MMC 6726 Social Media and Virtual Worlds
FALL 2015 l Instructor Lisa Hope
UF College of Journalism and Communication Masters in Social Media

COURSE
Social Media and Virtual Worlds
Number: MMC 6726
Credits: 3

INSTRUCTOR
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Course Description
This course offers an introduction to _gamification_, as well as the research, educational, enterprise, and marketing uses of mobile games, virtual reality, social media games, and virtual environments. Students will study the successes, failures, and uses of these mediums, particularly as they relate to marketing, branding, education, and business.

Additionally, students will research ethical and sociological issues associated with these mediums, and analyze the uses for a variety of settings and purposes. Each week, students will study real-world examples of major brands and organizations using these mediums in a variety of ways. Among others, course assignments will include: drafting marketing plans using these methods; reviewing current campaigns; and overcoming hypothetical obstacles and issues in these types of campaigns.

Note
This is not a "videogames" course. We will undertake careful, systematic analysis of these methods in the communications field. An aficionado of videogames will have no advantage in this course over a student who has zero experience with gaming.

Course Objectives
By the end of this course students will:
- Study current marketing strategies using gaming, virtual reality, and virtual worlds.
- Analyze traditional gamification techniques and propose modern strategies.
- Create educational and professional marketing strategies using gaming, virtual reality, and virtual worlds, designed to influence behavior.

- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of gaming, virtual reality, and virtual worlds in the marketing and business worlds.
- Understand how to utilize these tools to fuel marketing campaigns, reach new demographics, and raise brand awareness.
- Explain the educational, medical, military, and enterprise uses for these methods that reach far beyond entertainment
- Design a creative and detailed marketing plan encompassing these methods for the brand of their choice.

Requirements
- Students should have a working knowledge of interactive digital media and a computer with Java and Flash enabled in their Internet browser.
- Students should have a mobile device with access to the App Store or Google Play to download games that will be used as part of class assignments and discussions.

Required Reading
There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, readings will be assigned throughout the semester. Readings for the course include texts in digital media theory and criticism, scholarly works in gaming, social media, and human-computer interaction. The readings will provide in-depth analysis of the uses for gaming, virtual reality, and virtual environments.

Course Policies
The course is comprised of lectures, online discussions, required reading and videos, class activities and a final project. Students are expected to watch all recorded lectures and contribute to the class discussions for their course participation requirement.

Policy on Late Work and Participation
There will be penalties for late work:
- Less than an hour late: 5 points off
- More than an hour late but less than 24 hours late: 10 points
- More than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late: 15 points
- More than 48 hours late: 25 points
- Over a week late: 50 points off or not accepted at all

Coursework
Your grade in this course will be evaluated according to the following distribution:
- Watching class lectures and writing a reaction: 20%
- Weekly reading/activity posts: 20%
- Weekly reading reactions comments: 10%
- Assignments: 25%
- Final project: 25%

Due Dates
- Weekly reading/activity posts: Mondays by 11:59 pm EST
- Weekly lecture reactions: Mondays by 11:59 pm EST
- Weekly reading comments: Fridays by 11:59 pm EST
- Weekly reading reactions comment responses: Sundays at 11:59 pm EST
- Assignments (6 assignments): Sundays at 11:59 pm EST on week assigned

Lecture Post Description and Grading Scale
The instructor will post a lecture video to Canvas each week of the semester. These videos will vary in length depending on the material. It is your responsibility to watch each of the videos in their entirety. 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 will be easier as many build off the other along with the weekly readings.

You are expected to provide a 250 – 500 word response to each lecture video. The instructor will post a question or writing prompt in the Discussion Board for you to write your reaction based on the knowledge learned during the lecture. Your reactions are not summaries of the material presented, but actual reactions to the writing prompt. You may discuss areas not mentioned during the lecture that relate to the discussion, or discuss topics not included in the lecture. You will not get any points if you skip the Lecture Reaction but comment on others' reactions. You are not required to comment on students' lecture reactions, but feel free to engage in discussion.

Lecture reaction posts are awarded points of 0 -100 according to levels of completion:
- 100 points: Completed task fully and by the due date according to the schedule. Reaction meets word requirement and provides an actual reaction to the writing prompt and not a summary of the lecture.
- 80 points: Reaction post made by the due date according to the schedule. Reaction DOES NOT meet word requirement, but provides an actual reaction to the prompt and not a summary.
- 50 points: Reaction post made by the due date according to the schedule. Reaction DOES NOT meet word requirement and DOES NOT provide an actual reaction to the prompt and instead is a summary.
- 25 points: Reaction post made by the due date according to the schedule. Reaction DOES NOT meet word requirement, DOES NOT provide an actual reaction to the prompt and instead is incoherent or off-topic.
- 0 points: No reaction post made.

Weekly Reading Discussion Post
You are expected to write a weekly Canvas discussion post (approx. 250-500 words) based on the readings assigned each week. Additionally, some weeks will include Activities, which include viewing short (3 minute) video examples. Students will watch these videos each week to get ideas for their final projects and assignments. You

should reference these videos in your weekly discussion post. <u>Posts are due by 11:59 PM EST each Monday throughout the term of the week the readings are assigned.</u>

Discussion posts should not only provide a short summary of the readings, but your analysis or insight, and reference any experience you have with the topic. It may be best to reference each reading in your reaction so it is clear when you are discussing them. <u>You will also need to include two questions based on the reading/videos</u>. Your questions should explore deeper into the topic than the readings and videos alone, and provoke thoughtful responses and insight from your classmates. These questions will also be used to provide classmates ideas for comments they may answer in response to your post. Please follow appropriate netiquette rules. Your posts should discuss ALL the readings and videos assigned to demonstrate you have completed the assigned work.

Your classmates will comment on your discussion post and you will comment on theirs to you. You are required to comment on at least 3 students' posts. For full credit, you are expected to respond to every comment made on your own post. <u>Your comments are due by Fridays at 11:59 PM EST.</u>

<u>**You should provide all responses to fellow students' comments by 11:59 PM EST on the Sunday of the week assigned.</u>

Weekly discussion reading posts are awarded points of 0 -100 according to levels of completion:
- 100 points: Completes task fully and on time and demonstrates an understanding of the reading and is not simply a summary. Applies information to a real-world situation. Covers all the readings assigned and poses at least two questions to classmates, and responds to their posts in reaction to what you have written.
- 90 points: No questions posed to classmates, but otherwise satisfied the objectives of the assignment OR questions were posed, but responses to classmates' posts were not made.
- 85 points: Not all the readings were covered, but otherwise satisfied the objectives of the assignment.
- 75 points: Post did not fulfill word requirements (250-500 words) or merely summarized the readings but did not advance the material.
- 50 points: Post was late and did not demonstrate any evaluation of the readings OR post did not include at least two questions AND did not cover all the readings.
- 0 points: No post listed.

Weekly Reading Reactions Comments
Each week you will comment on 3 reading discussion posts by fellow students. Comments must add something of value to the conversation thread (be thought provoking). You are required to respond to every comment on your own post. <u>You will only receive full credit if you respond to all comments on your post</u>.

<u>You should provide all responses to their comments by 11:59 PM EST on the Sunday of the week assigned.</u>

Weekly reading reaction comments are awarded points of 0 -100 according to levels of completion:
- 100 points: Completes task fully and on time of three posts on other student's discussion post that add substance to the discussion.
- 66 points: Two completed comments on other student's discussion post that add substance to the discussion.
- 33 points: One completed comment on another student's discussion post that adds substance to the discussion.
- 0 points: No comments posted or the comments posted do not add to the discussion.

Assignments

Students will complete 6 experiments assigned throughout the semester. Not each week will have an assignment. It is the student's responsibility to know which week an assignment is due. Each assignment will help the student explore and further understand the subject discussed that week. Each student will post a 250 – 500 word thought paper to Canvas answering the assignment question.

The assignments are for students to use the material learned from weekly readings and lectures. Most importantly, students can see how gaming applies in the real world.

<u>Your assignment thought paper is due Sundays at 11:59 pm EST the week assigned.</u>

You must submit your assignment through the Assignment tab in Canvas, not through email.

Grading For Assignments

Assignments are awarded points according to levels of completion:
- 100 points: Briefly covered assignment for the week, thorough analysis, majority of writing is a reaction to the assignment.
- 90 points: Briefly covered assignment for the week, slight reaction to assignment; not enough analysis.
- 85 points: Briefly covered assignment for the week, majority of writing is a reaction to the assignment, but DID NOT meet word length.
- 75 points: Barely covered assignment for the week, majority of writing is a reaction to the assignment, and DID NOT meet word length.
- 65 points: Majority does not provide analysis of assignment; writing went off topic and DID NOT meet word length.
- 50 points: Majority does not provide analysis of assignment and DID NOT meet word length.

- 0 points: Did not complete assignment.

Final Project
Students will prepare a final pitch proposing their plans for integrating THREE of the following into a brand's marketing strategy: virtual reality, gaming, mobile app, or virtual worlds. The minimum requirement is three, but you may include all four in your strategy if you feel it's appropriate. Students may use their own organization's brand or create a marketing plan for another brand of their choice. Students must submit their topics by the 6th week of classes.

Students will turn in three components - PITCH, MARKETING PLAN, and PRESENTATION. The Pitch and Proposal can be in the same word document, and the Presentation can be PowerPoint or Prezi (or another presentation tool of your choice). Details on each piece below.

The PITCH is simply a summary to sell the idea to the Marketing Director/Decision Maker. In the Pitch (over-arching introduction to the marketing plan), students should discuss in 3-5 pages:
- How virtual reality, gaming and/or virtual worlds add to their brand's marketing plan.
- The type of technology (mobile, Facebook game, virtual reality, virtual world, etc.)
- References to successful campaigns. Can be campaigns we discussed in class or discovered through your own research.
- How the business/brand will use brand messaging throughout the game to market their brand.
- Marketing goals - is this for sales, clicks, user retention, customer loyalty, etc.
- Tools to measure success - how would you track metrics?
- Dates campaign will run for.

The MARKETING PLAN (10 pages minimum) will include:
- Targeting and positioning
- PR plan
- Marketing key message
- Game, app, virtual world, etc., description
- Pre-launch marketing plan
- User Acquisition plan
- Launch and post-launch marketing plan
- User Retention plan
- Metrics and Analytics - what will you track and how? Why are you tracking it?

Formatting Requirements for Pitch/Paper:
Times New Roman 12pt font
Double spaced with 1-inch margins
References

PRESENTATION: During the last week of classes, students will present their marketing plan to the instructor in a one-on-one Google Hangout. Final dates and specifics will be provided on the course site in Canvas.

- 15-30 minute presentation discussing your pitch and proposal
- Sell me on your idea!
- Can be any presentation tool of your choice

Formatting Requirements for Presentation:
30 minutes minimum
References

Grading for Final Project

	100 **Excellent**	90 **Good**	80 **Satisfactory**	Less than 80 **Unsatisfactory**
Creativity – 30%	Compelling and interesting content to attract audience through superior writing and design	Interesting content to attract audience through creative writing and design	Demonstrates sufficient creative content that at times falters to attract audience	Uncreative content that lacks cohesion provides little interest to audience
Attracts target demo – 20%	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the target audience and rationale for selecting this audience	Provides an explanation of why the chosen target audience was selected but only a loose rationale	Explanation for target audience falters at times due to tenuous understanding of target demo	Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the target audience for the campaign
Key message – 20%	Singular message and theme superbly articulated throughout campaign	Message appears frequently throughout campaign but at times presents conflicting or differing	Multiple themes presented although with a common thread that loosely ties together varying	Demonstrates a lack of understanding of target audience thus creating and ineffective campaign

		messages	themes	
Shareable – 10%	Content design is creative and applicable to platforms chosen to better ensure potential sharing	Content design is creative but not entirely applicable to platforms chosen	Limited potential for content to be shared based on lack of understanding of platforms selected or a lack of creative content	Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the types of content that would lead to sharing by target audience
Presentation – 10%	Presentation is professional, effective, and interesting	Presentation at times falters in delivery but otherwise professional and effective	Delivery is adequate but impedes effectiveness of presentation, but still professional	Poor delivery, and unprofessional presentation which leads to ineffective delivery
Writing – 10%	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling result in a coherent and intelligible campaign	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is not always clear with grammar, punctuation and spelling errors noticeable	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding

Course Schedule

Course Introduction Video
Introduction to Social Media Gaming and Virtual Worlds: Why it matters and what you need to know about their impact on marketing, social networking and society.

Course Syllabus Video
Explanation of course requirements and assignments.

WEEK ONE
Evolution of Gamification

Readings:
- Bunchball: What is Gamification?
- Bunchball: Gamification 101
- How to Guide: Engaging Users With Gamification
- Octalysis: Complete Gamification Framework

Activities:
- Video: Coca-Cola and Mellow Mushroom Team Up
- Video: 9Lives Cat's Eye View
- Optional: Explore: 9Lives Cat's Eye View

NO ASSIGNMENT THIS WEEK

WEEK TWO
Uses and Gratifications of Gaming: Who are Gamers? *Spoiler Alert: We all are.*

Readings:
- Essential Facts About the Computer and Video Game Industry
- Gamers: Doing Much More Than Just Gaming
- Theory of Gaming Motivation

Activities:
- Video: Google Maps and QuizUp
- Video and Case Study: Oreo

Assignment 1:
Install QuizUp on your mobile device and challenge one of your classmates to play Earth From Above and then a second game from a different subject. Compare the two games. How effective is Earth from Above in encouraging you to use Google Maps? Did the experience feel genuine or like a sales pitch? In the second game of your choice, think about branding and how to incorporate marketing into the game. How could a brand partner with QuizUp to promote their product within that game?

WEEK THREE
Gamification & Engagement

Readings:
- Bunchball: Winning with Gamification
- Branded Games Can Help Marketers Engage With Consumers
- Bunchball: Using Gamification for Customer Loyalty

Activities:
- Video: Buscopan and Mobile Gaming
- Video: Lexus and Electronic Arts

Assignment 2:
As the creative director for Gatorade, you're tasked with creating a gamification plan to engage your consumers and to generate new customers. Without going into detail, give me your elevator pitch. (*Hint: What techniques have you seen work before? Would that work for Gatorade? Give me a concept and briefly explain your idea.*)

WEEK FOUR
Virtual and Augmented Reality

Readings:
- Experiencing is Believing: What Virtual Reality Could Mean for Ads and Brands
- The Rise and Fall and Rise of Virtual Reality
- The Virtual Reality Renaissance is Here, But Are We Ready?
- The Inside Story of Oculus Rift and How Virtual Reality Became Reality

Activities:
- Video: Nokia and JobLens
- Case Study: Oral-B
- Case Study: True Blood creates "True Survival"

Assignment 3:
Your boss at Nike asks you to research virtual and augmented reality for marketing the new Nike Fuelband. She is concerned about return on investment. How would you judge success or ROI with using virtual reality? Cite specific examples in your response.

WEEK FIVE
Conducting Market Research in Video Games and Virtual Worlds

Readings:
- Prezi: Research Through Gaming
- 4 Ways Mobile Research Can Boost Engagement in Market Research
- Survey Research in Virtual Worlds

Activities:
- [Video: Turbo Racing League](#)
- [Video: JetBlue Get Away With It](#)
- [Video: Mobile Commons "Do Something" Campaign](#)

NO ASSIGNMENT THIS WEEK

WEEK SIX
The Gamified Nonprofit, Health and Educational Industries

Readings:
- [Virtual Reality for Vets](#)
- [Gamification: A Cure for the Healthcare Industry](#)
- [Virtual Reality and Learning: The Newest Landscape for Higher Education](#)
- [How Social Games Are Changing the World](#)

Activities:
- [Video: Walgreens Balance Rewards program to promote health](#)
- [Video: Alvio Teaches Kids With Asthma Breathing Techniques](#)
- [Video: ZYRTEC mobile symptom tracker](#)

Assignment 4:
Take one idea from the videos you've seen so far this semester and brainstorm an idea/campaign pitch for one of the following:
- Nonprofit raising diabetes awareness
- American Red Cross seeking to increase blood donations
- Helping high school students learn physics

WEEK SEVEN
Gaming, Virtual Reality, and the Military

Readings:
- [3 Ways the Oculus Rift Could Change the Military](#)
- [The Army Gets Unreal: The Pros and Cons of Video Games for Combat Training](#)
- [Virtual Reality Headset Helps Navy Simulate Future Workspaces](#)
- [Playing War: How the Military Uses Video Games](#)

Activities:
- [Case Study & Video: Allstate: Protect It or Lose It](#)
- [Case Study: Lowe's partnership with The Sims Social Facebook game](#)

NO ASSIGNMENT THIS WEEK

WEEK EIGHT
Marketing…Gamified

Readings:

- Top Ten Marketing Gamification Cases You Won't Forget
- How to Solve Your Biggest Marketing Problems with Gamification
- Another Win for Digital Marketing: 4 Gamification Methods That Increase Conversions

Assignment 5:
You are the marketing director for the new *Star Wars* movie (lucky you). Your boss wants you to use a social media game or mobile game to increase hype for the movie and encourage early ticket orders. What is your strategy? What platform do you choose and why? Include how far in advance you'd launch, how long the campaign would run, and how you'd promote the game, increase sales, and raise engagement.

WEEK NINE
Enterprise Gamification

Readings:
- 7 Habits of Corporations Successfully Using Social Collaboration and Gamification
- Gamification of Enterprise
- Top Ten Enterprise Gamification Cases That Will Make Employees More Productive

Activities:
- Video: Call of Duty Modern Warfare 3
- Video: Angry Birds and State Farm Ads

Assignment 6:
Take your favorite television show and explain how you'd use mobile gaming, virtual worlds, or virtual environments to promote brand awareness and increase ratings.

WEEK TEN
Money, Money, Money – Gambling, Virtual Goods, and Fantasy Football

Readings:
- Social Casino Games are Among the Most Lucrative
- The Money Makers for Social Games Aren't the Big Spenders
- How Fake Sports Are Turning Man Cave Dwellers Into Millionares

Activities:
- Presentation: Gamification: The Fantasy Sports, Advergaming, Cybercafe, Virtual Currency Maze

NO ASSIGNMENT THIS WEEK – WORK ON YOUR PAPERS

WEEK ELEVEN
Risks and Challenges of Social Networking and Gaming

Readings:
- How Do People Become Addicted to Online Games and Social Networking Sites?
- Real World Risk in Virtual World Gaming
- Candy Crush Saga: The Science Behind Our Addiction

NO ACTIVITIES OR ASSIGNMENT THIS WEEK – WORK ON YOUR PAPERS

WEEK TWELVE
No reading for this week.
Final presentations.

Disclaimer:
This syllabus reflects my current plans and objectives. These plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Any changes will be communicated clearly. Changes to the syllabus are not unusual and should be expected.

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.

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/wpcontent/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
- (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-complaints 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.