

MMC 1009 - Intro to Media and Communications

Summer 2018 Syllabus

Professor: Mark Leeps

Meeting Time: Online, class week runs from Monday-Sunday

Office Hours: Email to arrange for an email or phone conference

Contact: mleeps@wuft.org – all messages should be sent to this address, not via Canvas

Note: I'm a faculty member at UF and also a station staffer for WUFT-TV (the UF College of Journalism & Communications houses several media outlets, including WRUF-AM/FM/TV and WUFT-FM/TV/.org, with one newsroom serving all platforms)

Instructor's policies

I am located in Gainesville, FL and will do my best to respond to student emails within 48 hours. If you email me within 24 hours of an assignment deadline, I will do my best to get back to you, but cannot promise I will respond in time, so plan ahead. **Please note that most deadlines for this course are on Mondays at NOON ET, although you'll need to work in advance near the end (and on your final paper), so modules will often be opened a week or more in advance.**

I may email you directly but may also post information to the Canvas announcements section of the course. **Please read the announcements and your syllabus before contacting me with questions to see if your answers are there.** It is my goal to post grades within a week of assignment deadlines.

Questions or other messages for me should be sent to my UFL email address above to ensure receipt and reply. Canvas has too many places for messages to "hide", and I also teach traditional courses involving dozens of students while managing newsroom labs for several dozen more. Any messages sent on Canvas will not receive a reply.

Course overview

This course is designed to give UF Online students a general overview of the College of Journalism and Communications. We will discuss career options with all areas of study in our College: *Advertising, Journalism, Media and Society, Public Relations and Telecommunication*. **We will look at current trends in the field of communications, audience engagement and social networks using the majors and career paths in advertising, public relations, print and broadcast journalism to help you succeed in our College.** In addition to a general understanding of our fields of study and their corresponding professions, you will begin to build your professional network by connecting with industry professionals near you as a part of your learning experience. Please note that the videos in the course feature former instructors and other UF faculty.

Course goals

Our goal is to prepare you for a successful experience at our College by introducing you to our programs, professors, industry professionals and best practices. We want you to begin planning your career by building your professional network from day one with us. Finding a mentor to help guide you through college is a critical component to your success. This can be a professor, professional or close advisor. Through this course, you will be connecting with practicing professionals in the industry of your choice to learn more about career options in communications.

What will you learn?

- Basic principles of Advertising, Journalism, Media and Society, Public Relations and Telecommunication and how these fields of study provide career opportunities
- How to position your social networks to benefit you professionally
- Where to find professional networks
- What opportunities you can take advantage of as an online student

Required reading

There is not a required textbook to purchase for this course. You will have assigned readings in each module, and, in addition, you are expected to follow the news each week on the following websites and include current media events and industry developments in your weekly discussions and be prepared to answer questions on module quizzes:

Poynter

<http://www.poynter.org/>

Advertising Age

<http://adage.com/>

MediaShift

<http://mediashift.org/>

PR Week

<http://www.prweek.com/us>

Student evaluation

Students will be graded through a variety of assignments, quizzes and a final paper, all due on Mondays at NOON ET. The grades will break down as follows and available in your grade book on Canvas (the final grade average calculated there will be used to determine your final grade):

Six Multiple-Choice Quizzes (10 each): **60 points**

Six Discussion Board Posts (5 each): **30 points**

Six Course Activities (5 each): **30 points**

Final Paper: **30 points**

Total possible points earned in class: 150

Multiple-choice quizzes will be given at the end of each module and will cover the topics in both the lectures and the readings. They will be taken online, have a time limit, and be graded once all students in the course complete the quiz.

Discussion board posts will vary from sharing examples of work you find online to questions and comments about topics covered in class. Incorporate hyperlinks in your text as you see them used here in your syllabus. They will be open for two-week periods and will be graded for relevance, understanding of the topic asked and ability to identify and communicate pertinent and accurate concepts.

Grading Scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
E	59 or lower

Course activities will be turned in online. These activities could vary from completing a professional Twitter account, pitching a TV news story, or networking with each other. Again, incorporate hyperlinks in your text as you see them used here in your syllabus.

The **Final paper (Shadowing a Professional)** will serve as your final examination in this course and demonstrate understanding and application of the concepts we will cover throughout it. **Your assignment is to find a professional in one of the four media fields we cover in this class (advertising, public relations, print journalism, or broadcast journalism), and then shadow them at their job for one day and journal your experience.** An example of this would be finding a local reporter for your television station or other news outlet and attending a news meeting, covering a story or watching a broadcast in the studio.

The paper has no length requirement but should be detailed enough to describe who you shadowed, why and how you chose and connected with this particular professional, what shadowing you did and when, how they conducted their job, and what lessons from the lectures or reading applied to your experience with this particular profession and work. You will also need to include photos of your shadowing experience, including a photo of you with the person you shadowed on that day. Please make sure the professional is aware of this requirement when you make arrangements with them so they can anticipate and solve any problems, as some businesses and media outlets have restrictions about photography. You will also have to include your thank-you to them.

The professional you shadow must work in one of the four fields listed above full time, not have a job or business that just includes doing some marketing or social media promotion; media and communications work must be their primary function. If you have any questions or need direction or help, please contact me as soon as possible – this includes confirming that the person and place where you want to shadow is appropriate for this assignment. **The final paper can be turned in at any time during the course, but its deadline is Wednesday, April 25 at noon ET.**

Learning environment

Give your classmates the utmost respect when interacting with them in this course. Remember that it is much different to communicate thoughts and opinions over discussion boards than in person. Be respectful to your classmates' ideas, ask insightful questions for clarity, read with consideration, and give criticism with professionalism.

Both students and faculty each have a responsibility to maintain an appropriate learning environment online. I expect that we will all show professional courtesy and good “netiquette” in our discussions. Per university policy, we will all give due respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression, age, disability, political affiliation, and nationalities. If there is a pronoun your classmates and I should use when talking with you, please let us know.

Missed assignments and late work

Because we are working together in a class about professionalism and learning about professions that run on tight and crucial deadlines, we will do the same to model and practice that behavior as students. **No late work will be accepted or extended deadlines for missed assignments will be granted in this course – NO EXCEPTIONS.** Requests for extensions will not receive a response. Manage your time and prioritize your work. Our assignments are neither long nor terribly difficult, and if you do them thoroughly and well and turn them in on time, you will complete this course with a satisfactory grade.

Each module’s discussion board post and activity will be open for at least a two-week period and the module quiz will be scheduled well in advance. The final paper’s instructions are in this syllabus and the assignment is open on Canvas on the first day of the course and can be turned in at any time during the course. Our deadlines are always the same: Mondays at noon ET. **Given the long-term availability of the course content and assignments in this class, as well as the fact that our deadlines are always the same, there are no excuses for not completing work on time.** Please plan ahead and, if you need to, work ahead.

Fact errors

Making fact errors on an assignment – this includes, but is not limited to, inaccurate facts and statistics, misspellings of proper names, and misquotes – will result in a full letter grade deduction for that assignment. Please **proofread** and fact check your writing, sources, and information carefully.

Academic honesty

University of Florida students are expected to read, understand, and follow the [Student Conduct & Honor Code](#). Violations of this code are taken very seriously and can result in your failure of this course and additional sanctions up to and including academic probation and expulsion. I personally identified and issued sanctions for six violations last semester alone, so trust me when I say that I will notice abuses of academic integrity and take action. Please make sure we do not have to go down that road together.

Online tutoring

The new [Writing Studio](#) is a free service for current UF graduate and undergraduate students. Students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with a consultant on issues specific to their own particular development. Because their aim is to help students become more effective writers, they do not simply proofread or edit documents. They can, however, assist students to become better proofreaders and editors of their own work. Their main office is 302 Tigert Hall, and our office phone is (352) 846-1138. They also offer online tutorials from 11am-4pm ET on Wednesdays. You must [register in advance](#) for all tutorials.

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 making a request for accommodations. Please contact the professor within first two weeks of class with documentation to request accommodations.

Instructor evaluation

Students are highly encouraged to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> and are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Thank you for taking your time to complete this process.