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### COMX 391.50: Social Media for Strategic Communication - Online

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# COMX 391: Social Media for Strategic Communication

Fall 2020

## Contact Information

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## Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This upper-level course is dedicated to exploring the new emerging technologies and mediums influencing business, marketing, public relations, and advertising practices and research.

This course will acquaint you with practical knowledge and analytical skills necessary to create, evaluate, and execute social media and mobile campaigns. This course will also provide iconic and current case studies using social media and mobile, individual assignments, and engaged activities that will help you in developing a strong social media skill set to take to future job and/or internship interviews.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Provide insight about and experience with current and emerging social media tools and digital technologies.
- Have knowledge about various opportunities for strategically implementing digital, social, and mobile media into strategic communication practices and research.
- Understand the importance of managing online personal reputation and a business/organization's identity through social media applications.
- Provide awareness of ethical, legal, and privacy issues when using social media outlets.
- Be able to listen, participate in, and monitor online conversations in a professional and strategic manner.
- Present insights and strategies related to social media implementation and best practices.
- Connecting theory and application of social media marketing and the strategic decisions made prior to the implementation of social media and mobile technologies.
- Awareness and understanding of the need for research and evaluation when incorporating social media in an overall integrated marketing (IMC) campaign.

## Required Course Materials

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Concise guide to APA style* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). American Psychological Association.

Freberg, K. (2019). *Social media for strategic communication: Creative strategies and research-based applications*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

### Required Social Media Accounts

You'll be looking at personal and business social media accounts for many of your assignments. If you don't have them already, please create profiles for the following platforms (at minimum):

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter

### Recommended Apps

While not required, the following apps will make it easier for us to connect and communicate, and help you make the most of your time:

- **Microsoft Outlook:** I expect you to check your email every day. Downloading the Microsoft Outlook app and connecting your UM email account will allow you to receive notifications when I send you a message, and make it faster and easier for you to respond.
- **UM Moodle:** Receive notifications when your peers have responded to your discussion questions, and get reminders about approaching deadlines.
- **Hemingway Editor:** This is an incredibly useful tool to help you edit your assignments. Paste in your content, and the Hemingway app will analyze your readability and highlight sections that can be simplified.

### Format

The course objectives are met entirely online. Taking an online course may be new for you; it may take a while to get used to the format beyond the time you might usually spend on a class.

I am committed to the endeavor of teaching, whether online or in a classroom. I believe I can meet my goals for teaching this course and you can meet your goals in taking this course, even though this will not occur in a traditional classroom setting. The more contact students make (both with their peers and with their instructor), the more successful they are in the course. Thus, my goal is to encourage you to interact and engage as fully as possible.

I should note that I live in Boise, Idaho, not Missoula, so we are unable to meet in person. While we won't meet face-to-face, your questions, comments and feedback are never viewed as a distraction. I check my email frequently and will always respond within 24 hours. Please don't feel uncomfortable calling me, either. I wouldn't include my personal number if I didn't want students to call when they had questions. You can also make an appointment with me on Zoom if you prefer to see a face at the other end of the line.

## Policies

### Deadlines

Though many of the constraints of time and location have been removed, deadlines are still inevitable and are designed to help you stay caught up. All assignments must be submitted by 11:55 p.m. (MT) on the deadline. Late work is not accepted. Communicate with me immediately if you foresee any difficulties in meeting a deadline. You'll find I can be flexible and understanding if you inform me of difficulties meeting deadlines before assignments are due; difficulties meeting deadlines after assignments are due are excuses, and I don't accept those.

### Academic Integrity

All students taking this course must adhere to the University of Montana's academic dishonesty policy as presented in the [Student Conduct Code \(SCC\)](#). You're responsible for reading and understanding this code. If you have any questions, please contact me or the department chair.

### Original Work

I expect all the work you do in this class to be completely original. No work that has been done by classmates (current or previous) may be used by you, in whole or in part, for your work in this class. Nothing you have written previously (for any other course, in this course if you have taken it previously or anything you have written for other jobs or organizations) may be submitted to fulfill the assignments in this class. Finally, absolutely no plagiarism will be tolerated. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive a zero on the first offence. If you are caught again, you will fail the class and steps will be taken to initiate university sanctions as provided for in the SCC.

### Types of Plagiarism

The advent of the internet has made plagiarizing simpler. However, keep in mind that if you can find something online, I can, too. Generally, plagiarism occurs in three forms:

- Incremental: Failing to properly attribute source material (e.g., using incorrect style to cite your source, omitting information such as the date of publication or page number or failing to include a source both in the body of the work and on your reference list).
- Patchwork: Copying and pasting material from one or more sources with very little modification (e.g., visiting three web sites and cutting and pasting snippets from each).
- Global: Taking the full text of another source and passing it off as your own work.

### Disabilities

If you have a disability which may impact your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs so accommodations can be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please contact me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

### Consideration

Help foster an atmosphere where a priority for education and a respect for all students is valued by engaging in comments that relate to course content and show tolerance for opinions different from your own. Please understand that whether it is a face-to-face or online, harassment of any kind is inappropriate and intolerable, and disciplinary action will be taken should it occur.

## Assignments

All assignments must follow APA formatting (typed, double-spaced on standard-sized paper [8.5" x 11"] with 1" margins on all sides, and use 11 pt. Calibri font). More detailed assignment descriptions and rubrics for each assignment are posted in Moodle.

### Chapter Quizzes (13 @ 15 points each)

To encourage you to complete the assigned readings, you will have a 15-question quiz on each chapter.

### Discussion Questions (13 @ 18 points each)

Discussion questions take the place of conversations in a traditional classroom; they are an opportunity to explore topics in more depth, learn about your classmates, share ideas and apply course concepts to things you've seen or experienced. Each week, you will create one discussion question, respond to at least one of your classmates' discussion questions, and help facilitate dialogue on the threads you participated in by asking or responding to follow-up questions, clarifying questions or addressing any issues raised.

### Basics of APA Style (70 points)

I expect you to consult outside sources to complete your written assignments. Regardless of whether you use direct quotations or paraphrase information, you need to cite your sources using APA format, both in the body of your assignment and on your reference list. This assignment is designed to introduce you to the specifics of APA style. Upon completion of the tutorial, you'll create a template you can use throughout the semester to ensure you're following proper formatting.

### Hootsuite Academy Certification Program (200 points)

Hootsuite is a social media dashboard that allows individuals and brands to monitor, listen to, and engage with their audiences across multiple platforms in a centralized location. The program involves two units — Social Marketing Training and Hootsuite Platform Training — and an exam. After you complete both units and exams, you will receive a widget to embed on your social media profiles and be listed in the [Hootsuite Certified Professionals & Social Media Consultants](#) database. This a great certification to add to your resume!

### Managing Your Online Reputation (100 points)

One of the important elements of being a social media professional and practitioner is being aware of not only your corporate or business online presence, but also your own online presence as an individual and professional in advertising and public relations. In this reflection paper, you will identify your personal goals for online reputation management and analyze your current online presence using the tools we'll be exploring throughout the class.

### Platform Assessment (100 points)

Social media platforms are the tools of the trade, so knowing about each platform's history, capabilities, and use cases will help you make the most of them as you begin your career as a social media professional. In this assignment, you'll do a deep dive on one platform as you address its history, key trends, user information and statistics, unique characteristics and metrics, benefits and challenges, and more.

### Infographic (100 points)

Infographics are a popular way for businesses and individuals to communicate information in a visually compelling way. In this assignment, you will choose a client, conduct research, and create an infographic to explain a concept or topic of interest to their target audience.

### Content Idea Proposal (100 points)

As a social media professional, you will be asked to recommend platforms to accomplish your clients' goals and reach their target audiences. In this assignment, you'll create a content strategy proposal for a local business and mock up messages for each platform you recommend. This should be an excellent portfolio piece you can use as you apply for internships or jobs.

### Social Media and Sports (100 points)

Social media has become the go-to way for organizations to create interest and engagement for special events. You are asked to create a game plan for social media activities for a local sports team. Your job is to research this team's current use of social media content, brand voice, and engagement across its social media platforms, and make a recommendation for social media channels for an upcoming game.

### Get Out of Jail Free

I give each student an opportunity to miss one deadline with no penalty each semester. If you miss a deadline, I'll still accept your work, but you'll forfeit the extra credit points; if you never use your get out of jail free card, it's worth 10 extra credit points at the semester's end. The caveat is you must submit your assignment within one week of the deadline.

### Redo Assignment

You have an opportunity to redo any assignment of your choice the second to last week of class. It can be an assignment you did poorly on, did not turn in or even one you want to improve for personal edification. There is one exception: if you are caught plagiarizing and subsequently earn an F on an assignment, you may not redo it.

## Grading

There are 1,199 points possible for this course, and you will be graded with traditional letter grades. I do not curve grades, round up or add in extra points you have not earned.

100%-97%=A+	82.9%-80%=B-	66.9%-63%=D
96.9%-93%=A	79.9%-77%=C+	62.9%-60%=D-
92.9%-90%=A-	76.9%-73%=C	<60%=F
89.9%-87%=B+	72.9%-70%=C-	
86.9%-83%=B	69.9%-67%=D+	

All grades will be posted within two weeks of the deadline.

### Contesting Grades

I am willing to review any assignment with you to discuss your concerns. This is more difficult online than in person, so we'll have to work with what we've got. Please wait 24 hours after receiving an assignment before you contact me. When you do, please write down your specific concerns and your backing for these concerns and I will research your situation. We'll take it from there if further discussion is necessary.

### Submitting Work

All written assignments should be saved as Word documents to avoid problems with opening files. If I can't open your files, I can't grade them, and if I can't grade them, you'll earn a zero. If you don't have access to Microsoft Word, use a computer on campus or visit the bookstore to take advantage of deeply discounted student pricing on software. Moodle is the ONLY place I will accept written assignments; if you email me an assignment, you will receive a zero.

### A Note About Tone

A key tenant of communication and public relations is "know your audience." People are MUCH less formal and more conversational online than they are in traditional academic/business contexts. While I encourage you to find and use your own voice in your written assignments, please keep in mind that I am the grammarian about whom your mother warned you. Therefore, I expect you to follow established spelling and grammar rules, like using appropriate spelling and punctuation.

## Class Schedule

Week	Readings	Assignments	Due
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 1 – Introduction to Social Media: An Art and Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 1 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 1 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Basics of APA Style <input type="checkbox"/> Register for Hootsuite Academy	8/23
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 2 – Ethical and Legal Fundamentals of Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 2 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 2 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Media Networks <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 2: Optimizing Your Social Media Profiles	8/30
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 3 – Personal and Professional Branding	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 3 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 3 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Managing Your Online Reputation	9/6
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 4 – Industry Qualifications and Roles	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 4 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 4 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 3: Social Media Strategy A to Z <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 4: Building Your Advocate Community	9/13
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 5 – Research in Social Media: Monitoring, Listening, and Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 5 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 5 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Platform Assessment	9/20
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 6 – Strategic Planning for Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 6 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 6 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 5: Social Content Marketing	9/27
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 7 – Strategic Writing for Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 7 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 7 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Infographic	10/4
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 8 – Audience Segmentation and Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 8 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 8 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Training Chapter 6: Social Advertising Fundamentals <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Social Marketing Certification Exam	10/11
9	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 9 – Creating, Managing and Curating Content (Strategies, Tactics, and Key Messages)	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 9 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 9 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Content Idea Proposal	10/18



10	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 10 – Measurement, Evaluation, Budget and Calendar (Considerations for Social Media)	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 10 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 10 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Platform Training Chapter 1: The Fundamentals of Using Hootsuite	10/25
11	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 11 – How Social Media is Applied: Exploring Different Specializations, Part I	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 11 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 11 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media and Special Events	11/1
12	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 12 – How Social Media is Applied: Exploring Different Specializations, Part II	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 12 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 12 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Platform Training Chapter 2: Advanced Uses of Hootsuite <input type="checkbox"/> Hootsuite Certification Exam	11/8
13	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 13 – What Does the Social Media World Have That Is New?	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 13 Discussion Question <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 13 Quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Redo Assignment (OPTIONAL)	11/15