture Description**

This week focuses on the optimization of a set of live webpages. Students will discover how to quickly examine real-world marketing collateral to identify opportunities for future optimization efforts.

#### **Readings**

- Principles of Screenwriting — Chapter 10 (p. 233-251) and Chapter 12 (p. 288-302) and Chapter 13 (p. 303-316)
- Yeager, J. (2003). Innovative motivational profiling: Comparing marketing projective techniques versus linguistic forensic techniques. [\*The Qualitative Report\*](#), 8(1), 129-150.

#### **Final Project**

Final Project due Friday 11/4 at 11:59 p.m. EST.

### *Week 12: The Web as a Living Laboratory*

#### **Lecture Description**

Marketers make the grave mistake of underestimating the true value of their organization's website. It is not just another channel through which to pipe their message. It is a living laboratory for testing the company's customer theory. When used properly it can be the center of the dialog between the company and its customers. The Web is, without a doubt, the most remarkable breakthrough in the history of behavioral research. For the first time, we can measure, even monitor, human response, en masse, and yet down to the level of the individual customer, in real-time.

#### **Readings**

- Nielsen, Jakob. (2007) [\*The Myth of the Genius Designer\*](#)
- Sherwin, Katie. (2014) [\*Breaking Web Design Conventions = Breaking the User Experience\*](#)
- Nielsen, Jakob. (2004) [\*Mastery, Mystery, and Misery: The Ideologies of Web Design\*](#)

- Stockwell, Amanda. [UX Research Fundamentals](#)

### **Reflection Project 3**

Examine any 5 web pages of your own choosing through the lens of the conversion heuristic, and identify at least 5-7 opportunities to test per page.

### **Disclaimer**

The instructor reserves the right to make any modification necessary to this syllabus to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes will be communicated via Canvas.