TECM 3500: Social Media for Technical Communication

Course Information

Term: Spring 2020

Location: AudB 313

Instructor Information

Instructor: Meesha Thomas

Office Location: AudB 105

Office hours: In Office T/Th 8:25AM – 9:25AM & Video Conference: By Appointment

Email: meesha.thomas@unt.edu

Course Overview

Social media is everywhere. Increasingly, it is where people live out their lives - making connections, staying informed, finding jobs, and even falling in love. In 2019, people spent on average 58 minutes a day on just Facebook (Links to an external site.) - almost as much time as they spend eating and drinking.

If people have changed the way they live and buy things, it follows that marketing and sales must update as well to match this new lifestyle.

This course will present an in-depth overview of creating an effective social media strategy. It will focus on four primary areas:

- Research
- Planning and strategy
- Implementation
- Measurement

Likes and views don't magically turn into revenue. Businesses must harness social media to attract, convert, close and delight customers and turn them into promoters. They must be able to overcome common pitfalls, challenges and dead ends that companies face when formulating a social media strategy.

Whether you end up using social media professionally or personally, there is tremendous value in understanding why businesses are on social and how they use it to generate revenue.

Course Goals and Objectives

Our course goals and objectives are outlined below:

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
Building a content strategy	Learn how to produce content, how to curate content, how to design content, and how to create shareable content.
Channel evaluation	Determine where your target market spends time online. Which channels should your company use, and what will the goals of that channel be?
The Psychology of social	Analyze why certain content gets shared and how to improve the virality of content.
Community-building	Engage with people to build relationships and trust, and make community-building a collaborative and cross-departmental priority for your company.
Developing a brand voice	Develop and create a consistent experience across all of a company's external channels.
Best practices for how brands should behave and how they should not	Study case studies on how brands have interacted.
Measuring your efforts	Establish types of goals (engagement, revenue, reach, traffic).
Paid Social	Determine how and why one advertises on social media.

Course Structure

This class will employ many of the ideas outlined in the flipped classroom (Links to an external site.) methodology. A flipped classroom is a type of blended learning where students consume instructional content (lectures, videos, and readings) outside of the classroom and use in-class time to conduct classroom exercises and do activities that are traditionally assigned as homework.

Activities

The backbone of the activities and exercises in this syllabus is the HubSpot software. We're partnering with HubSpot this semester to give you access to an abundance of FREE resources and content!

The required resources and readings for this course are provided below:

- [Social Media Certification (Links to an external site.)](): A **free** online certification with videos, transcripts slides, and additional readings.
- Blogs: Inbound marketing is an incredibly fast-moving area of study. For that reason, you will be required to read and subscribe to several industry-leading blogs (**Feel free to create an additional email account, if you're concerned about using your primary email address**). This will be the most effective way to fully immerse yourself in the planning, creation, and execution of Inbound marketing. You can also take the free certification [here (Links to an external site.)]().
    - HubSpot Inbound Marketing blog: [http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing (Links to an external site.)]()
    - MOZ blog: [http://moz.com/blog (Links to an external site.)]()
    - Unbounce blog: [http://unbounce.com/blog/ (Links to an external site.)]()
    - Litmus blog: [https://litmus.com/blog/ (Links to an external site.)]()
    - HelpScout blog: [http://www.helpscout.net/blog/ (Links to an external site.)]()
    - Optimizely blog: [http://blog.optimizely.com/ (Links to an external site.)]()
    - ConversionXL blog: [https://conversionxl.com/blog/ (Links to an external site.)]()
- Additional content will be made available via Canvas

Grading Scale

The following criteria serve as general guidelines for all assignments submitted in this course. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these guidelines.

"A" (90-100%): A manager would be very impressed and would remember the work when a promotion is discussed. In this course, that means work that is a pleasure to read, with excellent content, grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. In addition, work is thorough, complete, coherent, well organized, supported sufficiently, and demonstrates a superior understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"B" (80-89%): A manager would be satisfied with the job, but not especially impressed. This means that papers are well written and well produced, and demonstrate a substantial addition to the learning process. Work is sufficiently developed, organized, and supported, and demonstrates a solid understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"C" (70-79%): A manager would be disappointed and ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing clients and others to see the work. In other words, the paper may have clear, but

underdeveloped ideas, or the paper might not engage or affect the reader. The paper may contain some errors in grammar, mechanics, or logic.

"D" (60-69%): A manager would be troubled by the poor quality of work. This level of work forces the reader to work too hard to understand the main ideas. The paper may contain incomplete information, have serious grammar and mechanical problems, lack clear organization, or be conceptually unclear.

"F" (0-59%): A manager would start looking for someone to replace you. In particular, work fails to address the tasks of the assignment, is so underdeveloped as to demonstrate incompetence, and is mechanically and grammatically incomprehensible. This grade will also be assigned for any evidence of plagiarism.

Attendance

Your presence in this course is mandatory not optional. You cannot perform well in this course unless you attend class. If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made. You will receive three attendance grades—one at the end of each five-week period. Your grade will be calculated by how many absences you have during the 5 week period. At the beginning of each 5-week period your absences will reset.

Following is the grade breakdown per absence:

 0 absences= 100% 1 absence= 90%   2 absences= 70%   3 absence= 50%   4+ absences= 0%

You will be considered absent if,

- You do not come
- You are more than 10 minutes late
- You leave more than 10 minutes before class is dismissed.

I understand extenuating circumstance do exist, so if you feel an exception is needed in any of these cases, please see me after class, or contact me via email.

If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made. However, you cannot make-up assignments that were written and submitted during class. It is your responsibility to keep track of your own absences. If you have questions regarding your absence(s), please speak to me during office hours, or send me an email.

General Technology Requirements

Computer Operations and Access Requirements

You are expected to be familiar with the day-to-day operation of computers including email (and sending attachments) and standard software. If you need to develop your computer skills, please consider signing up for the courses offered by the Computer and Information Technology Center.

You are also expected to have regular access to computing technology whether it be your computer at home or the computers provided by the Library. There are 14 computer labs on campus, including one 24-hour lab should the library be closed.

Hardware and Disk Media Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that the computer(s) and disk(s) you use are functional and that you have, in the case of technological failure, backed up your data.

As a student at UNT, you can back up data, up to 25 GB, through [SkyDrive (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)](). A corrupted disk or crashed hard drive does not constitute an excuse for late or unsubmitted work. If you need to bring electronic files to class, please email them to yourself as attachments or use the SkyDrive available through your EagleConnect account.

Small USB storage units called "jump drives" or "pen drives" are an excellent alternative. See Amazon for more information or visit our local computer stores and/or large retailers to purchase portable memory starting at around $30.00.

Email Requirement

All students must have a valid UNT email address. You can forward your UNT email to your regular account (Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.), should you not wish to directly check your UNT account. It is also your responsibility to check your email regularly. I often use email to send class emails, including notices, updates, and advisories.

Assignment Submission and Grading Format

Major assignments and drafts must be submitted through Canvas unless otherwise noted. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted.

Due Dates

Assignments must be completed and uploaded to Canvas by the beginning of the designated class period, unless specified otherwise. I do not accept late work unless you have documented extenuating circumstances related to university events or the observance of a recognized holy day.

It is your responsibility to turn in your work on time. Computer-related excuses will not be accepted as per the above technology requirements.

Lastly, you may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents — these don't encourage you to learn the programs and generally result in dull, unpersuasive documents.

Classroom Behavior

It is expected that discussions will occur in the classroom; consequently, it is important to be respectful and listen to the instructor and your classmates. "Listening" does not include answering a cell phone, texting, chatting to your neighbor, checking email, surfing the Internet, etc.

Particularly, students who elect to surf the Internet rather than work on a class assignment or listen to the instructor/classmate will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent for that day.

Your preparedness in this course also falls under the subject of classroom behavior. You are expected to come to every class period with your textbook and appropriate note-taking materials. Likewise, you are expected to have completed all the assigned readings and brought all assignments due during that class period.

Academic Dishonesty

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment. Other sanctions may be issued, depending on the severity of the incident. All incidents will be reported

to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations
- dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments
- the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university
- dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s)
- any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to:

- the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment
- the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ADA Statement

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.