

Communication 330 - Effective Use of Social Media in Public Relations
2:00-3:15 Tuesday/Thursday
Room 236 (CAC)

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Office: 329 CAC

Office Hours: 11:00-12:30 Tuesday & Wednesday and by appointment

Required Texts:

Barger, Christopher. *The Social Media Strategist: Build a Successful Program from the Inside Out*. (2012).

Dietrich, Gini. *Spin Sucks: Communication & Reputation in the Digital Age*. (2014)

Additional required readings are on D2L.

Course Overview:

Effective use of social media by an organization is more involved than crafting the perfect tweet. This semester, we will analyze some of the more prominent examples of (in)effective use of social media platforms by organizations across a variety of industries.

The required texts offer two different, yet complementary perspectives that should help prepare you for some of the internal and external considerations that are involved in crafting the social media strategy for an organization.

By the end of the semester, you should be fluent in best social media practices for an organization, and familiar with common obstacles that can work against an implementation strategy. You will reach out to social media experts, and enhance your ability to conduct online research. Finally, you will have several opportunities to work individually and in groups and hone your professional presentation skills.

You should take notes and come prepared to engage in a substantive discussion on the assigned readings. Participation in discussions each week is worth as many points as the final.

Course Objectives:

When you complete Comm 330, you will be able to:

1. Understand best practices in social media for individuals and organizations;
2. Identify potential internal and external constraints to implementing a social media strategy;
3. Evaluate, critique and discuss the production and circulation of information;
4. Develop an opinion regarding social media and articulate it in front of peers;
5. Synthesize concepts from lectures and class readings and apply them to real-world scenarios.

Attendance Policy

Attending class is important, if only to get used to the notion of being expected to be at a certain place at a certain time. Sometimes life happens, and you can't make class. For that—and whatever reason, really—I'm giving you two free absences. That does not mean you aren't responsible for what we cover that day, it only means I won't take additional points off your grade for being absent.

Please note that class periods in which you are scheduled to present are particularly important: Not showing up and not emailing me in advance on those dates means you will receive a zero for that presentation.

After your two "free" absences, your professionalism score will drop a full letter grade for being absent a third time. Being late to class matters as well. If you're late three times, it counts as an absence.

My Expectations

* **NO PHONES:** Take care of personal business before and after class. It's only 75 minutes, so lose the phone. Don't have it on your desk. Don't have it on your lap. I've been around the block and know the tricks. Former students will tell you this is my only real pet peeve. I have zero problems with you tapping screens before class, but once we get going, put it away and forget about it.

* Respect your classmates. We will learn from and with one another, so be good to each other.

* Show up on time and ready to go. (See attendance policy).

Late Work

Deadlines matter in the workplace, and there are consequences if you fail to deliver. Work submitted after the deadline has passed will receive a 20 percent deduction. For each subsequent 24-hour period that elapses, an additional 5 percent will be deducted. Finally, any work turned in more than a week late should be accompanied by either a written note or face-to-face discussion.

Feedback & 24/7 Rule

I will provide detailed feedback via D2L for each assignment during the semester. This will include suggestions related to grammar as well as content. Reviewing these comments should help recalibrate your output for future assignments, which will boost your grade.

I encourage you to talk to me about any grade you found to be questionable or unfair. I have a 24/7 rule, which means you should contact me at least 24 hours but no more than 7 days after receiving the grade. Waiting 24 hours will allow you to read the feedback and formulate a response. Waiting no more than a week will allow the assignment to be fresh in both our minds.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

You are expected to do original work. Recycling work you have previously done is known as self-plagiarism. When you use information or images that you did not create, you need to indicate that.

Section 14.03 of the UWSP code defines academic misconduct as occurring when a student takes any of the following actions:

- ◇ Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- ◇ Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- ◇ Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- ◇ Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- ◇ Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
- ◇ Assists other students in any of these acts.

The potential consequences of academic misconduct include failing the class, being placed on disciplinary probation, being suspended, or being expelled from UWSP.

The stakes are far too high to take risks in this area. Let me know if you need clarification.

Beyond the ethical considerations, part of the fun in this class and in the field is playing with ideas. It is far more rewarding to be inspired and find your own voice than it is to steal someone else's effort and hope you don't get caught. It's a better way to live; as Mark Twain put it, "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."

Course Requirements and Grading

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Weekly Responses	130
Report: Self-Study	40
Report: Twitter Assessment	40
Midterm	75
Report: Email Assessment	40
Report: Ask an Expert	40
Readers Choice	20
Participation	40
Final	75
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TOTAL	500

A:	94%+	(470+)
A-:	90-93%	(450-469)
B+:	87-89%	(435-449)
B:	84-86%	(420-434)
B-:	80-83%	(400-419)
C+:	77-79%	(385-399)
C:	74-76%	(370-384)
C-:	70-73%	(350-369)
D:	65%	(325-349)
F:	<65%	(Below 325)

Course Requirements

Weekly Responses are 1-2 page responses to the readings for the week. There is no response due the first week, or the week preceding Spring Break. Otherwise, each response should be turned in via D2L before 5p.m. Friday (after our class discussions regarding those readings). Additional details are provided in a separate assignment sheet.

There are a total of four reports required for this class. Details regarding those reports will be handed out in class.

Finally, there will be an in-class Midterm and a take-home Final. Please review the policy on late assignments, and contact me with any questions.

Grading

In general, all work will be graded against a publication standard, and will be evaluated for grammar and usage (15%), content (60%), and organization/clarity (25%). Any changes to this basic formula will be made clear in particular assignments.

An "A" is Outstanding. This grade rewards work that is of a professional caliber. The writing is clear, organized and precise, and requires virtually no editing. Any edits are relatively cosmetic and subjective. In short, the work would not require changes prior to being submitted to a client or editor.

A "B" is Good. This grade reflects work that could be raised to professional standards without extensive editing. The work needs minor revisions in terms of reorganizing, rewriting and/or reformatting. A "B" doesn't necessarily have anything wrong, but does have identifiable areas for improvement.

A "C" is Adequate. This work indicates a relatively significant problem in at least one area, such as research, analysis, grammar, strategy, or formatting. It does not measure up to professional quality but might be saved with extensive revisions. This is work that a boss might consider a first draft.

A "D" is Unacceptable. This work is substandard, even for a classroom setting. The research and analysis may be unprofessional, the writing may be unclear, and/or ungrammatical. The work may contain factual errors and/or critical omissions, or may show little concept of basic strategic judgment.

An "F" is Failing. This grade reflects completely unacceptable work, and conveys the impression that the student did not take the assignment seriously.

Additional Resources

The [Mary K. Croft Tutoring-Learning Center](#) offers assistance with writing, technology, and study skills. It is located in room 018 of the Learning Resource Center (in the basement of the library), and you can set up an appointment by stopping by or calling 715-346-3568.

Any student who anticipates they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) should contact me privately to discuss specific needs.

The [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) offers assistance and documentation for students with disabilities. It is located in room 609 of the Learning Resource Center. You can contact them at 715-346-3365 or via email at datctr@uwsp.edu. Students registered with the DATC may provide their Notice of Accommodation letter (yellow forms) during office hours, via email, or after class.

The [UWSP Counseling Center](#) is available to help you deal with the stresses of college life. There are licensed mental health professionals who can help. It is located on the 3rd floor of Delzell Hall at 910 Fremont Street. Contact them at 715-346-3553, or via email at counsel@uwsp.edu.

SCHEDULE

Subject to change. Students are responsible for noting changes announced during class.

Due indicates an assignment is due before class begins that day.

Readings listed on a particular date should be completed before class begins.

Assignment denotes something that will be discussed & assigned that day.

Tues., Jan. 24 - Class Overview & Introduction

Assignment: Memetic Communication Example

Thurs., Jan. 26 - Memetic Communication

Due: Memetic Communication Example (posted to D2L)

Assignment: Self-Study Report

Tues., Jan. 31 - Surveying the Digital Landscape

Readings (On D2L):

* Aja Romano, "The Year Social Media Changed Everything," Vox, 12/31/16.

* "Tech that will Change Your Life in 2017," The Wall Street Journal

* Wall Street Journal - Tech that will Change Your Life in 2017

Thurs., Feb. 2 - History of (Social) Media

Due: Self-Study Report

Readings (On D2L):

* Ingrid Burrington, "How Railroad History Shaped Internet History," The Atlantic, 11/24/15.

* "The History of Social Networking," Digital Trends, 5/14/16,

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/>

Assignment: Twitter Assessment Report

Tues., Feb. 7 - Algorithms, Filter Bubbles & Echo Chambers

Readings (On D2L):

* Will Oremus, "Who Controls Your Facebook Feed," Slate, 1/3/16:

http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/cover_story/2016/01/how_facebook_s_news_feed_algorithm_works.html

* Chava Gourarie, "Investigating the Algorithms that Govern our Lives," Columbia Journalism Review, 4/14/16

Thurs., Feb. 9 - Stickiness & Spreadability

Readings (On D2L):

* Jenkins, Ford, Green - How Media Spreads

Tues., Feb. 14 - Dietrich Introduction & Overview

Readings:

Dietrich: Introduction: pp. 1-6

Thurs., Feb. 16 - Tell Your Story

Readings:

Dietrich - Tell Your Story pp. 7-37

Tues., Feb. 21 - Scammers, Liars and Beggars

Readings:

Dietrich - Scammers, Liars, and Beggars, pp. 59-96

Thurs., Feb. 23 - Your Brand; Your Customers

Readings:

Dietrich - Your Brand; Your Customers pp. 97-108

Tues., Feb. 28 - Spin Sucks: The Convergence of Media, Crisis Communication and the Future of Communication

Readings:

Dietrich - Spin Sucks, pp. 109-146

Thurs., March 2 - Roundtable: Twitter Assessment

Due: Twitter Assessment Report

Tues., March 7 - Guest Visitor

Thurs., March 9 - Roundtable: Ask an Expert

Due: Ask an Expert Report

Tues., March 14 - Midterm

Thurs., March 16 - Flex Period

Tues., March 28 - The Lay of the Land

Readings:

Barger - Introduction & Chapter 1 "The Lay of the Land": pp. xix-16

Assignment: Email Assessment Report

Assignment: Ask an Expert Report

Thurs., March 30 - The Social Media Evangelist

Readings:

Barger - Chapter 4 "The Social Media Evangelist": pp. 49-66

Tues., April 4 - A Solid Social Media Policy

Readings:

Barger - Chapter 8 "A Solid Social Media Policy": pp. 111-130

Thurs., April 6 - Teaching the Organization to Fish

Readings:

Barger - Chapter 9 "Teaching the Organization to Fish": pp. 131-150

Tues., April 11 - Working with Bloggers / Moneyball

Readings:

Barger - Chapter 10 & 11 - "Working with Bloggers," and "Moneyball:

Winning Big by Going Small": pp. 151-194

Thurs., April 13 - Three Mile Island

Readings:

Barger - Chapter 12 & 13 - "When all Hell Breaks Loose" and "Three Mile

Island: The GM Bankruptcy Crisis": pp. 195-262

Tues., April 18 - Image Maintenance and Branding

Readings: (On D2L) -

* Erika Harwood, "Zendaya: Young, Hopeful, and Full of Branding Opportunities," Vanity Fair, 11/4/16

* Deepa Seetharaman. "What Celebrities Can Teach Companies About Social Media," The Wall Street Journal, 10/14/15:

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/what-celebrities-can-teach-companies-about-social-media-1444788220>

*Josh Duboff: "Ghosts in the Star Machine," Vanity Fair, October 2016.

Thurs., April 20 - Persuasive Email Tactics

Due: Email Assessment

Readings: (On D2L) -

* Brodie, Email Persuasion, "Read to Me: Effective Strategies to Get Your Emails Opened and Read" and "Talk to Me: Writing Emails that Engage and Persuade," pp. 43-78

Tues., April 25 - Measuring Online Success

Readings: (On D2L) -

* "Which Stats Matter: The Definitive Guide to Tracking Social Media Metrics," Kevan Lee, <https://blog.bufferapp.com/definitive-guide-social-media-metrics-stats>

Thurs., April 27 - SEO Basics

Readings: (On D2L) -

*Introduction to How Google Works, Adam Clarke, SEO 2017, pp. 10-37
Assignment: Readers Choice

Tues., May 2 - Best Practices Roundup

Due: Ask an Expert Report

Readings: (On D2L) -

* Ash Read, "A Complete Guide to Instagram Marketing" - Buffer, 7/14/16, <https://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-marketing#profile>

Thurs., May 4 - Finding Balance: Unplugging

Due: Readers Choice

Readings: (On D2L) -

* William Powers, Chapters 12, 13 "Not So Busy: Practical Philosophies for Every Day," Disconnectopia," & Afterword, pp. 209-240 in "Hamlet's Blackberry: Building a Good Life in the Digital Age," (2010).

Tues., May 9 - Roundtable: Readers Choice

Thurs., May 11 - Last Day of Class

Distribution of Take-Home Final

Let me know if you have questions - I'm here to help!

-nathan