

Social Media Journalism
J336F – Undergrads (#08925)
J395 – Grads (#09175)
Fall 2021

Class: Online

Professor: Dr. Gina Masullo

Office hours: 5 to 6 pm Tuesdays & 1 to 2 pm Wednesdays.

Conducted via. Zoom Sign up here: <https://calendly.com/gina-chen/fall-2021-office-hours>

Email: gina.masullo@austin.utexas.edu

Twitter: @ginammasullo

Cell: 228-229-2783 (Please tell me who you are. I respond to texts and emails rapidly, but not when I am asleep – 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.)

TEACHING ASSISTANTS FOR THIS CLASS

Below are the TAs for this class. You will be assigned a specific TA to work with, and you can contact that person if you need help. You will find out who your TA is when you log into Canvas. You also can always contact me.

Section	TA	Email	Office Hour
1	Tamar Wilner	Tamar.wilner@utexas.edu	1 to 2 p.m. Wed.
2	An Hu	anhu@utexas.edu	2 to 3 p.m. Mon.
3	Hyun Koo	gkoo@utexas.edu	11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tues.

Tentative Syllabus – Subject to Change

TEXTBOOK FOR THIS CLASS

Mobile and Social Media Journalism by Anthony Adornato.

It is available in the campus bookstore or Amazon.com (as low as \$23.14).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Using social media effectively is a core part of journalism today. In this course, students will learn the top tips and trends in the industry and practice what they learn through hands-on projects. This is an online course. Students will not be required to attend any in-person meetings. The class is set up in a way that allows for flexibility in schedule, though there are some things that must be done each week. Students may work ahead on much of the material in the course. The class is based on the following main components: Hands-on projects and learning modules based on social media topics with quizzes.

OBJECTIVES

Students who complete all of the work for this course will be ready to run the social media efforts for any organization. To that end, they will:

- Understand what separates a journalist on social networks from the millions of others who use social networking
- Gain intimate knowledge about the top social media platforms and how to use each one to engage audiences, drive traffic and market themselves and their organizations
- Know how to measure success for a social media campaign and build reports
- Learn how to cover breaking news using social media and crowdsourcing
- Build up their personal social media presence, making them more marketable to future employers

ASSIGNMENTS (See Canvas for specific details about assignments)

Major assignments (cumulatively 50% of total course grade)

You will have five hands-on projects:

1. Personal tweeting assignment
2. Running Socialnn Twitter account
3. Live tweeting assignment
4. Video story assignment
5. Social media plan assignment
6. **Graduate students have a 6th major assignment: 2-page essay.**

Minor assignments (cumulatively 30% of total course grade)

You will have four categories of minor assignments:

Live chats (6)

Essays (3)

Quizzes (3)

Twitter profile (1)

Midterm exam (20% of total course grade)

Open-book, open note midterm.

You can do it anytime on Canvas between Oct. 4 and Oct. 12, but once you start, you must be finished in 1 hour.

Midterm is due by 11:59 p.m. Oct. 12.

Grading Policies

A (94 to 100)

A- (90 to 93)

B+ (87 to 89)

B (83 to 86)

B- (80 to 82)

C+ (77 to 79)

C (73 to 76)

C- (70 to 72)

D (< 70)

F (< 60)

Late work = Half a letter grade dropped for each day work is late. (An A assignment becomes an A- assignment if it is 1 day late.) No work accepted more than three days late without extreme extenuating circumstances approved by me in advance. **Quizzes cannot be taken late.**

Failure to turn in work = Zero.

Rounding: I do not round grades up or down. The numeric score is the score you get. (So if your final grade is a 93.9, that will be an A-, not an A.)

Changing grades: I do not change grades unless I have made a mathematical error.

Class Schedule (Subject to change – see Canvas for assignment details.)

Module 1 Basics of Social Media for Journalists/Ethics Aug. 26 to Sept. 9	
This module will introduce you to how to use social media as a journalist and give you some ethical guidelines to follow.	
What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Sept. 9
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of how this class works.	Live chat #1 is 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 26 You attend through the Zoom link on Canvas If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
Follow all the Socialnn accounts	You can access all the accounts you need to follow here: http://bit.ly/2mknfWz
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 1, 2 and 7 in <i>Mobile and Social Media Journalism</i> • Read the information in the module. 	Quiz #1.
Module #2 Social Media – Creating Your Brand Sept. 10 to Sept. 16	
In this module, you will learn how to create a professional brand on social media platforms that will work if you run a social media account for a news organization, a private company, or a government entity.	
What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Sept. 16
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of how to create your brand.	Live chat #2 is 2:45 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 7. You attend through the Zoom link on Canvas. If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
Create a professional profile on your Twitter account (you can create a new one for this class or use your own.) Be sure to	Screen capture your profile for the profile assignment.

incorporate the concepts from this module	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 3 and 4 in <i>Mobile and Social Media Journalism</i> • Read information in the module. 	Quiz #2
Module #3 Hands on Social Media Sept. 17 to Oct. 1	
What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Oct. 1
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of the personal tweeting assignment.	Live chat #3 is 11:30 am Friday, Sept. 10 . You attend through Zoom on Canvas. If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 6 in <i>Mobile and Social Media Journalism</i> • Read information in the module 	Quiz #3
Tweeting from your personal account.	You must tweet AT LEAST three times a day for 10 days during this module. Save your tweets daily using Twitter Moments (directions on Canvas) and turn them in all together. All your tweets should include some form of engagement/interaction.
Essay about your personal tweeting experience.	You will write a short essay about what you learned about using Twitter as a journalist during your personal tweeting period. The essay is only 300 words, but it MUST include how many followers you gained and any other analytics that are helpful to show you made improvement.
Module #4 Midterm Exam Oct. 4 to Oct. 12	
The midterm exam is open-book and open-note. You can take it any time during the week, but once you start, you must be done in 1 hour. Questions will be drawn from the readings, the module information, and also requires critical-thinking about your experiences. Midterm is due by 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 12	
Module #5 Running Socialnn Twitter Oct. 13 to Oct. 29	
In this module you will run a Socialnn Twitter account for four hours. You will sign up for shifts, and demonstrate what you have learned so far about running social media accounts as a journalist.	

What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Oct. 29
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of running the Social NN Twitter account.	Live chat #4 is 2 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 13 . You attend through Zoom on Canvas. If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
Read the materials in the module.	
Sign up for your Socialnn Twitter account.	You sign up on Canvas for your time slots and the channels you want (politics, sports, entertainment, etc.)
Running your Socialnn accounts.	You will be creating and sharing content and engaging with other users during your shifts. You will save your tweets as Twitter Moments (directions on Canvas) each day and turn them all in together at the end. You should be tweeting at least 6 times an hour.
Essay about your experience running Socialnn accounts.	Turn in your essay You will write a short essay about what you learned about running the Socialnn Twitter account.
Module #6 Running other types of accounts Nov. 1 to Nov. 15	
In this module you will use other types of social media in a professional way, including Instagram and other platforms. You also will live-tweet an event.	
What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Nov. 15
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of how you should be completing the live video and Instagram assignments.	Live chat #5 is 7 p.m. Monday, Nov 1 . You attend through Zoom on Canvas. If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
Read the materials in the module.	
Live tweeting assignment	You find a “live” event and live tweet it.
Video story assignment	You do a video story related to news. You can use Facebook Live, Instagram, TikTok or whatever other platform you want.
Module #7 Developing a social media plan Nov. 16 to Dec. 6	
In this module you will create a social media plan for a real upcoming news event, incorporating all you have learned throughout the course.	
What is due?	When is it due? By 11:59 p.m. Dec. 6
Live chat with the whole class. This chat will give you an overview of how	Live chat #6 is noon Tuesday, Nov. 16 . You attend through Zoom on Canvas.

to create your social media plan.	If you cannot attend live, watch the video on Canvas ASAP. [You need take a screen capture and upload it to Canvas to show you “attended.”]
Read the materials in the module.	
Social Media plan assignment	You develop a plan for one of several real upcoming news events.[You don’t actually have to cover the event – just plan how you would cover it.]
Final essay	Turn in your essay about what you learned from this class

MORE INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

Trusted sources

When students are seeking information to post on social networks, they should try to post content from the original source when possible (not from an aggregator). Also, if there’s a sensational story from an untrustworthy or unknown source, students should see if they can verify the information from a trusted, known news source. For the purposes of this class, the instructor believes the students can trust the information coming from the following sources (not an exhaustive list):

Top tier

Austin-American Statesman
Texas Tribune
The New York Times
The Washington Post
The Associated Press
Reuters
The Guardian
The BBC
The Wall Street Journal
USA Today

Other trusted sources:

Daily metropolitan newspapers
Major network TV – CNN, ABC, Fox, MSNBC, CBS
Major market TV stations
Major national news magazines
Major news blogs, including Huffington Post, if properly sourced

Note – I’m not saying smaller blogs, alternative publications, etc. can’t be trusted, but if there’s a major breaking story, I’d feel more comfortable if one of the above had the story.

Additional Course Policies and Resources

Dropping this Course

Undergraduate students can drop this course through Oct. 28, 2021. You may use a Q drop to drop this course by meeting with your academic advisor. This Q drop will be recorded as non-academic and will not count against your six-drop limit.

Changing The Grading Status of This Course

If you wish to change this course to, or from, pass/fail, you may change up to two Letter-Graded courses to Pass/Fail or any Pass/Fail Course to Letter-Graded one time between until Oct. 28, 2021. Unless only offered on a Pass/Fail basis, a course taken under the Standard Pass/Fail option will generally only count toward elective hours and not toward Core, Flag, Minor, Certificate, or Major requirements. Students who are Moody majors must take ALL Moody courses for a Letter Grade in order for the course to count for a Moody degree (unless it's only offered on the Pass/Fail basis, or unless you use the COVID-19 Pass/Fail Exception, see below). You should check with your academic advisor before choosing to use this option.

Use of Canvas: I will use Canvas, a web-based course management system with password-protected access to distribute course materials, to make course announcements, to post grades, and for you to submit your assignments. You can get help learning to use Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/helpdesk/>.

Email: I will be using email to communicate with you about this class, and I will use your official UT email address. All students should become familiar with the University's official email notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed of changes to his or her email address. Students should check email regularly (daily). The email policy can be found here: <http://www.utexas.edu/cio/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>

Students with disabilities: The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Service for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-232-2937 (video phone.)

University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

University policy on holy days: A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy

day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete assigned work.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice line to discuss by phone your concerns about another person's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD): Call 512-232-5050 to visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal/>

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin: The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. You are particularly encouraged to use the Learning Skills Center on campus for help on writing assignments. Also, the PCL reference librarians can assist you with online news retrieval and other information finding tasks.

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Safety issues: <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/terms/>