This Syllabus is subject to change as real-time events occur

Course Name: JOUR 4980.001/5350.001 Topics in Journalism—Strategic Social Media
Class Meetings: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 6:00 – 7:50 p.m. GAB 104

Instructor: Samra Jones Bufkins, MJ, APR
Office: GAB 113  Office phone: 940-565-2167
Cell phone: xxx-xxxx-xxxx (text any time, include name & class, call if an emergency.)
Office hours : By appointment, but in general I’ll be in my office one hour before class starts.
E-mail: Samra.Bufkins@unt.edu  Twitter: @samjb
A note on accessibility: I try to be available to students but if you text/tweet/email me on a weekend or late at night, don’t panic if I don’t respond right away. If you need immediate response, call.

Class hashtag: #UNTJ4980
Class blog: EagleStrategies.blogspot.com  Look for login instructions at LEARN.UNT.EDU

Course Description
In a collaborative atmosphere we will explore strategic applications of a variety of social media platforms used for strategic communications and journalism. Students will be challenged to bring new ideas to the classroom while adapting social media tools to traditional communications planning and measurement methods. Students with specific expertise/interests will be encouraged to present to class.

Course Objectives
After taking JOUR 4980, each student will be able to:

- Understand and apply the basic technologies of the most common social media platforms and the strategic uses for those platforms.
- Analyze ethical dilemmas in social media strategic communications case studies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes in which they work.

Texts
There is no required text for this class.

Recommended:


A list of blogs, websites and other resources has been uploaded to Blackboard for your perusal. Students are encouraged to add to that list as they find useful information to share.

Technical requirements:
- While not mandatory, it is highly recommended that you have access to a smart phone and home Internet access—many assignments require work outside of class time.
• All students must have a LinkedIn profile, must connect with me and each other by the beginning of class Wednesday, July 10. Post your link in the discussion area of LEARN.
• All students will open and maintain a Twitter account (by Wednesday July 10) and monitor and send daily “Tweets” to hashtag #untj4980 for discussion and links to supplemental reading material.
• All students will establish a splash page (I recommend About.me) by Wednesday July 10 with all social media links and make that available to all students via the discussion area of LEARN.
• Students will follow the instructor and other students in the class and should follow guest speakers, business and media outlets and strategic communications professionals of relevance to the course material in order to enrich the class discussion and learning environment.
• Sharing of relevant articles, blogs, websites and social media resources is expected in order to stimulate dialogue with a diverse community in and outside of class.
• Twitter activity will count as a percentage of your class participation grade—those who do not initiate at least one course-related Tweet per day will see their grade reduced.
• Students must maintain and use BlackBoard LEARN to access course materials and required supplemental readings, and regularly access e-mail through BlackBoard and UNT.
• Students must have an active personal Facebook account in order to review and post to the course Facebook group. You are not required to be “friends” with anyone in the class or share your Facebook page with anyone you don’t care to.

Classroom protocol. Class meetings will consist of a combination of lecture, guest speakers, discussion, case study analysis and group exercises. Participation in class discussion is mandatory and expected to be provocative, but must be conducted in an environment of respect and tolerance for differing perspectives, cultures, backgrounds, skill levels and opinions. I retain my nonnegotiable right to evaluate your in-class performance and ask anyone to leave if they are disruptive or their inattention is disruptive. This includes sleeping in class, working crossword puzzles, playing on Facebook or other platforms, working on assignments for other classes, muttering and talking in class, talking back, and disrespectful and/or inappropriate comments directed at the instructor or other students.

ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION POLICY
You are expected to attend and participate in each class meeting, complete all assignments on time in the proper format and participate in all online and social media activities as assigned. I may periodically give quizzes covering the week’s readings, speaker presentations, class discussions and current events—these will occur in the first 10 minutes of class. Be there. I take roll in writing at the beginning of each class.
• Journalism faculty have the discretion to drop any student who misses the first class meeting without prior notice.
• One absence is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me, in writing, from the beginning about an extraordinary problem (like you’re planning to be on life support). This class meets once a week, so if you miss, you’ve missed a full week of class.
• The second absence will result in 10 points taken off your final course grade, with 10 points deducted for each subsequent absence.
• After the third absence I reserve the right to drop you from the class if I do not see sufficient evidence that you are taking the class seriously and making an effort to complete all work.
• If you are absent you are still responsible for submitting your assignment on time. If you need to leave the classroom for any reason during an exam you will not be re-admitted to the classroom, and your exam will be graded accordingly.

Communication: Communicating with students using the UNT student email account is part of the university’s contract with students. Official course-related electronic communication with students in this class will be through the students’ myunt accounts rather than personal email accounts.

That said, we will be using many other means of communications in this class including, but not limited to, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other social networking platforms.
Description of Assignments

A NOTE ON RESEARCH SOURCES: Answers.com, Ask Yahoo!, Quora, Wikipedia and similar, unverified, user-generated sites are not acceptable research sources, although they are often good places to start looking for ideas. Don’t be lazy and quote the first one or two things that pop up on Google. Use of Google Scholar is fine. Use the library resources available to you—you paid for them—and your research will be more meaningful to you and your clients and will most likely result in a better grade. Do not depend solely on Internet research, even though this is a social media class.

Evaluation (grad students, see addendum)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Exercises and assignments</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postings to class blog (minimum 2 per week)</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation and online engagement</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam and quizzes</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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Grading System for Journalism 4980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90% -- 99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80% -- 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70% -- 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% -- 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Lower than 60%</td>
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Activities/Assignments/Assessments

- **Individual Exercises**—subject to change if something new comes along
  - #1 Upload of required information to discussion forum
  - #2 Online personal profile of one classmate and your instructor—see class handout.
  - #3 Twitter assignment—see class handout
  - #4 One-page bullet summary of each guest speaker’s presentation, due before the beginning of the next class period.
  - #5 Minimum of two “show and tell” demonstrations of an app or SM issue.
  - #6 Daily Paper.Li or other social media aggregator of your choice.
  - #7 Storify
  - #8 LinkedIn profile: post link in discussion area of Blackboard, see handout
  - #9 Minimum of four Tweetchats (one per week) see class handout & online content folder.
  - #10—TBA (or your choice—could include major class presentation)

- **Class blog**—Write about new elements, uses, issues, platforms or channels of social media (NOT discussed in class) as you discover them, including an analysis of what strategic applications you see for it OR if you think it’s useless. Comment on other postings. **Post any time, as long as you do it at least twice a week with the first two due Saturday July 13 and ending Wednesday August 7.**
  **Specific due dates in Learn.com discussion area.** All blogs are due at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday and Saturday. Whenever you post, Tweet the link to that post using the #untj4980 hashtag and upload your copy to Turnitin.

- **Book Review** Each student will read a book of their choice about social media (which I approve) and write a review of the book. You’ll write a 2-3 page critical summary (bullets are acceptable) and submit it by Turnitin, and bring a hard copy to class. You must be prepared to briefly discuss the book in class and bring copies of a one page summary of the book for everyone in the class.

- **Class participation and online engagement**—Showing up and contributing to the conversation in class and online. This includes your weekly Twitter activity, participating in a minimum of one Tweetchat per week (4 total—provide me with screenshots or a Storify of your Tweets), commenting on blogs—preferably professionals’ blogs, not just your classmates’ blogs, sharing links via Twitter, and any other activities we think of.

- **Group Activities**—As a class and in small groups you will participate in SM-driven activities.

- **Assessments** Yep, gotta do it. Three quizzes mainly cover terminology, but will also include elements
of communications planning and other concepts introduced in class, including information provided by guest speakers (including graduate student presentations).

**Electronic Device Policy**
Most faculty prefer to limit the use of electronic devices in classes, but it would be counterproductive and hypocritical to enforce that rule in this class. Please refrain from any texting, tweeting, surfing, shopping, Googling, or whatever that is not related to this course material. The Twitter feed will be displayed on the screen at all times. Be considerate of your classmates and all guest speakers. Live Tweeting relevant class discussions or speaker quotes (with the class hashtag) is encouraged, but let’s not be excessive about it. I do reserve the right to ask you to leave if you are using this class time to work on projects for another class. I also don’t mind if you eat or drink in the classroom, but be considerate of others, pick up and dispose of your trash properly, and try not to stink up the place.

**The Required Fine Print**

**JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES**

**Journalism Course Registration**
1. The Mayborn School of Journalism, in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office, has eliminated the need for individual class codes for the majority of journalism courses. Registration will begin on the dates noted in the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program; thus, we are unable to maintain the traditional waiting list as has been done previously.

2. By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required prerequisites according to your catalog year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven’t taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your prerequisites, please see an advisor.

3. A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all pre-major courses, and Math 1680 and also have applied for major status. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses. Pre-majors must file a formal application for major status in the final semester of pre-major status to be eligible for early registration of major-level classes in the following semester.

**Re-taking Failed Courses**
Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

**Disability Accommodation**
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. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

SETE
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a university-wide online evaluation and a requirement for all UNT classes. The Mayborn School of Journalism needs your input to improve our teaching and curriculum. This short survey will be available at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Prompt completion of the SETE will mean earlier access to final semester grades. You're a critical part of our growth and success. We look forward to your input through SETE.

Academic Integrity (Cheating)
Mayborn School of Journalism Academic Integrity Policy
The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school’s policy aligns with UNT Policy 18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

I have zero tolerance for cheating, and will not hesitate to file a report with the Office of Academic Integrity for any instance of suspected cheating including plagiarism, dual submission of work (work you submitted for another class) or falsifying research (including lying about personally interviewing sources or clients).

When you submit work for this class it is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety, specifically for this class and no other class. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people’s work and ideas are unacceptable and in most instances illegal. **All assignments and blogs in this class are to be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise specified. There are no exceptions. Anything not submitted via Turnitin will receive a grade of 0 (zero). Turnitin is also set to lock out late submissions.**

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people’s written words as your own, including copying from your client’s website or other published materials. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include complete citations when using other people’s writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It’s a firing offense in the professional world, and can keep you from graduating.

**For this class, copying from your client’s website and other materials is plagiarism.** While there are rare situations in which you must copy verbatim (organizational mission statements, for example), DO NOT ASSUME BECAUSE YOU HAVE THE CLIENT’S PERMISSION SUCH COPYING IS ACCEPTABLE FOR THIS CLASS. This is primarily a writing class, not a "copy, paste, attribute" class. If you are in doubt or have a question contact me immediately. It is better to ask for clarification than to find yourself dealing with an academic integrity issue that will go on your permanent academic record.

Quoting large chunks of text, even with attribution, in assignments or blog posts is unacceptable in an academic environment. This is a WRITING class and you are expected to provide critical analysis in your blog posts and other assignments, not copy, paste and attribute. Rewrite source material in your own words.

Submitting previously published work and/or work submitted for other classes (whether or not it was graded) is strictly prohibited by university policy. All work submitted for this class is to be original work created by you for this class only.

**Citation of online sources must follow the format from the Purdue Online Writing Lab, http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/ and must be complete. Raw links will not be accepted as citations or bibliography entries.**
Final Note
I come across as a tough old broad but it's because I'm trying to prepare you for the intensely competitive career you've chosen. I'm here to help you, and I care deeply about all my students. I have 23 years of professional PR experience and many professional contacts in the industry. Come see me in my office any time, about anything, and if I can help, I will. If you can't meet me in my office, I will meet with you at a mutually convenient time and location. My ultimate goal is to see you succeed in class, in life, and to inspire you to greatness.

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