

MMC 6936 Copywriting for Digital Messaging
FALL 2018

Instructor: Lisa Hope
Email: lisahope@ufl.edu
Phone: 352-870-9719

Course Website: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Course Communication:

The instructor is available via email. No phone calls unless a meeting is scheduled. Please email or text to set up an appointment. For general course questions, please post on the questions discussion board in Canvas or email the instructor.

Course Description:

Consumers are surrounded by thousands of screens every day. It's easy for retail messaging to get lost in the fray between puppy videos and celeb gossip. In this course, you'll learn how to stand out. You'll learn what makes an audience connect with a company beyond a "like" and how to turn a website into a brand story. You'll learn that there's more to an email subject line than you thought and just how important character count really is (hint: very). By the end of this course, you will develop a social content calendar and messaging doc for your very own brand, learn the value of design/copy partnership and what it means to write not just for a brand but also as a brand.

Course Objectives:

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

- Concept, develop and execute creative copywriting campaigns
- Craft engaging social media content
- Plan and develop consumer-driven blog posts
- Plan and develop email blasts and mobile notifications
- Execute website copy and learn how UX can affect copy
- Create brand manifestos that determine tone and voice, and explain how that is translated through a digital medium

Course Goal:

The overall purpose of this class is to gain further understanding of creative digital copywriting for brands.

Expectations:

We're here to learn and to share ideas in a professional and respectful manner. You're expected to provide timely, thoughtful and intelligent commentary to each class discussion. These discussions are not limited to the Canvas shell, but all platforms that involve coursework.

Required Text:

No required text.

Readings:

Online articles will be required for weekly discussions. You can find them in the syllabus and in Canvas along with the weekly lecture video. The articles will consist of blogs, online publications/ads, brand emails, and case studies.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills:

Do you know how to use Microsoft Word? If yes, then you will be fine. General understanding of social media and some website/basic user experience knowledge will also come in handy.

Teaching Philosophy:

Writing is an essential form of communication. This course seeks to explore how brands communicate with their audience. Gone are the days of "specialized" creative; if you want to excel in advertising, you have to own every medium. Here, you'll learn how to master digital writing and add that to your creative arsenal.

Instructional Methods:

This class is online. There will be no live meetings. Each week there will be a lecture accompanied by a reading assignment and a discussion question. This course also includes a midterm project and a final presentation.

Attendance Policy:

Because this course is online, there will not be any sort of attendance sheet or roll call. Instead, you are expected to sign onto the course site regularly to check for updates in the announcements and discussions sections.

Late Work and Make-up Policy:

Just like in any agency, deadlines are non-negotiable. Try explaining to your Creative Director why you couldn't get that pitch done on time and see how that goes. Listed below are penalties for late work*:

- Less than an hour late 05 points off
- More than an hour late but less than 24 hours late 10 points off
- More than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late 15 points off
- More than 48 hours late 25 points off
- More than 72 hours late 50 points off

The new lecture week begins on Mondays.

*However, life does happen. You must email the instructor in case of an emergency that prevents you from turning work in on time.

Issues with uploading work for a grade is not an excuse. If a student is having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. Student may email .zip files or links to Dropbox folders to the instructor via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

Technical issue policy: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the ticket number received from Help Desk 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 instructor 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/> .

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:

Coursework should be submitted through Canvas. Throughout the semester, you will submit:

- Thought Papers In Canvas
- Assignments In Canvas
- Midterm Project In Canvas
- Final Presentation In Canvas

Deadlines:

This class, like others, involves many deadlines. Here is a reminder. The new lecture starts on Mondays:

Thought Papers	11:59 PM EST Wednesday the week of lecture
Thought Paper Comments	11:59 PM EST Friday the week of lecture
Assignments	11:59 PM EST Sunday the week assigned
Midterm	11:59 PM EST Sunday the week assigned
Final Presentation	5:00 PM EST last Friday of the semester

Grading:

Your grade in this course will be evaluated according to this distribution:

- Thought Papers 15%
- Thought Paper Comments 5%
- Writing Assignments 25%
- Mid-semester project 25%
- Final Project 30%

The final grade will be awarded as follows:

A	100%	to	93%
A-	< 93%	to	90%
B+	< 90%	to	87%
B	< 87%	to	83%
B-	< 83%	to	80%
C+	< 80%	to	77%
C	< 77%	to	73%
C-	< 73%	to	70%
D+	< 70%	to	67%
D	< 67%	to	63%
D-	< 63%	to	60%
E	< 60%	to	0%

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

Assignments:

Thought Papers:

You will be assigned a combination of lectures, case studies, videos, and other materials to read or watch each week. You can find the assigned materials in the syllabus. Each week, the instructor will post a question or problem to the discussion board in Canvas. Based on what you have learned, write a thorough thought paper addressing the problem.

You should post this in the thought paper section every Wednesday by 11:59 PM EST. Thought papers should be well thought out and intelligent and at least three paragraphs.

Requirements:

- Please reference at least **TWO** of the week's materials in your work.
- When referencing a fact, cite your source.
- Ask **TWO** thoughtful questions to spark debate.
- **Word count:** 400-600 words.
- Within your thought paper, include examples of corresponding brand work and your experience (if applicable).
- **No typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. You will lose 3 points for every error of this type.**

Thought Paper Comments:

You must respond thoughtfully and politely to two of your classmates' thought papers. Provide your answer to their two questions and offer any insights or experience on the topic.

This is a pass/fail assignment. You must meet all the requirements listed below under "Requirements" in order to receive passing credit.

You should post your comments every Friday by 11:59 PM EST.

Requirements:

- Comment on **TWO** of your classmates' thought papers.
- Answer both questions asked by your classmate.
- Word count: 200 words minimum.
- No typos, misspellings or grammatical errors.
- You do not need to respond to comments on your own thought paper.

Thought Paper Rubric

	100-90 Excellent	89-80 Good	79-70 Satisfactory	69-60 Less than Satisfactory	Less than 60 Unsatisfactory
Topic focus (30%)	Focuses on the topic in a fresh and creative manner	Explores the topic with relative insight to demonstrate an overall understanding	Adequately addresses the topic with little additional insight	Haphazardly addresses the topic with little to no additional insight	Does not address the topic or does so too broadly
Analysis (40%)	Expertly draws from lectures using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of analysis and synthesis	Competently evaluates lectures and outside material with some analysis, if not synthesis	Minimal evaluation of lectures and outside material with little analysis or synthesis of material	Related lectures and outside material are presented without analysis or synthesis
Argument (40%)	Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization	Writing is supported by capable argumentation including conceptualization and understanding of topic	Writing falters at times when making a compelling argument, but the main point is clear and supported by competent writing	Writing is haphazard with minimal evidence used to support argument	Argument is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments

Assignments

Assignments will vary from week to week. Please see weekly schedule. All assignments are to be completed in Word, Arial font, 12 pt. They should be turned in every Sunday by 11:59 PM EST in the assignments section of the site.

This is to be your ORIGINAL work and should reflect that week's topic.

Rubric

	100-90 Excellent	89-90 Good	79-70 Satisfactory	69-60 Less than Satisfactory	Less than 60 Unsatisfactory
Topic (90%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind	No thought into research or put into effective communication

	communicates objective	outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	objective effectively	communication and almost not evaluation of reading	
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Zero typos and errors	One or two minor errors	Noticeable mistakes (Internet trolls <3 these)	Several errors	Did you even use Spell Check?

Final Presentation

This is the final presentation for the class. It is due by 5:00 PM EST on the final Friday of the course. **NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED!**

The final presentation will be a copy deck of a digital campaign. Create your own digital campaign for an original brand of your creation OR a brand of your choice.

Must include two emails for a marketing campaign; one-month social media calendar with content for at least TWO social media channels; five Facebook ads; one blog post, and one brand manifesto that accurately captures your brand's audience and creativity.

This should be in a PowerPoint, PDF or Word doc. Arial, 12-point font.

Rubric

	Excellent (100-90)	Good (89-80)	Satisfactory (79-70)	Less than Satisfactory (69-60)	Unsatisfactory (less than 60)
Creativity and branding (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively communicates objective	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates objective effectively	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind communication and almost not evaluation of reading	No thought into research or put into effective communication
Social Messaging (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind	No thought into research or put into effective communication

	communicates objective	outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	objective effectively	communication and almost not evaluation of reading	
Email (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively communicates objective	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates objective effectively	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind communication and almost not evaluation of reading	No thought into research or put into effective communication
Facebook Ads (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively communicates objective	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates objective effectively	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind communication and almost not evaluation of reading	No thought into research or put into effective communication
Blog (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively communicates objective	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates objective effectively	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind communication and almost not evaluation of reading	No thought into research or put into effective communication
Manifesto (15%)	Offers superior evaluation of readings; effectively communicates objective	Provides sufficient evaluation of lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of thought and effort	Competent evaluation of readings and communicates objective effectively	Minimal research into audience. Little thought behind communication and almost not evaluation of reading	No thought into research or put into effective communication
Grammar and syntax (10%)	Zero typos and errors	One or two minor errors	Noticeable mistakes (Internet trolls <3 these)	Several errors	Did you even use Spell Check?

Schedule

Week One: Welcome To Digital

Learning Objectives:

- Understand digital mediums
- Basic digital copywriting skills

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ajagrawal/2016/01/21/7-things-about-digital-marketing-everyone-should-know/#504d58cd9fc3>
- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2016/04/11/seven-rules-for-digital-copywriting-all-brands-should-follow/#149cab85483f>
- <http://webbyawards.com/winners/2016/advertising-media/features/best-copywriting/>

Assignments:

- Introduce yourself to your fellow classmates, share your background and what you hope to gain from this class on the discussion board.
- Weekly thought paper

Week Two: Audience

Learning Objectives:

- Writing for you vs. writing for them
- The power of image and copy
- How to understand an audience

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.marketingdonut.co.uk/marketing-strategy/your-target-market/six-steps-to-defining-your-target-market>
- <https://www.thebalance.com/define-your-brand-identity-2294834>
- <http://www.inc.com/rebekah-iliff/how-to-build-a-brand-with-soul-emotion-audience-philosophy.html>
- <https://www.oliveandcompany.com/blog/the-basics-of-building-your-brands-audience-online>

Assignments:

- Weekly thought paper

Week Three: Blogging

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about basic blogging
- Influencers and how they can help market a brand

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/how-beats-used-celeb-marketing-become-millennials-favorite-audio-brand-175314>
- <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/233891>
- <http://www.inc.com/amanda-pressner-kreuser/what-you-can-learn-from-these-5-brands-with-addictive-blogs.html>
- <https://contently.com/strategist/2015/04/29/5-fashion-brand-blogs-that-are-killing-the-game/>

Assignments:

- Write three blogs for “Iron Horse” motorcycle insurance. Pick any three topics relating to motorcycles (upkeep, travel, cost) but no two blogs should have the same topic. One should be written from the perspective of an influencer.
- Weekly thought paper

Week Four: Facebook

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding brands and Facebook
- How to create Facebook ads
- What makes a successful post
- Who are the successful Facebook brands?

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.postplanner.com/7-no-brainer-tips-to-write-awesome-facebook-post/>
- <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/infographic-how-millennials-and-baby-boomers-consume-user-generated-content-175307>
- <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/anatomy-of-a-facebook-post#sm.001uahogv11uifkkwpv1edm80hu6h>
- <http://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2016/06/29/best-facebook-ads>

Assignments:

- Create five Facebook ads, five Facebook boosted posts, and five Facebook posts for “Fast Fix” cleanse (fictional company). Target audience is health advocates and fitness competitors of any age. Fast Fix is an organic meal supplement loaded with protein, fiber and amino acids.
- Weekly thought paper

Week Five: Twitter

Learning Objectives:

- Twitter and branding
- How to make your mark in 140 characters or less
- Twitter vs. Facebook

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://sproutsocial.com/insights/facebook-vs-twitter/>
- <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246325>
- <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-social-media/twitter>
- <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/twitter-best-brands#sm.001uahogv11uifkkwpv1edm80hu6h>

Assignments:

- Weekly thought paper

Week Six: Midterm

Learning Objectives:

- No lecture

Watch:

- No lecture

Required Readings:

- No reading

Assignments:

- Midterm: Create a two-week content calendar and messaging doc that includes daily Facebook posts and Tweets and at least one blog (max. 2) for “Sweet Cream” artisan coffee company (this is a fictional company). The target audience is women/men aged 18-35. You must create messaging around brand posts, engagement posts, and CTA-driven (sales) posts.

Week Seven: Manifestos

Learning Objectives:

- What is a brand manifesto and how does it affect all creative?

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://disenthral.co/12-inspiring-brand-manifestos/>
- <http://justcreative.com/2016/02/24/language-in-branding-tips-examples-best-practices/>
- [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how to create a culture manifesto for your organization and why its a good](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_to_create_a_culture_manifesto_for_your_organization_and_why_its_a_good)

Assignments:

- Write one (1) brand manifesto for “Illuminate” electric company (fictional). Illuminate is a start-up dedicated to providing free power to underserved areas and families. For every home that chooses to power with “Illuminate,” one home in a distressed neighborhood will receive free power for one year. Your manifesto should speak to who Illuminate is, not just what they do. Also, who is the Illuminate customer and what do they stand for? This must be a written document. No more than one page. Arial font, 12 pt.

Week Eight: Websites

Learning Objectives:

- What is user experience writing?
- Writing for mobile vs. desktop
- Content creation

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.dtelepathy.com/blog/design/7-writing-tips-for-creating-great-user-experience>
- <http://www.verticalresponse.com/blog/5-copywriting-tips-to-enhance-the-user-experience/>

Assignments:

- Weekly thought paper

Week Nine: Email

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding marketing emails
- What makes your audience click?

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/email-marketing-examples-list#sm.001uahogv11uifkkwpv1edm80hu6h>
- <https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/32606/The-9-Must-Have-Components-of-Compelling-Email-Copy.aspx#sm.001uahogv11uifkkwpv1edm80hu6h>
- <https://www.campaignmonitor.com/best-email-marketing-campaigns/>
- <http://optinmonster.com/9-tips-for-writing-email-marketing-copy-that-converts/>

Assignments:

- Create five brand emails for “Fresh Face” organic makeup (fictional company). Your target audience is millennial moms. Write out five separate emails including: subject line, headline, subhead (optional), body copy and CTA. No imagery required.
- Weekly thought paper

Week Ten: Direct Messaging

Learning Objectives:

- CTAs and writing for retail, healthcare, nonprofit and political clients
- Retargeting Ads

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/230745>
- <http://www.annhandley.com/2013/09/20/the-best-political-ad-ever/>
- <https://www.thebalance.com/nonprofit-writing-101-fundraising-to-social-media-2502241>
- <http://www.thehiredpens.com/web-writing-healthcare-guide-right/>
- <http://www.smartinsights.com/conversion-optimisation/product-page-optimisation/ecommerce-product-copywriting/>

Assignments:

- Weekly thought paper

Week Eleven: Storytelling

Learning Objectives:

- How to tell a story through advertising
- How to tap into human emotion

Watch:

- Weekly Lecture and Supplemental Lectures

Required Readings:

- <http://www.smedio.com/7-elements-of-a-successful-marketing-campaign/>
- <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/top-10-most-effective-ad-campaigns-in-2016/159004/>
- <https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/33441/10-companies-that-totally-nail-copywriting.aspx#sm.001uahogv11uifkwpv1edm80hu6h>

Assignments:

- Weekly thought paper

Week Twelve: Final

Learning Objectives:

- Complete final presentation

Watch:

- No weekly lecture

Required Readings:

- No required reading

Assignments:

- **Complete Final Presentation.**

This is the final presentation for the class. It is due by 5:00 PM EST on the final Friday of the course.

The final presentation will be a copy deck of a digital campaign. Create your own digital campaign for an original brand of your creation. You are not required to add imagery to each section of your final presentation; however, if you feel that it adds to your brand's story, you may do so.

Must include two emails for a marketing campaign; one-month social media calendar for at least TWO social media channels; five Facebook ads; one blog post, and one brand manifesto that accurately captures your brand's audience and creativity.

This should be in a PowerPoint, PDF or Word doc. Arial, 12-point font.

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, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

University Policies

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

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

Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

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

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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/>.

Class Demeanor

Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no additional fees for this course.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that

facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.