AEC 4932

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

Fall 2016

*Wed., 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Bryant Hall Mac Lab*

Dr. Lisa Lundy
Associate Professor
113D Bryant Hall | (352)273-2588
lisalundy@ufl.edu | @lisalundy

Office Hours
Thursday 9 – 10:30 a.m. & by appointment

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.

Course Objectives:
1. Students will understand the concepts and theories that inform the use of social media.
2. Students will learn how various traditional and social media strategies and tools can contribute to organizational effectiveness.
3. 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.
4. Students will develop digital messages for agriculture and natural resources.
5. 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*.

EVALUATION OF GRADES

Assignment	Percent of Grade
Discussion Posts	20
Storytelling Assignments	20
In-class Participation	20
Social Media Analysis Assignment	40

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Posts - You will be responsible for writing weekly discussion posts wherein you apply what you watch, listen to and read that week. Each week, you'll respond to a set of questions. You will also be responsible for commenting on other students' discussion posts.

Storytelling Assignments – Each week, you'll be asked to use social media in one way or another to tell a story. Sometimes you'll be asked to attend an event and "live tweet" about the event. Sometimes you'll be asked to interview someone about an agricultural issue and post a short video. These assignments are intended to help you learn to develop content for social media.

In-class Participation – 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.

Social Media Analysis Assignment - For this assignment, you will track an organization's use of social media for the semester. You will be assigned an organization (more details in class). You'll provide an overview of the organization. Briefly describe its history, size, goals and mission. Websites and annual reports (usually linked on the website) are a great place to find this information. You'll discuss how the organization is using social media. You should use numerical analysis, infographics and narrative explanation in this section. We will discuss various metrics for social media as the semester progresses. You should demonstrate your understanding of these metrics in this section, applying them to your organization. You should also show data points over time. You need to examine your organization's use of social media for at least a one-month period. Finally, you'll outline a plan for how you'd improve upon the organization's current use of social media. Give 5-10 specific recommendations on how the organization can improve its use of social media. Explain how these relate to the data you gathered and why you think they are important recommendations. Include creative, innovative ideas.

POLICIES & GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS IN THIS CLASS

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 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.

Course Schedule

Week of Aug. 22 - Course Intro & Overview	Course Introduction/Syllabus / Listening in social media (LSM, Intro & Ch. 1)
Week of Aug. 29 - Authenticity & Branding Yourself	Being authentic (LSM, 8) / Being honest and transparent (LSM, 9)
Week of Sept. 5 - Defining & Understanding Your Audience	Defining your audience (LSM, 2) / Thinking like your customers (LSM, 3,4)
Week of Sept. 12 - Engaging and Responding	Engaging & Responding (LSM, 5-7) SM & customer experience (LSM, 14) / Social advertising (LSM, 15-18)
Week of Sept. 19 - Science Communication in Social Media	Asking questions (LSM, 10) / Providing value and stories (LSM, 11-13)
Week of Sept. 26 - Social Media Measurement	Knowing what to measure (MWM, 1-2)
Week of Oct. 3 - Social Media Analytics	Role of research / Measurement programs (MWM, 3) / Measurement tools (MWM, 4)
Week of Oct. 10 - Social Media Analytics	Measuring Influencers (MWM, 8) / Sentiment analysis / Local relationships & employees (MWM, 9-10)
Week of Oct. 17 - Google Analytics & Search Engine Optimization	Search engine optimization / Measuring Ad, PR & Marketing in Social Media (MWM, 5)
Week of Oct. 24 - Low-cost Measurement for Nonprofits	Online surveys / Measuring Events & Sponsorships (MWM, 6-7) Measurement f/ nonprofits (MWM, 13)
Week of Oct. 31 - Social Media Ethics	Readings posted in Canvas
Week of Nov. 7 - Social Media and Culture	Readings posted in Canvas
Week of Nov. 14 - Blogging and Blogger Engagement	Readings posted in Canvas
Weeks of Nov. 21 & 28 – Social Media and Crisis Communications	Measurement and crisis (MWM, 11)
Week of Dec. 5	**Social Media Analysis Assignment Due & Presentations**