COMM 326: Content Creation For Social Media

This syllabus describes the requirements and procedures for online COMM 326. You are responsible for knowing this material, so please read carefully. Any changes will be announced via an announcement on Blackboard (and the corresponding email). You will be responsible for any changes. **Timeliness and deadlines are available via the Schedule / Calendar link. Read it carefully and refer to it often as well.**

Instructor Contact Information

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About the Instructor

My name is Jay Mindeman and I'm the creative director at an advertising / new media agency in Grand Forks. I bring a unique viewpoint to COMM theory because I deal with practical, real-life communications situations every day. My team works with social media every day, and one of our most important jobs is to create content for the platforms used by our clients. This includes a lot of writing, creating and choosing images, making videos and sharing information created by others.

It takes skill and hard work to use social media to engage users, build a brand or delivery news and information. When you are finished with this course, you will have an understanding of what it takes to create effective content for the growing - and ever changing - world of social media.

Required Textbooks:

Mobile and Social Media Journalism (Adornato) ISBN-13: 978-1506357140

Inbound Content: A Step-By-Step Guide to Doing Content Marketing the Inbound Way (Champion) ISBN-13: 978-1119488958

Course Description

Focuses on writing, creating and curating professional content for diverse social media platforms with the goal of engaging users, delivering messages and building relationships. Prerequisites: COMM 200 or consent of instructor.

After successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

Write online stories that engage users on social media

Create / identify powerful imagery and videos that stand out in the crowded word of social media

Construct a cohesive strategy that ties various types of content together to reach specific organizational goals

Course Overview

The course itself will involve three overarching elements: Course Materials (textbooks and lectures), Questions and Creating Content.

Course Materials - Read the indicated chapters in the text(s), along with any supplemental online materials. Watch the associated lecture(s) and take notes. Note that not all videos include closed captioning or accurate closed captioning.

Note: materials assigned for these assignments will also provide the questions for the midterm exam.

Questions - You will be assigned one or two essay questions in each Lesson. Your answers to these questions should include both cited content from the course materials and your own thoughts regarding the topic presented. Make it clear that you have read and understood the assigned content. Your answers should be one page long (12 pt type, double spaced). This part of each Lesson will be worth 10 points.

Creating Content - finally, you will be creating and posting your own content for each Lesson based on instructions I provide (see Required Social Media and How You Will Use Them below). I will point you toward a topic that relates to the Lesson's overall theme (which will in itself be related to the textbook, lecture etc.). I will also provide you with a goal, but will leave the specifics up to you. You will need to provide me with a screenshot of the social media post along with a link to the Blogger entry containing the rest of the content (when there is additional content, which will happen often). Double check your work to ensure that it is professional, free of typos and grammar issues and easy for me to read. This part of each Lesson will also be worth 10 points.

All assignments must be turned in via Blackboard.

Required Social Media Accounts and How You Will Use Them

This is a social media course, and to really experience this powerful new(ish) media paradigm, you're going to need to participate in it. You will be required to have the following social media profiles: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. You will also need to have a Blogger account and an account on Youtube. These are all free and you don't need to use them for anything other than this course. This means that if you wish to create profiles specifically for this course in addition to your own personal account on any given social media, feel free to do so. You could then close these accounts once the course is complete (hint - if you are creating temporary accounts, you will need a temporary email address for them).

This is how your social media accounts will be used: As part of each Lesson, you will make a post (based on some instructions from me). You will then take a screenshot / printscreen of that post and paste it into the document that contains your essay question answer. Also, include links to any additional content on your Blogger blog or Youtube page (these are the only two kinds of links I will allow).

You can get some advice on screen shots here for Windows (http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/take-screen-capture-print-screen#take-screen-capture-print-screen=windows-8) and here for Mac (https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201361).

It would be fairly simple for you to use your existing accounts to post for this class, take a screenshot, then delete the post before anybody really noticed. It's also worth noting that you will not need to become

"friends" with me or the university on any of these social media - I just want you to get practice using the real thing - and have proof that you did (via screenshot).

Required Devices - You will also be required to take digital photos and create some basic videos for this course. A modern smartphone will be able to handle the requirements for this course quite handily. If you don't have one, or aren't' familiar with how they work, you will need to do some homework and find other technology options. This course assumes that you can take digital photos (and submit them) and record video (along with simple editing if necessary) with sound. Need help setting up your social media accounts? Click on this course's "Tools" link and then select Hoonuit.

Technical Requirements / Assistance

For technical assistance, please contact UND Tech Support at
https://und.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/KB/ArticleDet?ID=60552.

Most of you will use Microsoft Word to complete assignments (though you can use another word processing program if you prefer). All students are expected to use their official UND email address for any and all communication regarding this course. This technical support webpage contains information on your UND email address. It also describes how you can obtain a free version of Microsoft Office.

Minimum Technical Skills Needed:

In order to succeed in this course, at a minimum, you should be able to:

• Navigate in and use basic Blackboard functions

• Create, save, and upload/attach electronic documents

• Create and utilize various social media accounts (listed above)

• Take screenshots and import them into documents

• Take basic digital photos

• Record basic digital video and upload it to Youtube

Access And Navigation

Access and Log in Information

This course was developed and will be facilitated utilizing Blackboard. To get started with the course, please go to: http://blackboard.und.edu. You will need your NDUS.Identifier, Username and Password to log in to the course. If you do not know your NDUS Identifier or have forgotten your password, please go to: http://www1.und.edu/uit/ndus.cfm

Blackboard / Resources

The course is organized into 12 Lessons. Each Lesson will require you to complete the assigned reading, view the assigned lecture (via YuJa) and complete the assigned work (directions are unique to each Lesson).

Important links to look for on Blackboard:

Lessons - click on this link to find and complete each Lesson

Course Requirements

The student will access and follow all course instructions found in the Lesson area of the Blackboard course.]

The student will view / listen to all online lectures provided in the individual Lesson folders.

The student will turn in the work assigned with each Lesson via Blackboard quizzes, including any exams and papers.

The student will complete and submit assignments electronically using the Blackboard assignment link found in the weekly folder. We will use Central Standard Time for due dates and times.

Communication / Announcements

Announcements will be posted periodically in Blackboard. Be sure to check the class announcements regularly as they will contain important information about class assignments and other class matters.

The very best way to contact me regarding this course is via email: jay.mindeman@und.edu. On weekdays from 8am - 5pm I will normally respond to emails within a few hours. On weekends or in the evenings, I normally respond to emails within 24 hours (though it is often much sooner).

Assessment and Grading

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives/outcomes. Each Lesson includes a combination of assignments, activities, readings, research, etc.

Course Evaluation

You will be asked to complete an online course evaluation form (SELFI). Your feedback on the course is extremely valuable to me. Students' comments are used to improve the course over time.

When the time comes, please let me know which aspects of the course helped you learn — and which aspects might be modified to help future students learn more effectively.

Please note that the course evaluations are anonymous and that I won't see the results until after the grades for the course are submitted, allowing you to provide honest and constructive feedback.

If you have feedback to offer before the end of your time with the course, please let me know.

Grading Breakdown

Lessons - each lesson will be worth 20 points overall, 10 for essay questions, 10 for content creation.

Mid-term Exam - There will be one exam in this course, a mid-term. It will be made up of short answer essay questions and will require a proctor, so plan ahead. The test will be worth 100 points.

Final Social Media Content Campaign - This final assignment is the course's ultimate application of the principles of "Create Content" that you will have learned. You will be expected to develop all of the content for an in-depth social media campaign that ties to additional content on Blogger and Youtube. More details are provided in the Lesson's directions. It will be worth 100 points.

I will expect the same responsibility from you that you will give real employers and clients after you graduate. Treat this like a business, and you'll do great. Grades are calculated like this:

Lessons: 200 points (10 assignments X 20pts)

Mid-term Exam: 100 points

Final Content Campaign: 100 points

Final Grade = Total Points / 400

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback

I will provide feedback on your work. When you come up short, I will offer suggestions for ways to improve. You should review my feedback on Blackboard and follow these instructions on subsequent Lessons in order to improve your scores.

If you have questions, I am very responsive via email. This is the best way to ask me to address your questions or concerns.

UND COMM Plagiarism Certificate Required

The University of North Dakota Communication Department takes scholastic dishonesty and plagiarism very seriously. Read the following information closely and complete the assigned tutorials and corresponding tests if you haven't already.

If you engage in scholastic dishonesty, disciplinary action at both the departmental and university level will be taken, which could result in failing the course and/or expulsion from the university. Examples of scholastic dishonesty include:

Recycling prior work: submitting work previously submitted and evaluated for course credit in prior sections of this course or in other courses.

Cheating: copying from another student's test; possessing or using material during a test not authorized by the person giving the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the instructor; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an unadministered test; substituting for another student or permitting

another student to substitute for oneself to take a test; bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.

Plagiarism: appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another person's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own work.

Collusion: unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing any academic work offered for credit.

All COMM majors and students taking COMM classes are required to pass a brief online course that teaches them how to recognize plagiarism. This course was put together by Indiana University, which has kindly allowed us to utilize it for our own students. To pass the course, use the links provided below. Obtain the certificate, then upload it to the Lesson in this course entitled Plagiarism Certification some time before you complete the course. If you have already obtained this certificate, you don't need to take the Indiana University course again. Simply upload the certificate that you have already earned for all COMM courses. Finally, if you do not turn in this certificate before you complete this course, you will not receive a grade for this course. Note that if you are failing this course at the end of the term, you will earn a failing grade regardless of the status of your plagiarism certificate. With all that being said, this certificate is not worth any points. It is a pass / fail assignment.

Watch the "How to Recognize Plagiarism" tutorials here:
https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html

and learn about registration / certification tests here:
https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/certificationTests/index.html

The Communication Program is committed to bringing the richness of cultural diversity to all students. Through active engagement, the Communication Program endeavors to provide multicultural opportunities, to reduce cultural stereotypes, to embrace cultural differences, and to promote respect for cultural diversity. All Students are subject to the University of North Dakota Code of Student Life, including, but not limited to, issues of Scholastic Dishonesty.

To request disability accommodations, please call Disability Services at 777-3425.Mission: The mission of the Communication Program is to provide students with a broad understanding of human communication in various contexts, across diverse cultures, and through multiple systems. The program engages students in lifelong learning that addresses socially and globally pressing communication challenges through scholarly, creative, critical, and practical curriculum and instruction.

Goals: We seek to achieve this mission by designing an interdisciplinary curriculum that respects the liberal arts tradition and exposes students to a variety of theoretical and practical experiences to become informed, engaged, and ethical global citizens.In particular, this course focuses on Goals 3 and 4 of the following:

Goal 1. Students will understand key foundational communication theories and best practices, and will be able to apply these concepts to scholarly and professional scenarios.

Goal 2. Students will become proficient in communicating critically, creatively, and ethically in diverse contexts and through multiple forms of media, including (though not limited to), written, oral, digital, and print-based communication.

Goal 3. Students will learn to conduct and report research in the broader discipline of Communication, including in (depending on courses/emphases taken:) journalism, digital communication, advertising, cultural, organizational, and health communication, public relations, speech communication, broadcasting, and other areas.

Goal 4. Students will demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired in their Communication coursework in an experiential learning environment, providing relevant and meaningful connections between their classroom work and the broader extended community.