

Social Media Skills

JOU 4930 | Spring 2016 | Section 121D | 234 Weil Hall
Thursdays 1:55–3:50 p.m. (periods 7 and 8)

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WEBSITE: <https://socmeduf.wordpress.com/>

Course Description

Students in this course develop and produce social media outreach, engagement and analysis for WUFT News. Once a week, the full class meets for lecture and discussion. Once a week, each student works a four-hour shift in the Innovation News Center, during which social media posts about Florida news are logged, analyzed, and republished (in some cases), and social media accounts for WUFT (and possibly other CJC Media Properties) are managed.

Course Objectives

In this course, students learn how to:

1. Study and analyze social media use by other news organizations
2. Create social media posts for WUFT.org
3. Assist managers and students in the WUFT.org newsroom with social media strategy
4. Edit and improve their own profiles on social media accounts
5. Use analytics to learn about community and demographics

Prerequisites

Students who enroll in this course must have completed JOU 3101 Reporting with a C or better. Consideration will be given to students who have completed RTV 2100, JOU 3109C or MMC 2100. Students who have not completed any of those courses should not enroll in this course.

Attendance and Attitude

Students are expected to show respect for one another and for the instructor. Attendance and arriving on time for class are necessary. **Lateness and absences will result in a lower final grade.** If you have been absent, you are responsible for finding out about any missed material by consulting another student or going to the instructor's office hours. These matters will not be handled via email.

Mobile devices must be turned OFF and placed out of sight during class. Do not check text messages, social media, email, etc., during class, as your instructor considers this quite rude and therefore grounds for disciplinary action. Give your full and undivided attention to anyone who is speaking in class, including your fellow students.

Students may use a laptop computer during class. However, if you are seen checking social media or any other sites unrelated to the immediate topics being discussed in class, penalties will be imposed. Penalties range from a warning (first offense) to grade point deductions. Please give your full attention to the class while you are in the classroom.

UF Attendance Policies

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

Course Deadlines and Makeup Work

Late assignments are not accepted. This means that an assignment submitted late is graded as a zero. Assignments are not accepted via email unless requested by the instructor. If an illness or a personal emergency prevents you from completing an assignment on time, advance notice and written documentation are required. No work for “extra credit” is accepted.

NOTE: Assignment deadlines in Canvas are usually set for 11:59 p.m. If you submit after the deadline, your assignment is late.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated in this course. It will be reported to the student’s department chair AND to the university’s Dean of Students—and it will result in a failing grade for this course. A formal report of the offense will be filed with the university’s Dean of Students.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment.
- Submitting work you did for another class.
- Copying and pasting text written by another person without quotation marks and/or without complete attribution, which usually includes a link to the original work.
- Use of images produced by others without explicit permission of the creator of the image. Attribution is *not* the same as permission. Most images found online are not free to use.

UF Student Honor Code

> <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Required Books and More

There are no required books for this course. Weekly reading assignments will be posted on the course website. Assigned readings will be covered in the weekly quizzes.

Social media accounts

During this course, students are *required* to use various social media platforms. Several graded assignments will require the use of accounts using your real name and publicly viewable posts. It is acceptable to have more than one account on one platform (such as Twitter) if the student prefers it. However, it is not acceptable to make accounts private or hidden *if they are being used for a course assignment*. The student's real name must be on the account.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodations.

UF Disability Resource Center

> <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Course Requirements

Read this entire document in the first week of classes. If anything is not clear to you, ask me for clarification before Jan. 11, 2016. This syllabus is a contract between you and me.

Please make sure to check the course website at least once a week. If you rely only on a printed or downloaded copy, you may miss a change in the schedule.

> WEBSITE: <https://socmeduf.wordpress.com/>

Quizzes

There will be quizzes on the assigned reading. Quizzes are in Canvas and are open-book (although there is no book). On the Course Schedule page on the course website (see above), the readings covered on that week's quiz are listed under *the same week as the quiz*. Deadlines: In Canvas.

Assignments

Assignments are listed and LINKED on the Course Schedule page on the course website (see above). Exact deadlines: In Canvas.

Presentations

Presentations will involve a 10-minute demonstration in class, showing how news organizations are using an app/social media tool from a list to be provided by the instructor.

Fulfillment of newsroom shift duties

The day and times for your shift will be determined in Week 2. Each student will do one four-hour shift per week in the Innovation News Center. You may take one 30-minute break during your shift. Except for that break, your whereabouts during your shift must be known to your newsroom supervisor; with rare exceptions, you will be in the newsroom. If you cannot work your assigned shift on a particular day, you must find a replacement from among the students in this course. Missing a shift (without a replacement) is a serious breach of professional conduct and will result in a zero for the shift. Exact duties and requirements for each shift will vary week by week. You will submit a shift report within 24 hours of the end of your shift. Failure to submit this report by the deadline will result in a zero for the shift.

Attendance and participation

Points will be subtracted if you miss more than one (1) class meeting, are chronically late, or repeatedly show inattention. Participation is expected.

Grades and Grading Policies

Quizzes	20 points
Assignments and presentations	30 points
Newsroom shifts	40 points
Attendance and participation	10 points
TOTAL	100 points

92–100 points	A	72–77 points	C
90–91 points	A–	70–71 points	C–
88–89 points	B+	68–69 points	D+
82–87 points	B	62–67 points	D
80–81 points	B–	60–61 points	D–
78–79 points	C+	59 points or fewer	E

UF Policies about Student Grades

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

UF Dates (Spring 2016)

Classes begin	Jan. 5	Jan. 18	MLK Jr. Day
Drop/Add	Jan. 5–11	Feb. 27–March 5	Spring Break
Classes end	April 20		
Final Exams	April 23–29		

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the final weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific dates when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Please note that many important details are on the website (<https://socmeduf.wordpress.com/>) and do not appear herein. Assigned readings, links to videos, resources, etc., are on the **Course Schedule** page of the website. Quizzes are based on the assigned readings in that same week.

Week 1 | Jan. 7

Introduction to the course.

Week 2 | Jan. 14

Social media and the evolving news ecosystem.

NOTE: Shift assignments will be made. Day and times to be locked in for the rest of the semester. Be prepared to commit to a single day and a four-hour time frame.

Week 3 | Jan. 21

How journalists use Twitter.

NOTE: Shifts start this week. Because of the Monday holiday, any students with a Monday shift will either (a) complete their shift on Friday, Jan. 15, or (b) commit to another day Jan. 19–22 for *this week only*.

Week 4 | Jan. 28

Verification and fact checking with social media.

Week 5 | Feb. 4

Journalistic uses of Facebook. Instant articles, Pages, Groups, the algorithm.

Week 6 | Feb. 11

Audience metrics and analysis.

Week 7 | Feb. 18

Curation and aggregation, best practices.

Week 8 | Feb. 25

Images, “cards” and animated GIFs: Creating attention with visuals.

Week 9 | March 3

Spring Break — class does not meet.

Week 10 | March 10

Guest speaker TBA: Audience metrics and analysis (part 2).

Week 11 | March 17

Live coverage of events, breaking news.

Week 12 | March 24

Short social videos; live streaming videos.

Week 13 | March 31

Engaging with audiences.

Week 14 | April 7

Data protection, security and privacy — for journalists.

Week 15 | April 14

Viral media and sharing behaviors.

Weekly topics are subject to change. Please check the Course Schedule page on the course website for the latest updates.