

COURSE SYLLABUS
PUR3622: Social Media Management – Online
Spring 2020 SEC 329A

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Office Hours: You may email me to set up a virtual conference call

COURSE OVERVIEW

Social media has changed the way companies do business and interact with their audiences. In this course, we will explore social media from a public relations perspective and understand how our roles as strategic communicators have evolved as a result. You will learn to develop a social media strategy, create content and measure meaningful results to reach brand goals and reach key audiences.

Social media changes every day. Because of this, the course content may also change, allowing us to address and analyze what's happening across the industry.

This course is centered on you and your needs. As such, the course will provide the opportunity for hands-on learning and real-world applications to help you gain experience and build a robust portfolio that showcases your social media and strategic thinking skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this class, students will master the basic social media skills of public relations and digital professionals to prepare them to meet the demands of today's industry. You will learn to:

- Analyze the social media landscape and its role in public relations and business;
- Apply fundamentals and best practices to social media management;
- Create and tailor social media plans – including strategy, content and KPIs – based on your target audiences and business objectives;
- Use social media platforms and professional tools, such as Hootsuite, through hands-on learning opportunities;
- Identify key performance indicators and measure the success of social media efforts;
- Examine the ethical and legal implications and potential risks of social media for brands;
- Develop and apply critical thinking, listening and professional skills through assignments that mimic industry work with clients and peers.

COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM & COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the US;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

COURSE FORMAT & CONTENT

This course will be 100 percent online. It is very important for you to keep up with all the video lectures, readings, assignments, quizzes and exams. These will be key to successful completion of the course.

I will use Canvas for all course communication, which will include a weekly email every Monday morning with upcoming assignments and announcements. Canvas can also remind you of upcoming due dates. Please check the site on a daily basis.

Course content may be published in advance, giving you the opportunity to work ahead.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

We do not have a specific textbook for this course, but we will use the below materials throughout the semester:

- Schaefer, Mark W. *The Content Code: Six Essential Strategies to Ignite Your Content, Your Marketing, and Your Business*. 2015. (ISBN: 0692372334)
- Hootsuite Academy. *Social Marketing Training*.

- Free course: <https://education.hootsuite.com/courses/social-marketing-education>
- Because of the ever-changing nature of social media, required online readings will be assigned throughout the course.
- You will be asked to use social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter, to complete several of your assignments for this course. If you do not have profiles already, you will be required to create profiles on most of these platforms to complete assignments.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be “client-ready,” which means they have been proofread, reviewed and formatted so that they are ready to submit to your client – or in this case, to your instructor.

Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. Misspellings, syntax and grammatical errors are unacceptable and will affect your grade. This is a key skill for future public relations and social media professionals.

Assignments will be completed either individually or as a group. Groups for your client social media project will be assigned for the semester.

Late Policy, Technical Issues and Make-Up Assignments

Social media takes time and consistency. Manage your time wisely. Please do not wait until the last minute to start working on your assignments. Public relations and social media professionals are often bound by tight, important deadlines and missing these can damage their and their clients’ credibility.

All assignments are due on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on the date of the deadline, unless otherwise instructed. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Requirements for make-up assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

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.

For any technical issues, you may contact the UF Help Desk, which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- helpdesk@ufl.edu

GRADING POLICY

Final grades will be based on the following scale:

- 90 – 100 percent A
- 87 – 89 percent B+
- 80 – 86 percent B
- 77 – 79 percent C+
- 70 – 76 percent C
- 60 – 69 percent D
- 0 – 59 percent E

For any questions regarding a given grade, please contact me within 48 hours after the grade is received.

Components of Your Final Grade

- **Exams (20 percent)** – You will have one midterm and one final exam. The final exam will be cumulative. These exams will be proctored through ProctorU.
- **Quizzes (10 percent)** – There will be quizzes throughout the semester, each covering approximately two weeks of material. Quizzes include short-response, multiple choice and true/false questions.
- **Personal Brand Project (20 percent)** – You will complete an individual personal brand project to improve or establish your online persona, helping prepare you for the workplace. This project is made up of four parts, which you will complete throughout the semester, prior to submitting the final project.
- **Group Client Social Media Project (30 percent)** – This is your final group project for the course, and as such, it is weighted heavily. You will complete several components of the plan throughout the semester and your drafts will count toward your final grade. Your team members' evaluations of your contribution and overall participation will affect your grade, too. See the breakdown below:
 - Drafts – 40%
 - Final Project – 50%
 - Peer Evaluations – 10%
- **Individual Discussions & Social Media Digests (15 percent)** – In addition to the two class projects, you will complete discussions and weekly digests related to the week's materials. The purpose of these discussions is to encourage you to keep up with the industry, use your critical thinking skills and share varying perspectives. Writing errors (such as grammar, spelling, syntax, etc.) will negatively affect your grade.

- **Hootsuite Platform Certification (5 percent)** – You will complete your Hootsuite Platform Certification this semester. If you're already certified, you will be given an alternative assignment.

CONTACTING ME

I will be available to answer questions and provide feedback via email. I will do my best to reply as soon as possible, but please allow up to 48 hours for a response. Please do not email me with a question about your assignment within 24 hours of the due date.

You may also email me to schedule an appointment for a video conference call.

COURSE PROFESSIONALISM

The College of Journalism and Communications is a professional school, and professional decorum is expected at all times. Students will conduct themselves in an honest, ethical and courteous manner with students and the instructor, abiding by the UF Student Conduct & Honor Codes.

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in email messages, threaded discussions and chats. You may review the Netiquette Guide for Online Courses here: <http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The work you submit for this course must be your own. You must never use direct or paraphrased material from any source, including websites, without citation.

Citation means providing attribution within the text for any ideas, insights or facts that are not your own. To clarify, you may not copy anything word for word from any source without putting quotes around it and attributing the source. This includes organizations' or companies' websites, internal documents and materials.

For this class, we will use the MLA in-text citation method. This applies to all discussions, assignments and projects. You must also list your sources in a works cited for all assignments.

All work submitted must be original work for this course. You may not submit anything that you wrote for another class, an internship, as a volunteer or in another academic or professional setting. You may not submit anything that was written for any purpose other than the given assignment. Plagiarizing another student's work or having another student complete the assignment for you is considered academic dishonesty.

I will handle any incident of academic dishonesty in accordance with the UF Honor Code that provides examples of unethical academic behavior, such as cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation and fabrication. Any case of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course. I will follow university guidelines for any offense.

You may review the Student Conduct & Honor Codes here:
sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requesting classroom accommodation should first register with the Dean of Students Office's Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Students Office will provide an accommodation letter that must be presented to me when requesting accommodation. Students should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

To contact the Disability Resource Center, visit www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ or call 352-392-8565.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION POLICY

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/>.