

JOUR866: Social Media Strategy (Online)

Fall 2019

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COURSE OVERVIEW

What are the implications of digital communication technologies, in particular social media, for organizations' building and managing relationships with their target audiences? How can organizations – corporate, governmental, and nonprofit – use social media to improve their image and brand? Developments in information technology and online social networking have posed opportunities and challenges for those who practice and research strategic communication. This course explores possible answers to these and other questions related to marketing, advertising and public relations in the networked age. In doing so, we will examine significant changes in strategic communication approaches brought about by the networked information society. We will also study effective ways for organizations to identify social technographics of key audiences, create and share social media content, and evaluate social media-based strategic communication initiatives.

This course combines theoretical and hands-on approaches to issues. Students are expected to critically assess scholarly papers and industry reports and develop informed perspectives on central issues. In conjunction with theoretical understandings of social media, students will study and use different social media applications throughout the course period. Students will analyze, evaluate, and develop social media strategies for the organization chosen for their case study research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop an understanding of implications of the networked information society for strategic communication
- To learn uses of social media for strategic communication by different actors in different countries
- To learn ways to identify and measure social technographics of an organization's key audiences
- To learn how organizations can effectively craft and deliver their messages via social media
- To learn research approaches that can be applied in implementing and evaluating social media-based strategic communication
- To learn about diversity issues related to strategic communication
- To improve skills for communicating research results in written reports

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successful completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Understand changes in strategic communication brought about by new and emerging digital technologies
- Understand the role of computer networking and social media in strategic communication
- Critically analyze academic and policy papers on contemporary issues concerning strategic communication
- Use research tools to identify and measure social technographics of an organization's key audiences
- Understand ways to effectively craft and deliver an organization's messages to its key audiences
- Understand diversity issues related to strategic communication
- Effectively communicate research results in written reports

READINGS

All the course readings are available electronically, either on the web or on the course Blackboard site. Download and read the documents specified in the course schedule. Some of the readings come from the following books, and you can purchase them through Amazon or other online booksellers.

- Burgess, J., Marwick, A., & Poell, T. (2018). *The SAGE handbook of social media*.
- Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Social media marketing* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Donald, M. (2018). *Building a story brand. Clarify your message so customers will listen*. HarperCollins.
- HubSpot Marketing Resource Library: <https://www.hubspot.com/resources>
- Social Media Resources by Sprout Social: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/resources/>
- Social Media Analytics Resources by Brandwatch: <https://www.brandwatch.com/reports>
- Articles by eMarketer: <https://www.emarketer.com/articles/>

COMMUNICATIONS

I will post class announcements under the “Announcement” channel of Slack (<https://j866sms19.slack.com>). I will use the course Blackboard site to post class materials including readings, assignment guidelines and other instructional documents. In addition, the University of Kansas email account (@ku.edu) will be used as a vehicle for official communications whenever necessary. Thus, it is your responsibility to regularly monitor your KU email account.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class discussion via Slack (25%)

In a graduate course, your active participation in class discussion is expected. This means that you should complete assigned readings and engage in discussion about them via Slack, the primary class discussion platform (<https://j866sms19.slack.com>). On Monday of each week, a discussion question will be posted on Slack. High quality and regular class participation will be worth 25% of your course grade. (J866 Slack sign-up [link](#))

Case study report (10%)

This assignment is aimed at enhancing your ability to assess social media strategies used by real-world organizations. Each of you should identify one good practice and one bad practice in a particular industry of your choosing (e.g., entertainment, sports, health, food or fashion). You should compare examples in the same industry. In the report (about 3-4 pages, double-spaced), you should (i) summarize your chosen social media campaigns/strategies, (ii) analyze why and how they were successful or not successful, and (iii) discuss how they could be improved.

Final project (65%)

In order to allow us to link an abstract understanding of marketing communications to a working organization's communications needs, students will develop social media strategies for an organization of their choosing. You should describe, analyze, and evaluate the organization's current use of social media for its strategic communication and then offer specific recommendations (theoretical and practical) for improving its social media-based strategic communication. Detailed guidelines and examples are posted to the course Blackboard site. Below are deadlines related to your final project.

- One-page proposal (5%) by November 2, 11:59 p.m.
- Situation analysis section (10%) by November 23, 11:59 p.m.
- Planning section (10%) by December 7, 11:59 p.m.
- Final presentation slides (10%) by December 14, 11:59 p.m.
- Final paper (30%) by December 20, 11:59 p.m.

Guidelines for submitting written assignments

All written assignments must be double-spaced, 12 point font, with 1-1.15 inch margin on all sides. For in-text citation and bibliography, refer to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association – commonly referred to as the APA style (6th edition of *Concise Rules of APA Style*). You should email me your assignments before class begins on the date scheduled. Assignments are graded on grammar, spelling, and punctuation as well as on their content.

Policy on late assignments

Papers and assignments are due when indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments are penalized one letter grade. Only under extreme circumstances (e.g., documented family or medical emergencies) will I agree to a delay in the submission of assigned material. Late assignments must be completed and turned in by the last day of the class.

GRADING

Summary of assignments and evaluation

Assignment	Deadline	Point	Percent
Class participation via Slack	11:59 p.m., Saturday each week	100	25%
One-page proposal (Final project)	11:59 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 2	20	5%
Case study report	11:59 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 9	40	10%
Situation analysis (Final project)	11:59 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 23	40	10%
Planning section (Final project)	11:59 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7	40	10%
Final presentation slides	11:59 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 14	40	10%
Final paper	11:59 p.m., Friday, Dec. 20	120	30%
<i>Total</i>		400	100%

The final grading is based on the accumulated number of points. The following scale will be used:

370-400 = A	308-319 = C+
360-369 = A-	290-307 = C
348-359 = B+	280-289 = C-
330-347 = B	270-279 = D
320-329 = B-	0-269 = F

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/MISCONDUCT

In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are critical. Any work you do must be original and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. You are bound by the university rules on academic misconduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, please ask before your endeavor.

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for the course and

expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of the course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

Plagiarism: Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620 (V/TTY), coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

JOURNALISM SCHOOL POLICY ON CLASS ATTENDANCE:

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester. Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent. The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

FINANCIAL AID POLICY

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.”

Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

COPYING OR RECORDING OF CLASSROOM LECTURES

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor’s property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.