

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Digital communication is constantly redefining how we view each other and ourselves. During the semester, students will learn about various new media platforms and technologies and take a critical yet practical look at the role technology plays in communication.

As producers of new media, students will leave this course having gained a new perspective of how the genre impacts communication. Through a collaborative environment, students will develop and maintain a high-quality digital product and acquire skills in working with others. Students will engage in the following exercises:

- Brainstorm creative digital content for a target audience
- Analyze effective and ineffective digital content, its usability and visual appeal
- Consider brand messaging components that will appeal to the target audience
- Engage in effective group collaboration and communication
- Present a complex digital project in a persuasive, concise, timely way

IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
- Developing creative capabilities
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing

TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING:

The Huffington Post Guide to Blogging, by the editors of the Huffington Post

In addition to the required texts, students are responsible for reading additional materials assigned during the course.

GUEST SPEAKERS

This course will occasionally feature guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions.

WRITING/PROOFREADING SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENTS

It's important that all submitted assignments are typed in a double-spaced format, stapled and proofread for clarity and organization of ideas. Submitted assignments cannot contain typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. Work that has not been properly proofread will be subject to a lower grade.

LATE WORK

Unless specified by the instructor, assignments are due at the beginning of class (11:30AM) via the class Sakai website. **All assignments must be submitted online and will not be accepted after 11:30AM. UNLESS INSTRUCTED, DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS FOR ANY REASON.**

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Due to the nature of the class (a group-based project) it's important that students attend every class. If a student is consistently absent, his/her grade as well as their respective group grade is in serious jeopardy. If a student can't attend class, he/she must let the instructor know via email prior to their absence. Failure to do so could result in a lower class/group grade.

WEEKLY UPDATES AVAILABLE VIA SAKAI

Sakai will serve as the course hub. You are expected to check on Sakai before each scheduled class. The syllabus and updated class assignments are available via Sakai. Students are encouraged to check the class page weekly.

GRADING STANDARD

A
B
C
D
F

Grades will be based on:

In class and outside assignments 30%
Group Participation 30%
Blog project / pitch presentation 40%

BLOG PROJECT

Working in your respective group, you will create an engaging and informative blog. The main objective of each blog is to learn how to create a well-written, effective post, engage your target audience and enable you to start thinking as a content creator not just a content consumer.

GROUP COMMUNICATION/ COURSE TIME MANAGEMENT

A significant amount of class time is dedicated to your blog project. It's imperative that your group communicates goals and objectives to team members daily and use class time in a productive manner. If you have a concern about group performance, please alert the instructor as soon as possible so we can address any issues that might impact your team's final grade. **It's equally important that students effectively manage their time during the course.** Communicate with your group about any scheduling concerns and plan accordingly.

TEAM MEMBER REFLECTIONS

Team member reflections are conducted mid semester – a month after groups have collaborated on several projects. Students can congratulate any member(s) for their exemplary contributions to the team. Evaluations are also an opportunity to address any member(s) who are not contributing to the team's overall performance. Students are encouraged to be honest yet respectful and handle any perceived conflicts with dignity and integrity.

BLOG RUBRIC

Grade	Description
A range	Group meets weekly deadlines. Blog content is highly organized and engaging. All content is written for the target audience and central to the blog theme. Blog contains professional and appropriate use of language. Minimal typos, misspellings, punctuation or grammatical glitches; no errors of fact. All the necessary details, documentation, quotes, citations, and specifics are there. Group immediately applies suggested revisions. The blog's social networking sites are active throughout the semester and consistently push the blog's content. The call to action is consistent and the blog has considerable comments and responses.
B range	Group meets weekly deadlines. Improvement is needed in blog theme content, clarity, and organization. Occasional typos or other glitches say more about the lack of close proofreading than failure to master the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage. More details, quotes, citations, or examples are needed. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, source, or date, etc.) show inattention to detail/accuracy although content is above average. Group applies suggested content revisions but with some delay. The blog's social networking sites are active throughout the semester but occasionally push the blog's content. The blog's call to action is consistent but has moderate comments and responses.
C range	Group has missed more than two deadlines. Blog content lacks clear connections to blog theme and target audience. Average, acceptable writing and research that meets basic expectations. Needs much work on content, clarity and blog organization. Errors indicate need

	for improvement in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage; material was not proofread carefully. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, wrong source, date, or page number, etc.) show inattention to detail and accuracy. Group applies suggested content revisions but with significant delay. The blog's social networking sites are rarely monitored throughout the semester but occasionally push the blog's content. The blog's call to action is not consistent and lacks comments and responses.
D/F range	Group has missed more than five deadlines. Blog organization and engagement is below average and content does not connect to the blog theme or the target audience. Posts include numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Group occasionally applies suggested content revisions but with significant delay. The blog's social networking sites are rarely monitored throughout the semester. The blog's call to action is not consistent and lacks considerable comments and responses.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Specifically for the SOC:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;

- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naive is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the

instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

You are expected to be familiar with and abide by Loyola's code of academic integrity. You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml

BLOG PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Blog theme presentations will begin Thursday, October 4, 2018. *This is your first deadline as a group.* Each group will announce their blog theme to the class via a five-minute presentation. Students are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their presentation and can present via any new media platform. **Casual business attire is required.**

The first content outline is due Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Every Tuesday at the beginning of class (11:30am), groups will submit a two-page content outline (includes research, story and logistics plan) for their respective blog.

Once the outline is approved, students will begin developing one blog post. A blog post is due once a week, four blog posts total. Blog posts should be live on the website the following Tuesday – giving students once week to develop one post. **The first blog post is due Tuesday, October 30, 2018.**

Outlines must be proofread, typed and stapled. List your group name and each member at the top of the first page. Groups should be prepared for weekly consultations. Each group will meet with the instructor to review their content outline and the instructor will give detailed feedback. Each group is expected to take detailed notes and apply revisions immediately.

Group pitch presentations will begin Thursday, November 29, 2018. At the conclusion of the semester, each group will give a final presentation to the class and a panel of media professionals. This twenty-minute presentation includes a rigorous question and answer session. **Business attire is required.**

Following blog presentations, students will write a detailed, balanced critique of their favorite blog as well as the blog that could use the most improvement. Students are required to study each blog prior to writing their critique. If you notice

a detail that could use improvement, please note your criticism in a constructive and respectful manner. Students will evaluate their colleagues according to the evaluation guidelines set by the instructor. **Blog group critiques are due Tuesday December 4, 2018 via the class Sakai website.**

BLOG ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Although students are collectively responsible for their blog, each team member will have specific roles and responsibilities. Each group will decide which members will assume their respective roles. Consider each role carefully when deciding who is the proper fit for your blog's success. Final decisions must be unanimous:

- **Story Editor – Each group will have one story editor.** Story editors are responsible for proofreading content and making sure each post adheres to the group's editorial standards. Group members are responsible for their own content (blog post, title, and tracking comments and responses), However, story editors will offer suggestions on how a post can build on the group's theme and speak to the their target audience.
- **Visual Editor - Each group will have one visual editor.** Visual editors are responsible for updating the blog's YouTube channel and making sure all visual elements are appealing to the group's target audience.
- **Audience Engagement Coordinator – Each group will have one audience engagement coordinator.** The audience engagement coordinator will be responsible for building blog momentum. AEC's will push the blog's content to the target audience via two social networking sites that align with the blog's mission. AECs are also expected to tweet content **daily** to the official class twitter page, **@200comm**.
- **Researcher – Each group will have one researcher.** The researcher is responsible for fact checking each post and keeping the group honest on their blog's mission. The researcher will also be responsible for keeping the group informed and updated on recent trends, events, or anything that impacts the target audience. Researchers will work closely with the ideas coordinator to contribute a significant amount of enterprising ideas to the group.
- **Ideas Coordinator - Each group will have one ideas coordinator.** The ideas coordinator is responsible for organizing all blog story suggestions and will help keep the group honest on story overlap. The ideas coordinator will not be solely accountable for coming up with ideas but will act as the group's

creative compass. The ideas coordinator will work closely with the group's researcher to make sure there are plenty of innovative ideas from week to week and to encourage the group to think out of the box.

TECH SUPPORT

**No technical expertise is assumed and no prerequisites are required. However, you are expected to seek out information needed to fulfill the course requirements on your own. Please check the class Sakai webpage under the resources tab for a detailed WordPress/blog tutorial.

SOC EQUIPMENT

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact apacheco@luc.edu; phone 312-915-8830).

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students are urged to contact the instructor should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

THE COURSE (Subject to change)

Week 1: Introductions/New Media defined

August 28: Welcome/ Syllabus review/Complete blog survey

Assignment: Read the syllabus. Please submit your questions via the class Sakai website by Thursday, August 30, 2018 at 11:30am.

August 30: Team assignments/Introductions

Week 2: Blog Project assignments/overview

September 4: How is new media redefining how we communicate?

Assignment: Read pages 1-30 from text

September 6: Blog project overview/group

Communication class exercise

Assignment: Read pages 31-56

Week 3: Writing for the Web – Finding your voice

September 11: How to write a good blog post

Write a blog post based upon a theme you are considering. Posts are due Thursday, September 13, 2018. Please submit posts via the class Sakai webpage and bring a copy to class.

Assignment: Read pages 79-94, 185-186 from text

September 13: Blog post review/Discussion

Assignment: Read pages 95-112.

Week 4: Writing for the Web – Creating shareable content

September 18: Groups will write a blog post together w/a title. Groups will submit their post via the class Sakai website by September 20, 2018 at 12:45pm.

September 20: Groups can use class time to finalize blog post

Week 5: Audio-Visuals/Page Layout

September 25: Using visuals to engage your audience

Assignment: Read pages 149-169, 57-78

September 27: Page layout/Blog theme presentation prep

Week 6: Blog theme presentation prep

October 2: Blog theme presentation prep

October 4 : Blog theme presentation due– Each group will give a five- minute presentation to the class. **Casual business attire is required.**

Week 7: Mid-semester break

Week 8: First Outline prep/Group meetings w/ Instructor

October 16: Students will use class time to begin crafting their first outline.

Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor for guidance.

October 18: First outline prep

Week 9: First outline due/Group meetings w/ Instructor Tuesday/Thursday

October 23: First outline due/Blog Prep

October 25: Students can use class time to develop content

Week 10: Blog preview

October 30: Outline due/First blog post due

November 1: Blog post goes live on the group's website

Week 11: Blog Buddy week

November 6: Outline and blog post due due/ Blog buddy week begins

November 8: Blog prep

Week 12: Final outline/blog post due

November 13: Final and blog post outline due

November 15: Blog pitch presentations prep

Week 13: Thanksgiving Break

Week 14: Final blog post due/ Blog pitch presentations prep

November 27: Final blog post due /blog pitch presentations prep

November 29: Blog pitch presentations

Assignment: Blog group critiques are due Tuesday, December 4, 2018 via the class Sakai website at 11:30am.

Week 15: Group Critiques Due/Course Review/Final blog grades delivered in class

December 4: Course review/Class discussion

December 6: Final blog grades delivered in class