PUR3622 SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT– SPRING 2025

Instructor: Sasha Matar, Adjunct Lecturer

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Office Hours (Virtual only): Monday through Friday (flexible for most of the day) by
appointment. See https://calendly.com/sasha-matar to schedule an appointment.

About the Course

Social media have changed the way organizations communicate with their audiences. In
this course, we will explore social media from a public relations perspective and
understand how our roles as strategic communicators have evolved as a result. You will
learn to develop a social media strategy, create content and measure meaningful
results on behalf of organizations.
Social media changes every day. Because of this, the course content may also change,
allowing us to address and analyze what's happening across the industry.
This course is centered on you and your needs. As such, the course will provide the
opportunity for hands-on learning and real-world applications to help you gain
experience and build a robust portfolio that showcases your social media and strategic
thinking skills.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn the basic social media skills of public relations and digital
professionals to prepare you to meet the demands of today's industry. You will:
1. Analyze the social media landscape and its role in public relations;
2. Apply fundamentals and best practices to social media management for
   organizations;
3. Create and tailor social media plans – including strategy, content and KPIs –based on
   your target audiences and objectives;
4. 4. Use social media platforms and professional tools, such as Hootsuite, through
   hands-on learning opportunities;
5. Identify key performance indicators and measure the success of social media efforts;
6. Examine the ethical and legal implications and potential risks of social media for
   organizations;
7. Develop and apply critical thinking, listening and professional skills through
   assignments that mimic industry work with clients and peers.

Availability

Please feel free to reach out to me any time during the semester. I'm available by email and will try to get back to you within 24 hours. If you would like to set an appointment, you can see times I have available here: https://calendly.com/sasha-matar

College of Journalism and Communications Objectives

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that by graduation all students should be able to:

- apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, in a global context, and for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located;
- demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts;
- present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Course Format

This course will be 100% online, through e-Learning on Canvas (https://elearning.ufl.edu/). It is important for you to keep up with the video lectures, readings, assignments and exams. Course content will be published in advance, giving you the opportunity to work ahead.

I will use Canvas for all course communication, which will include a weekly email with upcoming assignments and announcements. Canvas can also remind you of upcoming due dates. Please check the site daily.

Class Participation

This is an asynchronous course in that we don't have a set time each week to meet and discuss the material. However, there are due dates each week. It is vital that you meet those due dates. For more information on due dates, see COURSE EXPECTATIONS.

Required Materials

We do not have a specific textbook, but we will use the following materials:
- Required weekly online videos, readings and case studies.
- Social media training videos from Hootsuite Academy and Hubspot Academy.
- You will be asked to use social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter), to complete several assignments.
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You should also consider these suggested readings and resources:
- National news and trade publications, such as The Wall Street Journal, PR Week, PRovoke Media, AdWeek and AdAge. Free content is available on all the listed publications, and you can create free accounts to several of these with your UFL login. You should also subscribe to their daily/weekly newsletters.
- Online databases accessible through the UF Library, such as WARC, Mintel, Simmons and Statista. See the advertising and public relations UF Library guides. You must be signed on with the UF VPN to access these databases.
- Training videos available on LinkedIn Learning. You may access LinkedIn Learning for free with your UFL login.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

As a 3000-level immersion course, PUR3622 will build on the foundational concepts that you have learned in prior courses. These include but are not limited to research, critical reading and analysis, self and peer evaluation, obtaining digital certifications, and journalistic writing. You will apply these skills as well as new learnings from our lectures, guest speakers, readings, and other materials to develop real-world social media skills.

Minimum Technology Requirements

The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to their degree program. A student's computer configuration should include webcam, microphone, broadband access, and Microsoft office suite. Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review before starting their program. More information on technical requirements is available at the UF Online website.

Minimum Technical Skills
To complete your tasks in this course, you will need to know how to operate a computer and use the Internet and word processing software.

Grading & Assignments

QUIZ POLICY
The orientation quiz does not count towards your final average, but it must be completed at a score of 100% before the rest of the course will open. There are also a number of graded PlayPosit quizzes embedded in the module lectures. All quizzes may be taken multiple times. See below for more information.

FINAL EXAM
The Group Social Media Project will be treated as your final exam. The rationale behind this is that every lesson should culminate in an understanding of what makes a successful social media strategy. Your project is a good way to assess your comprehension of these standards. For more information on the project, see below.

COMPONENTS OF YOUR FINAL GRADE
- **PlayPosit Quizzes (10%)** – Most module lecture videos use PlayPosit. This tool allows instructors to add interactions to lectures, such as graded quiz questions and links to external resources. You must score 100% on each PlayPosit to be considered complete, but you will have unlimited retakes.
- **Weekly Assignments & Discussions (40%)** – In-class activities will require that you practice and apply the skills learned throughout the course, including identifying keywords, setting benchmarks and generating insights. Specific details about each assignment are available on Canvas. Your lowest grade in this section will be dropped at the end of the semester.
- **Group Social Media Project (40%)** – With your group, you will develop a social media campaign plan for a client. You will complete several components of the plan throughout the semester that will count toward your final grade. The final project will require you to create a PPT and record your presentation as a team. Your team members' evaluations of your contribution and overall participation will affect your grade, too. See the breakdown below:
    o **Components – 40%**
    o **Final Project and Presentation – 50%**
    o **Peer Evaluations – 10%**
- **Hootsuite Platform Certification (10%)** – You will complete your Hootsuite Platform Certification this semester. If you already have this certification, you will complete Hootsuite's Social Marketing Certification. Both are free to you as part of this course.
- **Extra Credit Opportunity: Social Media Digests** – Social media is always changing, and it's important to keep up with the latest news, platform updates and brand wins and fails. This semester, we're going to read and analyze social media news as a team. You can earn up to a 5% boost to your group project grade by contributing to four social media digests throughout the semester. Note that each digest has a different due date.

Grading Policy

Final grades will be based on the following scale:

A 94.0-100%	C 74.0-76.99%
A- 90.0-93.99%	C- 70.0-73.99%
B+ 87.0-89.99%	D+ 67.0-69.99%
B 84.0-86.99%	D 64.0-66.99%
B- 80.0-83.99%	D- 61.0-63.99%
C+ 77.0-79.99%	E below 61.0%

Course Expectations

Submitting Assignments

Social media management takes time, practice and consistency. Manage your time wisely. Please do not wait until the last minute to start working on your assignments. Public relations and social media professionals are often bound by tight, important deadlines and missing these can damage their and their clients' reputation. Everything you write for this course must be coherent, logical and carefully edited. All assignments must be "client-ready," which means they have been proofread, reviewed and formatted so they are ready to submit to your client (or in this case, to me). Assignments will be completed either individually or as a group, as indicated on Canvas. I will assign groups for your social media project at the beginning of the semester

Deadlines

Assignments are due on Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on the due date unless otherwise noted. PUR3622: Social Media Management Though late assignments are not generally accepted, I know life happens. You may submit one assignment late (48 hours maximum) without any penalty.

Requirements for make-up assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academicregulations/attendance-policies/.

Feedback

If you have a grading concern when you receive feedback, you must submit this request within one week of receiving your grade on the assignment. Requests after one week will not be accepted. My goal is to grade all assignments within one week of due date, but there may be delays in grading during the semester.

Grading:

Each assignment has a grading rubric in Canvas. Study each rubric along with the assignment requirement to see what the requirements are for each activity in the course. To earn the highest available points you must attain the highest level in the rubric.

Late assignments:

Late assignments will receive an automatic grade reduction of 10 points every 24 hours (or portion thereof) beyond the time they are due. So if it's an hour late, it's a reduction of ten points. If it's 25 hours late, it's a reduction of twenty points. If an assignment is submitted 11 days past the due date, you will receive a zero.

Exceptions consistent with UF policies are allowed. Academic honesty is expected on all assignments and exams. Cheating or violations of the academic honor code will not be tolerated.

Recording of Class

Although the class is already recorded, the same rules as other online/in-person classes still apply. The purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/

Campus Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352- 392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392- 1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

AI Policy For Student Work

In this course, you will be asked to use generative AI for some assignments. AI is commonly used in the profession, so familiarity with generative AI tools, like ChatGPT, is important. Assignments that require generative AI will be clearly noted on Canvas.

If not explicitly noted in the assignment, use of generative AI tools is highly discouraged. While social media managers do use generative AI, the most successful ones have nurtured their own original, strategic and creative thinking. Ultimately, you are here to learn the skills required of social media managers and be able to execute those skills on your own.

If you still choose to use generative AI, you must follow these guidelines:

- The final work you submit must be original and your own. If AI wrote most of your assignment, that is not your own work.
- Be transparent and clearly document how you use AI. This could include providing your original prompts, showing how you edited created content, or using appropriate citation of information obtained via generative AI.
- You must not use assignment instructions or other copyrighted material in your prompts. Do not share personal data or any information protected under FERPA.

If you fail to follow the above guidelines, that is considered a violation of the honor code as you are presenting content as your own that was not fully created by you. There are various AI detection tools available (built within Canvas and externally, such as ZeroGPT), and many AI platforms follow very formulaic response patterns. If I am concerned that your work is not your own, I will try to verify the originality of your work. If unable to do so, I may ask you to resubmit the assignment detailing how you arrived at your submission.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Course Content and Schedule

This timeline is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

- Week 1 – Course Orientation
- Week 2 – Module 1: Introduction to Social Media & Public Relations
- Week 3 – Module 2: Law & Ethics in Social Media
- Week 4 – Module 3: Building a Social Media Strategy
- Week 5 – Module 4: Social Monitoring, Listening & Analysis
- Week 6 – Module 5: Measuring What Matters
- Week 7 – Module 6: Selecting Social Media Channels
- Week 8 – Module 7: Creating & Curating Engaging Content
- Week 9 – Module 8: Writing for Social Media
- Week 10 – SPRING BREAK
- Week 11 – Module 9: Paid Social Media
- Week 12 – Module 10: Community Management
- Week 13 – Module 11: Influencer Marketing
- Week 14 – Module 12: Social Media Crises & Tragedies
- Week 15 – Module 13: Social Media, AI & Emerging Technology
- Week 16 – Module 14: Final Reminders & Updates