

Advanced Social Media

JOU 4930 | Spring 2017 | Section 08E5 | 334 Weimer Hall
Thursdays 12:50–3:50 p.m. (periods 6, 7, 8)

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

Course Description

Students in this course analyze social media platforms and social media accounts used by news organizations and individuals in professional contexts; write individual posts for various purposes and goals; produce photos, videos and graphics for social sharing.

Course Objectives

In this course, students learn how to:

1. Study and analyze social media use by news organizations and journalists
2. Create and critique social media posts
3. Create photos, videos and graphics for use in social media posts
4. Edit and improve their profiles on social media accounts
5. Learn about voice and branding in social media
6. Learn about analytics, community, 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 unexcused absences will result in a lower final grade** (see details below for point breakdown). If you have been absent, you are responsible for finding out about any missed material by consulting another student and/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 are expected to use their own 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, starting at 50 percent of one assignment for the second offense and up to half a letter grade for the course for chronic issues. Please give your full attention to the class while you are in the classroom.

See **Attendance and participation** under “Course Requirements” below for grading specifics.

UF Attendance Policies

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

Course Deadlines and Makeup Work

Late assignments are not accepted unless an emergency can be documented. 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. If advance notice is not possible because of a genuine emergency, written documentation will be 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. It will result in a failing grade for this course (for details, see <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4042.pdf>). 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/scrc/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Required Books and More

There is one required book for this course. Additional weekly reading assignments will be posted on the course website. All assigned readings will be covered in the weekly quizzes.

Required text: *Likeable Social Media*, 2nd edition, by Dave Kerpen (McGraw-Hill, 2015).

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 on or before Jan. 10, 2017. 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. 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 a particular app/social media platform from a list to be provided by the instructor.

Social media journal

So that you will have something to show from the class, you will make at least one post per week in a public, online, individual journal at Tumblr. Tumblr will be used because you can add Google Analytics without an extra charge. Each week's journal work will be marked pass/fail. If you have 10 or more failed weeks, the grade for your journal will be 0. For details, see the Required Work page on the course website (see link above).

Attendance and participation

Points will be subtracted if you miss more than one (1) class meeting, are chronically late, or repeatedly show inattention. **Participation in discussions is expected.** At times, you will be working on assigned projects during class. Absences due to illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, etc., will be handled in accordance with UF policies, to which you will find a link on page 2 of this syllabus.

Grades and Grading Policies

Quizzes	30 percent
Assignments and presentations	50 percent
Social media journal	10 percent
Attendance and participation	10 percent
TOTAL	100 percent

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 2017)

Classes begin	Jan. 4	MLK Jr. Day	Jan. 16
Drop/Add	Jan. 4–10	Spring Break	March 5–11
Classes end	April 19		
Final Exams	April 22–28		

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 Topics

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. 5

Introduction to the course; expectations

Week 2 | Jan. 12

Listening to the audience; social media and the evolving news ecosystem

Your social media profile: Inventory assignment (in class)

Your social media journal (starts now)

Week 3 | Jan. 19

Using social platforms to reach targeted audiences and to find sources

Professional use of Twitter; how journalists use Twitter; Twitter lists; whom to follow

Week 4 | Jan. 26

What consumers like; consequences of the Facebook algorithm

Facebook and news; Instant Articles; Pages; Groups

Week 5 | Feb. 2

Spreading your message by acquiring fans and followers

Instagram and Snapchat

Scheduling posts—why and how (Buffer, Hootsuite, SocialFlow)

Week 6 | Feb. 9

Engagement: What does it mean for news?

Building communities; responding to people; comment sections

Audience metrics and analysis

Week 7 | Feb. 16

Using the right tone and language in responses

Viral media and sharing behaviors

Week 8 | Feb. 23

Being authentic; transparency

Short social videos; live streaming videos; Facebook Live and news events

Week 9 | March 2

Class does not meet; your instructor will be at a conference. However, there is a quiz and an assignment.

Social media guidelines from professional news organizations

Social media is everyone's job

Week 10 | March 9

Spring Break—no class

Week 11 | March 16

Asking questions (relates to engagement and community)

Crowdsourcing and UGC

Live coverage of events, breaking news

Week 12 | March 23

Providing value; free vs. paid

Curation and aggregation: Best practices

Week 13 | March 30

Using social network ads

Images, "cards" and animated GIFs: Creating attention with visuals

Week 14 | April 6

Preparing for mistakes; appropriate ways to react; handling corrections

Verification and fact checking with social media; "fake news"

Week 15 | April 13

Exceeding the audience's expectations

Data protection, security and privacy — for journalists

Classes end: April 19 (Wednesday)

Finals: Monday, April 24–Friday, April 28

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