

JOUR 542: Social Media and the News

DePaul University, College of Communication
Section 301, Class 36412, Spring Quarter 2018
Online

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Office location: 1123 Daley, 14 E. Jackson, Loop Campus
Office hours: Mondays 4 to 6 p.m. (*in-person and online via Zoom*) and by email appointment
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Twitter: @jillhopke

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

We will be experimenting with a range of social media and mobile reporting apps this term. We'll also use online/mobile software to produce content to accompany social media news distribution. For this class you'll need access to:

- A smartphone or tablet device with wifi and/or data connectivity
- Headphones or earbuds

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Journalists use mobile devices and social media in news-gathering, distributing content and engagement with active audiences. This course blends the theory and practice of social media to provide you with a hands-on introduction to, and practice on, a digital-first approach to journalism. We will analyze and apply a range of social and mobile media tools.

This course has a dual purpose:

1. On a skills level, you'll be able to hone your professional social media practice and to build your technical skills with social media apps and platforms. By the end of the quarter you'll have an online professional portfolio and should have developed a "voice" on social platforms for your professional self; and

2. We will put a critical lens to social journalism and develop a grounding in social media and news concepts and the application of journalistic ethics to mobile and social media, that you can then apply as you embark on your career in this ever-evolving field.

The course covers emerging theory on social media, including: networked gatekeeping, social listening as applied to journalism, audience engagement and analytics, citizen journalism, visual storytelling, best practices for content curation and covering breaking news events with social tools, as well as verification of social content and ethics.

You will develop and implement a professional social media strategy and practice with a variety of mobile journalism and social media tools. For your final project, you'll conduct a social media audit and develop a professional social media plan.

Our learning objectives for the quarter:

- Develop a “mobile-first” mindset for your reporting and mobile news-gathering technical skills;
- Describe the changing role of audiences and the impact on journalism;
- Be able to assess user-generated content (UGC) from social media apps and platforms and locate reliable information from social media to use in your reporting;
- Design and actively manage your personal professional “brand” on social media;
- Demonstrate the use of audience analytics to improve your professional social media strategy;
- Assess the effectiveness of news organizations social media strategies and policies;
- Identify how the core journalistic concepts of verification and objectivity apply to mobile journalism and social media;
- Analyze future trends in social, “digital-first” journalism; and
- Complete the Facebook for Journalists Certificate (joint with the Poynter Institute).

TEXTBOOK

Adornato, A. (2018). *Mobile and social journalism: A practical guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.

Notes: A copy of the book will be on reserve at the Loop Campus library. In addition, the textbook has a companion website (<http://mobileandsocialmediajournalism.com/>).

D2L READINGS

In order to include up-to-date social media and journalism material, additional readings may be made available through the class D2L site.

TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS CLASS YOU WILL NEED

1. **Daily attention to news media** – In order to be successful in this class (and as a journalist) you need to become familiar with good journalism, using and on social media in this case, to be able to emulate it. Get in the habit of consuming a variety of news sources of local, national and international scope on a daily basis. Here's my list of recommended sources for keeping up-to-date on industry trends: <https://twitter.com/jillhopke/lists/social-media-and-news>.
2. **Monitor and participate on class D2L site** – Regularly check the class D2L site for updates. You will turn in all of your assignments via the D2L submissions folders by providing, depending on the assignment, a combination of a hyperlink to your work, screenshots and/or video capture. You should plan to log-in to the course three or more times per week.
3. **Professional Twitter account** – Set-up professional Twitter account (can be a previously held account, if you choose) by second week and tweet at least 10 times per week through the quarter (minimum requirement). Follow general news sources, industry influencers and those specific to your reporting interest(s).
4. **Medium.com account** – You will post your multimedia package assignments to the social blogging platform Medium.com. In order to do this, you'll need to create an account, which you can integrate with your professional Twitter account.
5. **Canva.com account** – For your assignments Drill 3 and Multimedia Package 3, you will need to create an account for the online graphics software Canva.com.

VERIFICATION

You are required to provide contact information for every person you interview over the course of this quarter for class material, including phone number and e-mail address. Do not post private interviewee contact information publicly. Upload to the D2L submissions folder for each assignment. Failing to provide contact information for interviewees will result in a full letter grade deduction and raise additional review for academic integrity issues.

You will include a reference list, if applicable for each assignment. Note, for blog posts it's fine to hyperlink to source material in lieu of a full reference list, and for social media to @mention source material.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism means taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own. You are expected to provide sources for all material that cannot be reasonably considered common knowledge (e.g. Chicago is located in IL; Chicago has two baseball teams). This includes any idea or piece of information that is not original to you. Plagiarism will result in an "F" for the assignment and for the course. It may lead to dismissal from the university.

Failing to act with academic integrity is detrimental to DePaul's values, including the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. University academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification; misuse of academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct.

Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by university officials. Furthermore, all work done for this course should comply with the University Academic Integrity Policy available in the student handbook or at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

GRADING

The conventional 10-point letter-grade scale will be used. The specific grading scale follows the recommendation of the College of Communication: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D (60-69), F (\leq 59).

If you have an emergency situation, contact me as soon as possible, ideally BEFORE an assignment is due, and I will handle the situation individually. No late work is accepted in this class. One thing is for sure in journalism and that's deadlines.

Multimedia Packages (30% of grade). You will produce three story packages, focused on your beat for the quarter. For every story, you'll use a mobile device and apps for the majority of your reporting. You are expected to use social media tools to engage online during your reporting and to distribute your stories. For each, consider why the story matters, who is impacted, potential sources, and how you'll use social media tools and apps in your reporting.

Drills (15% of grade). You'll complete a series of social and mobile media drills throughout the quarter, an average of one per weekly content module. These drills help you learn and practice skills needed to complete major assignments.

Discussion posts (10% of grade). For each, you will be required to post on the D2L “discussions” forum on a topic related to the weekly reading. Your analyses should be thoughtful but concise (300-500 words).

To receive full points, you should include quotes or screenshots of supporting evidence and include your own analyze. For reaction points, you will respond to at least two of your colleagues’ posts.

Social media activity/participation (15% of grade). I expect that you will have set-up your professional Twitter account by the second week of class and tweet at least 10 times per week throughout the quarter (this is the minimum requirement and doesn’t guarantee full credit). Aim for at least twice per weekday. Interactive engagement is encouraged and expected!

Note: I don’t require that you follow my account. I expect you to follow the course hashtag ([#JOUR542](#)). I will use this hashtag for course-related material.

Final project (social media policy/strategy analysis) (30% of grade). The project is due the first day of finals week. Late work will NOT be accepted for the final project.

An overview of the grading expectations is as follows:

A-level work: Very little improvement necessary to be published and/or distributed in social channels. Challenging and interesting idea executed completely as requested by the assignment. The story is thorough, informative and well written. No minor grammatical, AP style or other writing errors.

B-level work: Needs a little more retouching. Good story idea, solid reporting and writing behind the product, but more time spent on story development and revision required to improve the output. Typically, needs improvement on story focus.

C-level work: Effort and promise, but much execution must be improved in multiple categories. Commonly, repeated grammatical errors, basic style errors, lack of attention to detail and/or shoddy reporting are present. Document met only basic minimum satisfactory requirements and expectations.

Unsatisfactory-level work (D or F): Very little effort was made. Instructions were not followed. Reporting incomplete or only part of assignment completed. Major revisions necessary, did not make an attempt and/or plagiarized. Not full sourced by reference

list, list of interviewee contact information, hyperlinking and/or @mentions (depending on distribution format).

EXTRA CREDIT

You have an extra credit option to work for Good Day DePaul (TV), Radio DePaul or *The DePaulia* this quarter in a social media or digital content capacity. It will be worth up to one-half a letter grade of extra credit. You must begin this work by the third week of the quarter and continue in that work throughout the quarter. I will verify your involvement. I strongly recommend you take advantage of this opportunity. Additional extra credit may be available throughout the quarter.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This class will faithfully follow university guidelines on sexual harassment. Such behavior will not be tolerated and may lead to dismissal from the university.

WRITING SUPPORT

The Writing Center, at the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses, is available for consultation on all aspects of writing assignments. Writing Center tutors are specially trained undergraduate and graduate students who can help at any stage of the quarter or in your process. Visit <http://www.depaul.edu/writing> for more information.

COURSE PARTICIPATION

Doing well in this class requires you to actively participate and engage with course material. Work conflicts, vacations, and non-emergency family situations are not acceptable excuses for missing course D2L modules and deadlines, especially for the final project.

LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted without a Dean of Students Office verified excused absence for a “medical, mental health or personal reason.” Information on the Dean of Students Office’s “absence notification” policy and the form to submit to their office can be found at: <http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx>

That said, if you have a personal situation affecting your performance and engagement in our class, please contact me so that I can help identify campus resources that could be of assistance.

PROFESSIONALISM

Remember that out in the Chicago community you are representing DePaul and our Journalism Program. My expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately and professionally wherever your reporting takes you this quarter.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who require accommodations for any type of disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your individual situation, it is preferable if you contact me during the first week of class. Also, make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities. They are located at (and reachable via email at csd@depaul.edu):

Lincoln Park

Center for Students with Disabilities
2250 North Sheffield Avenue - Student Center 370
Chicago, Illinois 60614-3673
773.325.1677 main phone
773.325.3720 fax
773.325.7276 TTY

Loop

Center for Students with Disabilities - Lewis Center 1420
25 East Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-2287
312.362.8002 main phone
312.362.6544 fax

Weekly Modules and Assignments Schedule

WEEK 1: JOURNALISM AS SOCIAL AND ACTIVE AUDIENCES

- Turn-in professional Twitter handle
- ACTIVITY: Voice Thread introduction
- Discussion Post 1 + Responses
- Reading: Textbook chapter 1: "Forces at the Gate: An Active Audience" (pp. 1-22)

WEEK 2: THE MOBILE-FIRST NEWSROOM

- DRILL 1: Twitter Scavenger Hunt
- ACTIVITY: Complete Facebook for Journalists online course in "How Journalists Can Best Utilize Facebook and Instagram"
- Discussion Post 2 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 2: "Managing Change: The Mobile-First Newsroom" (pp. 23-46)

WEEK 3: DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA BRAND

- MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE 1
- Discussion Post 3 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 3: "Your Social Media Brand: Who Do You Want to Be?" (pp. 47-68)

WEEK 4: SOCIAL AND MOBILE APPS FOR REPORTING

- ACTIVITY: Complete Facebook for Journalists online course in "Connect and Engage with Your Audience Using Facebook Live"
- Discussion Post 4 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 4: "Mastering Social Media and Mobile Apps for Reporting" (pp. 69-94)

WEEK 5: MOBILE JOURNALIST FIELD PRACTICE

- DRILL 2: Live-tweeting or live-streaming an Event
- Discussion Post 5 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 5: "From the Field: The Mobile Journalist" (pp. 95-122)

WEEK 6: VIDEO FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

- MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE 2
- Discussion Post 6 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: No new readings. Refer to chapter 5 for assignment.

WEEK 7: SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION (SMO)

- ACTIVITY: Complete Facebook for Journalists online course in "Immersive Storytelling With 360 Video and Photos" (+ Pointer Assessment for extra credit)
- Discussion Post 7 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 6: "From the Field: Social Media Engagement and Audience Analytics" (*part 1 pp. 123-134 only*)

WEEK 8: SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

- DRILL 3: Tweet Optimization with Graphics
- Discussion Post 8 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 6: "From the Field: Social Media Engagement and Audience Analytics" (*part 2 pp. 134-145 only*)

WEEK 9: SOCIAL MEDIA ETHICS

- MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE 3
- Discussion Post 9 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 7: "Social Media Ethics and Policies" (pp. 147-164)

WEEK 10: MOBILE AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR CAREER

- Work on final project
- Discussion Post 10 + Responses
- Weekly professional Twitter posting (minimum 10 tweets)
- Reading: Textbook chapter 8: "Mobile and Social Media in Your Career" (pp. 165-178)

TURN IN FINAL PROJECT VIA D2L SUBMISSIONS FOLDER BY 11:59 P.M. THE FIRST DAY OF FINALS WEEK, PLUS ANY EXTRA CREDIT.

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