

MMC 6936 – Personal Branding and Professional Development

Fall 2018

Instructor: Jennifer Ford

Email: Jennifer.ford@jou.ufl.edu

Response time: I will respond to your email within 24 hours over the week. I will try my best to check email regularly on the weekends too, but plan on any email sent after 5 p.m. on Friday to be returned Monday.

Course Communication:

Please use jennifer.ford@jou.ufl.edu if you have any individual questions about the course. I will communicate class announcements, updates and reminders through the Canvas announcement tool. If I need to communicate with you individually, I will email you through your UFL account or submit a comment to your assignment.

Office Hours:

By appointment on Zoom

I am always open to scheduling additional meeting times. To set up an appointment, please email me at jennifer.ford@jou.ufl.edu. I encourage you to check-in and take advantage of office hours to assist with:

- questions about course material and/or assignments
- your professional development and/or transitioning to a full-time job post-graduation
- general job search and/or freelancing advice

Instructor Bio:

I currently work as Marketing & Communications Director at the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications for online graduate programs. I am the founding president of AIGA Gainesville, the 72nd chapter of the professional association for design.

I earned a Master's Degree from the University of Florida in Web Design and Online Communication. I also graduated from Idaho State University with a B.A. in Mass Communication specializing in Visual Communication and Graphic Design.

I spent several years designing for various publications and clients in Pocatello, Idaho before moving to Gainesville, Florida. Working as a page designer for the New York Times Company at their Gainesville Editing Center, I primarily designed pages for The New York Times International Weekly. I also aided in the development of new products for the NYT Syndicate, including The New York Times Spending Well, a personal finance supplement for various U.S. newspapers. Spending Well received a New York Times Publisher's Award in 2015. In my time at the University of Florida, I have also worked as a multimedia developer at the Career Resource Center and Senior Graphic Designer and Social Media Manager for UF Online.

Course Website and Login

You can access our course shell in Canvas (UF e-Learning). Go to <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>. Click the blue e-Learning button. Login with your GatorLink account. This course will be in the "Courses" menu on the left navigation. You might have to click "All Courses" at the bottom depending on how many courses you have taken at UF.

Contact UF Helpdesk <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> (352) 392-HELP (4357) if you have any trouble with accessing your course.

Please set up your Canvas notifications so that you are alerted when a course announcement is posted. I will be using the announcement tool to keep you updated about the course. I will also be using Canvas for due date reminders, assignment submissions, and course material. If you are unable to find a file/link you need, chances are it can be found in the modules section of Canvas.

Meeting Time

The course will be set up by weeks, with each week beginning Monday at midnight and going through Sunday at 11:59pm EST. This course is completely asynchronous so you will follow the weekly modules on Canvas.

Course Description

This course will connect students' education in the program and their previous experiences to their post-graduation goals, whether that is obtaining a new job, earning a promotion and/or freelancing. The goal is to focus on professional development topics so students feel confident marketing their skills after graduation and have concrete materials that will make them stand out to employers and/or clients.

By the end of the class, students should be aware of job search trends, the targeted documents necessary to be employable after graduation and the importance of networking. Students will also learn job-search skills specific to the online communications field such as writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, creating e-portfolios and negotiating a salary. The course will be a combination of learning specific professional development skills and then applying them through assignments. The key is that this course will always be geared toward a customized, targeted job search so students learn how to match their background to a specific opportunity.

Students will begin thinking of themselves as professionals and consider their personal brand as they pursue opportunities. A student's personal brand online, in-person and through written documents will be emphasized.

Course Objectives

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

- Build authentic relationships from networking and use networking tools to distinguish themselves as professionals.
- Develop job search techniques and materials that are targeted toward a job in an online communications field.
- Maintain an e-portfolio site that highlights work samples, skills in online communications and post-graduation goals.
- Advocate for a salary and/or promotion that meets their educational level and work experience.
- Identify actions and materials that contribute to a personal brand in both an online and in-person environment.
- Use presentation and professional writing skills to present information to potential employers or clients
- Use materials that highlight their personal brand such as a biography and networking business card.

Course Structure

This is a 12-week course. The course will be set up by weeks, with each week beginning Monday at midnight and going through Sunday at 11:59pm EST. The course is completely asynchronous so you will follow along with the weekly modules on Canvas. There will be a weekly recorded lecture, assigned readings, quiz, and supplementary activities/resources for eleven weekly modules. The 12th module/Week 12 will take the form of a workshop, where students will focus on peer reviews and updates to their e-portfolio site, which is the capstone project for the course.

Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor on an as-needed basis to discuss the course and/or their professional development. The instructor reserves the right to require individual meetings when necessary if there is a concern about the student's progress that can't be resolved via email.

Course Expectations

Given that this is a graduate-level course that focuses on your professional development, it is expected that you start engaging in best practices now. My assumption is that all of you already care about your academics, professional reputation and post-graduation goals. However, in the spirit of being on the same page, here are my expectations in this course:

- Students should be engaged in class, which requires watching provided materials or lectures, reading articles, participating in module activities and logging into Canvas regularly.
- Assignments are correlated with your post-graduation success. Therefore, students should plan to start assignments in advance and submit assignments on time.
- Communication via email and Canvas submission should take a professional tone and be free of spelling/grammatical mistakes.
- Students should be open to feedback on assignments, as this is a way to grow professionally and a trait that will be valued by supervisors.

Ownership of Education:

As graduate students, you are not passive participants in this course. All students in this program have a background in marketing, advertising, public relations, journalism, or a similar field. Everyone in class will benefit from your expertise and knowledge. If you have something to share with the class from a previous experience, reading an article of interest and/or following someone on social media, please share it with the group. We learn best from sharing resources with each other, as opposed to working in isolation.

This class also allows you to take ownership of your educational experience, where your efforts will equate to your success after graduation. You will know the due dates from the beginning of the semester. Please take personal responsibility to note the due dates and turn assignments in before the deadline.

Required Text

There is not a required textbook for this course. Readings related to the topics that we are covering will be posted in the corresponding weekly module.

I recommend keeping up with publications highlighting current employment trends and industry updates.

Prerequisites

There is not prerequisite knowledge needed for the course. To check how this course satisfies graduation requirements, please contact an advisor in the department.

Teaching Philosophy

Everyone has the opportunity and potential to earn an "A" grade, but high quality work is expected to attain it. Therefore, special efforts should demonstrate: (a) exemplary academic and pre-professional growth, and (b) substantial contributions to the course through participation and collaboration with others.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy:

Because this is an asynchronously delivered online course, attendance in the form of taking roll will not occur; however, students are expected to sign onto the course site at least once each day, Monday – Friday, to check for course updates in the announcements section of the site and participate in the weekly module.

Late Work and Make-up Policy:

Deadlines are critical to this class, especially since this class centers around professionalism. All work is due on or before the due date. Given that all assignment descriptions and due dates will be available from the first day of the semester, no late work will be accepted. Extensions for deadlines will only be given for preapproved emergencies so plan on keeping up with the course calendar. Minor inconveniences such as family vacation or minor illness are not valid reasons for extensions.

Since all of your assignments will be submitted on Canvas, there is an expectation that you are uploading your assignment files correctly. Therefore, for work to be considered on time, I need to be able to view it as it was originally submitted. Uploading a file that is not recognized by Canvas, uploading a blank document, and/or uploading a file for another class does not allow you to resubmit after the deadline for credit.

Issues with uploading work for a grade is also not an excuse. If you are having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. For example, you can send an email with file attachments to demonstrate that the work was completed on time. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

Policy for assignments that can't be emailed as an attachment if there is a technical difficulty: 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. Contact UF helpdesk (352) 392-HELP.

Emergency and extenuating circumstances policy: Students who face emergencies, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member, or other situations beyond their control should notify their instructors immediately.

Students are also advised to contact the Dean of Students Office if they would like more information on the medical withdrawal or drop process: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/> .

Students MUST inform their academic advisor before dropping a course, whether for medical or non-medical reasons. Your advisor will assist with notifying professors and go over options for how to proceed with their classes. If you aren't sure who your academic advisor is, please email distancesupport@jou.ufl.edu and you will be connected with your advisor.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalogue at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Coursework Submissions:

Below is a chart that contains the course assignments, along with the corresponding percentage of your grade and method of submission. You will note that all assignments and the weekly activities will be submitted through Canvas.

Assignment	Percentage	Submission
Networking Business Card	10%	In Canvas
Resume and Cover Letter	20%	In Canvas
Interview Preparation Assignment	10%	In Canvas
E-Portfolio	25%	In Canvas
E-Portfolio Classmate Critiques and Updates	15%	In Canvas
Weekly Activities (Weeks 1-11)	20%	In Canvas

Deadlines:

Below is a snapshot view of the assignments and their corresponding due dates. This class, like others, involves meeting deadlines and taking responsibility of managing multiple commitments. I highly recommend that you note the course due dates in a planner/online scheduler. These due dates will mirror the Canvas modules tab and Canvas calendar, which you will be held accountable for viewing regularly.

Assignment	Deadline
Networking Business Card	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Week 4
Resume and Cover Letter	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Week 7
Interview Preparation Assignment	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Week 8
E-Portfolio	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Week 11
E-Portfolio Classmate Critiques and Updates	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Week 12
Weekly Activities (Weeks 1-11)	Sunday at 11:59pm EST of Weeks 1-11

Grading:

All assignments will be graded on a 100 point scale. There will be a rubric for every assignment located in Canvas. The numeric grade that you receive will account for a percentage of your total grade. Therefore, your final grade in the course will be based on weighted percentages.

The final grade will be awarded as follows:

A 100% to 92.5%
A- 92.5% to 89.5%
B+ < 89.5% to 86.5%
B < 86.5% to 82.5%
B- < 82.5% to 79.5%
C+ < 79.5% to 76.5%
C < 76.5% to 72.5%
C- < 72.5% to 69.5%
D+ < 69.5% to 66.5%
D < 66.5% to 62.5%
D- < 62.5% to 59.5%
F < 59.5% to 0%

Rounding policy: The final grade of a student who ends the course with a 92.62 is an A- . The final grade of a student who ends the course with a 92.34 is a B+. When the grade falls at a .5, I will carry the grade to the next decimal point for rounding purposes.

Current UF grading policies for assigning grade points:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Course Details

Weekly Lectures:

This course is completely asynchronous so all videos and lectures will be pre-recorded. Materials will vary from week to week. Videos could be a pre-recorded lecture from the instructor, TED talks, or course clips from Lynda.com. Each recording will vary in length depending on the material, and some topics may be broken up into shorter segmented videos. It is your responsibility to watch each of the videos by Sunday at 11:59pm EST of the week that they are assigned.

Although it is possible to watch the video lectures at any time and at any pace, keeping up with the videos according to the schedule will be easier as they set the foundation for the graded assignments in the course.

Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor on an as-needed basis to discuss course material and/or their professional development. The instructor reserves the right to mandate individual meetings when necessary if there is a concern about the student's progress that can't be resolved via email.

Weekly Activities (11 Total)

There will be a activity that needs to be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm EST of each week during weeks 1-11. Activities will vary each week, based on the material being covered. Each activity will be submitted in Canvas. These activities are meant as a way to make sure you are staying up-to-date with the class lectures and should enhance your e-portfolio.

University Policies

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/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.

Other Resources:

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

- Counseling and Wellness resources
 - <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/> 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 contact your program director and/or student support coordinator at distancesupport@jou.ufl.edu or 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. 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 their 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 ¹⁴ 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.

Disclaimer:

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes will be communicated clearly. Students should expect these changes to take place. Students are responsible for taking note of these updates and will be held accountable for new deadlines.