

Social Media Writing

STRM 3213.M50

Spring 2025

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Development of strategic writing skills to write effectively across various social media platforms with an emphasis on the need to tailor the message to both the audience and the platform through which it is communicated. Topics explored will include style, repurposing of content, specific requirements for various platforms, organizational voice, SEO and strategic message development.

Prerequisites

None

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

- *Social Media for Strategic Communication* (2nd edition). Freberg, K. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 978-1-0718-2690-4.
- Other readings and supplemental materials will be assigned and posted to Canvas.
- Access to personal social media accounts – may be newly created for this class, but you will lack analytics to help with some assignments.

Classroom format

This course is delivered online in an asynchronous format. In other words, we have no scheduled meeting time. This can be convenient for you, but it also means that it is essential for you to be an organized, motivated student.

You must have internet access and Microsoft Word or other word processing software that generates a “.doc” or “.docx” extension. All assignments MUST be filed in a “.doc” or “.docx” format; type must be double-spaced with indented paragraphs.

I must be able to open your work and review it using track changes to grade it. Work submitted in a software package not noted as acceptable may result in point deductions

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <https://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. On your course dashboard, click on the course card for STRM 3213.M50

GRADING AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) (i.e., ChatGPT)

Certain assignments in this course may require you to use ChatGPT for specific purposes and follow specific instructions. For those assignments, you may utilize ChatGPT as directed. For all other assignments, you are not allowed to submit any work that is created, in whole or in part, by ChatGPT or any other AI tool. Assignment submissions may be checked using AI detection software. Unauthorized use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, may result in a failing grade or a request to resubmit the assignment.

Below is a general guideline for the major assignments within the class. More details will be provided in class and on Canvas. Deadlines will be listed on each assignment. Unless otherwise noted, all work should be turned in as a Word document on Canvas.

Blog posts (various deadlines), 15%. Blogs are a well-established form of online media among PR professionals. Blog content is frequently posted on LinkedIn and shared across other social media platforms. Every week, you will compose a 300–400-word discussion post in a blog format. These posts will help you practice your writing skills, stay current with industry trends, and critically reflect on course topics and those trends.

Assignments (various deadlines), 20%. Assignments designed to reinforce course concepts.

Personal branding assignments (various deadlines), 25%. This series of assignments will help you audit and build your brand on social media as a new PR professional.

Team: Social media presentation (various deadlines), 15%. This assignment will help you analyze and understand various social media platforms, how they operate, and why they are critical tools for PR and social media professionals. In two-person teams, you will explore a platform's role in community building, audience engagement, and brand strategy. You will give your peers a high-level, practical overview in a 5 – 8-minute recorded presentation. Details are provided on Canvas.

Team: Social media strategy assignments, 25%. The final project brings together the work you've completed this semester. In teams of four, you will create a one-week social media content calendar for a local small business or nonprofit and produce mock-ups for all posts, including original and curated content and notes that tie the content to a social media strategy. Details are provided on Canvas.

Grading

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| • Blog posts | 15% |
| • Individual assignments | 20% |
| • Personal branding assignments | 25% |
| • Social media presentation | 15% |
| • Team: Social media strategy | |

assignments

25%

A = 90% – 100%

B = 80% – 89.9%

C = 70% – 79.9%

D = 60% – 69.9%

F = Below 60%

Grading Philosophy. A = Professional quality work that could be used with little or no modification; B = Good to excellent work and exceeds requirements but would require revision to be used professionally; C = Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirements but would need significant revision; D = Barely satisfies minimum requirements and below average quality; F = Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirements.

Other issues

Contacting me. The best and quickest way to contact me is via email (ksmarks@memphis.edu). Please do not use the email within Canvas. Use my Memphis.edu email. I will respond to your email within 24 – 48 hours. If you have a problem, do not let it snowball. Contact me ASAP.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in STRM 3213

- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Provide a conceptual overview and a systematic study of content creation, curation and management.
- Understand the importance of considering diversity, accessibility, and inclusiveness when planning social media campaigns and messaging.
- Interpret and apply principles of leadership to the special needs of social media

managers and content creators.

- Foster professionalism in social media management, covering the knowledge base, theory, methodologies and ethics.

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Select and apply appropriate research and project management tools in support of social media content creation, curation and management.
- Evaluate and critique social media campaigns and content.
- Plan and create content for a social media campaign.
- Work effectively in a group.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Learn about the important role of social media management and content creation in public relations.

Understanding

- Understand leadership management and the role social media writing and management plays in public relations practice.
- Learn the basics of social media campaign finance and budget management.
- Understand the different audiences found on various social media platforms and how to select an appropriate platform mix for a social media campaign to further an organization's goals.
- Study effective social media campaigns and messaging.

Application

- Network with professionals in public relations and the community.
- Improve written and oral communication skills through written briefs, assessments, and presentations or reports.
- Complete researching, planning, and content creation for a social media campaign during the course of the semester.
- Gain experience creating effective social media messages.
- Learn about personal leadership style and determine areas of potential growth.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you must develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSJ 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system but are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace. You are also encouraged to purchase a URL if you use the portfolio long-term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students

- must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files, or writing pieces as examples of professional work. Professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

You must activate your UofM email account. If you use another provider, such as Google, you must forward all UofM emails to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop, or smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

AI/Chat GPT

In Journalism & Strategic Media, artificial intelligence software, such as Chat GPT, is prohibited in some courses and required in others. Please refer to the specific guidelines for this course in the course-specific part of the syllabus.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C-) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission or working with the same general idea may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. For more information about the University's policy on academic integrity, visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to university-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own as acts of cheating and punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws. You must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com or a similar electronic detection method for rating your ideas' originality and evaluating the proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely to detect plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or not accepted.

Online SETEs

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, you must understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor before the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted grammar and punctuation rules. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

If you need accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Diversity and inclusivity

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. These include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to contribute to fostering an inclusive environment that respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires understanding various perspectives carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional.

Weather policy

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather.

Student support

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to, food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors can assist in connecting you with campus or community support.