

# AEC 4932

## DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND RESEARCH METHODS FOR COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP IN AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES

Fall 2015

Tues, 8:30 – 9:20 a.m.  
Thurs, 8:30 – 10:25 a.m.  
Weimer Hall 1070

### Course Description

Social media are changing the way we all communicate. With this in mind, this course aims to present students with the core concepts of social media acknowledging that this course's content will continually evolve. Students will learn how, when and why to use various social media tools. Students will also learn to measure the effectiveness of these tools in reaching audiences with agricultural and natural resources messages.

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### Office Hours

Tuesday/Thursday 2 – 3 p.m. & by appointment

### Course Objectives:

Students will understand the concepts and theories that inform the use of social media.

Students will learn how various traditional and social media strategies and tools can contribute to organizational effectiveness.

Students will be able to provide strategic counsel to organizations, based on an understanding of core concepts of public relations and social media, about how, why and when to use social media tools.

Students will develop digital messages for agriculture and natural resources.

Students will evaluate the effectiveness of various digital messages for agriculture and natural resources.

### Required Materials

Twitter account (note stats at beginning of semester, so that you can monitor progress).

Laptops, iPads/tablets or smart phones are highly recommended for the course. Bring your laptop or iPad/tablet to every class period. Class-related use of Twitter is expected in and out of class throughout the semester.

Kerpen (2015). *Likeable Social Media*.

Paine (2011). *Measure What Matters*.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge:

*"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 (<http://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 obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to

appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor of this class.

### EVALUATION OF GRADES

Assignment	Percent of Grade
Personal Branding Assignment	20
Social Media Analysis Assignment	20
Group Case Study Presentation	20
Hootsuite University Social Media Assignment	20
Participation/Reading Quizzes	20

Unless otherwise noted, every component will be evaluated on 100 points. Your final grade for the course will be calculated on the previous percentages, which will then lead to your final letter grade as based on the following scale:

#### Grading Scale:

A = 93 – 100%	B- = 80 – 82.99%	D+ = 66 – 69.99%
A- = 90 – 92.99%	C+ = 76 – 79.99%	D = 63 – 65.99%
B+ = 86 – 89.99%	C = 73 – 75.99%	D- = 60 – 62.99%
B = 83 – 85.99%	C- = 70 – 72.99%	E = below 60%

*Note:* For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Please note: Under no circumstances will final grades be rounded. Please do not come to me at the end of the semester to negotiate your grade. If you want an A in this course, begin working toward that today.

### POLICIES & GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS

**Class Expectations:** Come to each class having read and studied the assigned readings for that week so that you can contribute to our class discussions. You should be able to provide an overview of each reading and explain how the readings relate to one another as a whole. High-quality participation means that you offer a number of informed comments and questions for each class period.

#### **On the whole, student participation will be evaluated according to the following criteria:**

- Meeting deadlines and expectations articulated by the instructor.
- Consistent participation and engagement with the class community.
- Active participation in class-related social media platforms (primarily Twitter and others as assigned).
- Listening and responding respectfully to ideas and questions posed by others.

#### **Grade Discrepancies**

If you have a question about a grade you receive on any of the course components, you must discuss the grade with me within one week of getting the assignment back. After that,

grades will not be discussed or modified. This discussion must occur in person. I do not discuss grades via email.

### **Accommodations**

If you know of any type of disability or barrier to your success in this class, please let me know as soon as possible. I want you to be successful and I am happy to work with you, if I can. Please note, students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

### **Class Absences**

Attending class is essential to be successful in this course. Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to attend all classes. A student who finds it necessary to miss class assumes responsibility for making up examinations, obtaining lecture notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed. The course instructor will determine the validity of a student's reason(s) for absences and will assist those students who have valid reasons. 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 catalog at:

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

### **Writing**

To be successful in today's world, it is critical that you write well. As such, your grade for each aspect of this course will be based on the quality of your thinking and writing. All assignments should be free of inaccuracies, weak thinking, typos, spelling errors and grammatical problems. Never turn in a first draft.

### **Professionalism**

The reality of this field is that people judge you by how you present yourself. Your use of language, the clarity of your speaking and your general appearance and professional bearing will shape the opinions of those who are listening to you. If you deliver a poor, unprofessional presentation, your grade will suffer. I will also grade you on the basis of the facts you assemble, the astuteness of your analysis of the problem and the soundness of your recommendations.

### **Group Work**

A portion of your grade this semester will be based on group work. This brings both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that you are part of a team working together to solve a problem. On occasion some groups experience difficulties with a person who does not pull his/her weight on a project. If that happens in your group, you must: Try to work it out as a group. Document the problem, how you tried to work it out and the outcome of that effort. Give this to me in a written statement.

- 1) If the outcome of your internal meetings and efforts is less than satisfactory, you should schedule a time to meet with me as a group to discuss and resolve the problem.
- 2) If this meeting still does not resolve the problem, then the group may ask permission from me to remove the individual who is not contributing to the group work.

If you are removed from your group, you will be required to complete the class assignments on your own. Your grade will also reflect your inability to work with your classmates and contribute to the group assignment.

### **AEC Expectations for Writing:**

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication's Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following writing standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these writing standards will result in substantially lower grades on writing assignments.

- Proper grammar and punctuation are mandatory.
- Proper sentence structure is required. This means...
  - Not using "tweet-talk" in your assignments.
  - Making sure that your sentences have a subject, verb, and (when needed) an object.
  - Not having sentence fragments.
  - And anything else that would pertain to "proper sentence structure."
- No use of first person (I, me, my, mine, our) unless denoted within the assignment rubric.
- NO use of contractions.
- Good thoughts/content throughout the writing assignment.
- For assignments that require citations, use American Psychological Association style. Proper APA citation and reference document is expected.
- For assignments that are more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style, as discussed in AEC 4031.

### **AEC Expectations for Design:**

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication's Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following design standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these design standards will result in substantially lower grades on design-related assignments.

- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure are mandatory. Although these are design assignments, writing has to be perfect so as not to detract from the design.
- For assignments that feature more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style, as discussed in AEC 4031.
- Use the proper photographic settings for the assignment (300 ppi for printed photos; 72 ppi for Web). Pixilated photos will result in lower grades.
- Students should not use copyrighted materials for design assignments. For example you may not "borrow" a graphic or design. Commercial artwork that is purchased may be used for assignments. Similarly, you may use *ideas* for a graphic/design assignment, but the use of the *actual* graphic/design is not acceptable.
- The following minimal design skills are expected to be demonstrated on all design assignments. The ability to resize an image, create documents in multiple columns, insert a graphic on a page, insert text with a graphic, alter the color of text and/or graphics. Additionally, the student should have moderate ability with the following software in order to complete design assignments:
  - Microsoft PowerPoint
  - Microsoft Word
  - Adobe Photoshop (photographs)
  - Adobe Illustrator (graphics). This software program is taught only in AEC4035. The expectations for actual graphic design in other courses will be minimal.
  - Adobe InDesign (print layout)
  - WordPress (Web)
  - Final Cut Express or ProX (video)

The University of Florida has an agreement with Lynda.com to provide FREE online tutorials to students and faculty on many software programs. If you feel "rusty" with any program, after being introduced to it in an AEC course, it is highly recommended that you take it upon yourself to go through some of the Lynda.com tutorials: <http://www.it.ufl.edu/training/>. Click on the Lynda.com yellow box on the right side of the screen.

### **Deadlines**

Deadlines will be given for all work; these deadlines will not be extended. Meeting deadlines is essential to be successful in this course and in our field. Your work must be completed and handed in by the specified date and time. Incomplete work turned in by the deadline will receive partial credit. If you miss a deadline without having a valid excuse, you will receive zero points on the late work.

### **Online Course Evaluation Process**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online 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>.

**DIGITAL DEVICES** (cell phones, iPads, laptops): Please turn off and store (away from your view and the view of others) your cellular phones before entering the classroom. Laptops, tablets and smartphones are only permitted if you are using them for class-related activities. If you are found to be texting, you will be asked to turn off your digital device.

### **Student Assistance and Emergencies**

University support services are available to students who are experiencing significant distress and/or personal emergencies. As appropriate please contact:

UF Counseling & Wellness Center: [www.counseling.ufl.edu](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu) or 352-392-1575

University Police Department: 352-392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies

### **\*\*Final Thought\*\***

I want you to be successful in this class, and I will do my best to help you succeed. I am happy to help you address any challenges you face this semester; please come visit me during office hours to discuss any concerns or challenges.

### AEC 4932 Course Calendar

<p><i>August 25</i> Course Introduction/Syllabus</p>	<p><i>August 27</i> Listening in social media (LSM, 1) Digital reputation management</p>
<p><i>September 1</i> Defining your audience (LSM, 2)</p>	<p><i>September 3</i> Thinking like your customers (LSM, 3,4)</p>
<p><i>September 8</i> Engaging &amp; Responding (LSM, 5-7)</p>	<p><i>September 10</i> Guest Speaker: Sarah Laborde, Managing Supervisor – FleishmanHillard</p>
<p><i>September 15</i> Twitter Chat #1</p>	<p><i>September 17</i> <b>Personal Branding Assignment Due (Peer review in class)</b> Case study #1</p>
<p><i>September 22</i> Being authentic (LSM, 8)</p>	<p><i>September 24</i> Being honest and transparent (LSM, 9) Case study #</p>
<p><i>September 29</i> Asking questions (LSM, 10)</p>	<p><i>October 1</i> Providing value and stories (LSM, 11-13)2 Case study #3</p>
<p><i>October 6</i> SM &amp; customer experience (LSM, 14)</p>	<p><i>October 8</i> Social advertising (LSM, 15-18) Case study #4</p>
<p><i>October 13</i> Twitter Chat #2</p>	<p><i>October 15</i> Knowing what to measure (MWM, 1-2) Case study #5</p>
<p><i>October 20</i> Role of research Measurement programs (MWM, 3)</p>	<p><i>October 22</i> Guest Speaker: Carly Barnes, Community Manager, Ketchum Overview of research methods Measurement tools (MWM, 4)</p>
<p><i>October 27</i> Search engine optimization Measuring Ad, PR &amp; Marketing in Social Media (MWM, 5)</p>	<p><i>October 29</i> Online surveys Measuring Events &amp; Sponsorships (MWM, 6-7) Case study #6</p>
<p><i>November 3</i> Measuring Influencers (MWM, 8)</p>	<p><i>November 5</i> Sentiment analysis Local relationships &amp; employees (MWM, 9-10) Case study #7</p>
<p><i>November 10</i> Measurement and crisis (MWM, 11)</p>	<p><i>November 12</i> Google Analytics Measurement for sales (MWM, 12) Case study #8</p>
<p><i>November 17</i> Measurement f/ nonprofits (MWM, 13)</p>	<p><i>November 19</i> Social media analytics <b>Hootsuite Univ. Assignment Due</b></p>
<p><i>November 24</i> Twitter Chat #3</p>	<p><i>November 26</i> – No class, Thanksgiving</p>
<p><i>December 1</i> Measurement in higher ed (MWM, 14)</p>	<p><i>December 3</i> Wrap-up day</p>
<p><i>December 8</i> <b>Social Media Analysis Paper Due</b></p>	<p><i>December 10</i> – No class; reading days</p>

