



# J615: Social Media

Spring 2019

2:30-5 Tuesdays



Welcome to our newsroom/agency! The goal of this class is to give you hands-on training producing social media content for clients while learning effective strategies for creating successful content that will engage audiences, build your brand and benefit your employers.

In this class, you will learn how doing social media professionally vastly differs from using it personally and the level of skill needed to stand out, be credible and make a difference. By the end of the semester, you will have a solid portfolio of work examples to show future employers and a much better understanding of what it means to be a social media editor.

This course explores various social media tools to better understand the purpose of each platform and how to strategically communicate to targeted audiences within those platforms. Students will gain experience writing effectively across platforms and also learn strategies for audience engagement. The course will also address ethical and law considerations when communicating via social media.

### **By the end of the semester, you should be able to:**

- Create effective social media messaging
- Evaluate & determine successful social media strategies
- Analyze and interpret social media analytics to inform future messaging
- Implement and evaluate various audience engagement techniques

### **Your Instructor**

Dr. Finneman has worked as a reporter, multimedia correspondent and social media editor. She spent two years as social media editor for the Brookings Register, where she grew the Facebook following by 3,600, added 1,000 followers each to Instagram and Snapchat accounts started from scratch, and launched a community engagement event that attracts 200+ per year. She also worked with three local businesses to grow their social audiences.

Reach her: Slack. [teri.finneman@ku.edu](mailto:teri.finneman@ku.edu). MW: 1-3 p.m. S-F 209D. Twitter: @terifinneman

## Required reading/technology

- AP Stylebook.
- A smartphone with an adequate data plan to do work from the field.

Reading schedule:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mhWpYDPkdgEUuIa\\_tU1e\\_8ORMagtxCl4dnutSF\\_W\\_yk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mhWpYDPkdgEUuIa_tU1e_8ORMagtxCl4dnutSF_W_yk/edit?usp=sharing)

Calendar schedule:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1y0B95NXEzWsGXAYOG9qqi6TQz4p9HjElxZGUa-pgduo/edit?usp=sharing>

Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/231095784476278/>

Slack:

kusocialworkspace.slack.com

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## Coursework

Your grade will be determined by the following items:

BINGO Shifts and Reflections: 200 points  
Reading/Speaker Qs: 110 points  
Online trainings: 50 points  
In-Class Exercises (ICE): 90 points  
Social Critiques: 60 points  
Social Media Interview Report & Presentation: 50 points  
Audience Engagement: 50 points  
In-Class Analytics Review: 50 points  
Social Expert Lecture: 50 points  
Final: 40 points

Total: 750 points

## Grades

\*\*Any questions/complaints/etc. about grades must be made within one week of receiving the grade. After that, the grade is final.

\*\*You may earn 25 points of extra credit if you pick up two additional shifts during the semester. You must do two to qualify for any extra credit.

Your final grade for this class will be a letter grade. Here's the grading scale.

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 93 – 100 = A | 90 – 92 = A-    |
| 87 – 89 = B+ | 83 – 86 = B     |
| 80 – 82 = B- | 77 – 79 = C+    |
| 73 – 76 = C  | 70 – 72 = C-    |
| 67 – 69 = D+ | 63 – 66 = D     |
| 60 – 62 = D- | 59 or below = F |

## Accuracy Rubric

Fact/accuracy errors: (e.g. wrong city, person, or address; misuse of facts or other important fact; attributing wrong person to information or quotes, either direct or indirect).

15 percent in a Bingo assignment  
10 percent in a class assignment

Misspelled name of person or city or organization, etc.:

30 percent in a Bingo assignment  
15 percent in a class assignment

Misspelled words:

15 percent in a Bingo assignment  
3 percent each in a class assignment

AP Style, grammar and punctuation errors: (also quotation style errors)

5 percent each in a Bingo assignment  
3 percent each in a class assignment

## How to succeed in the course:

- Attend class and ask questions. This course is training you to be a professional and involves working for clients. Therefore, it is the equivalent of reporting to work. You are permitted one unexcused absence of any kind. After one, you will receive a 5-percent grade deduction to your final grade *per class missed* at the end of the semester. If you are absent, you may not make up what you missed and must ask a classmate for notes. Excused exceptions include a doctor's note, funeral program or authorized university activity.

- Take notes in class. Consult these notes as you do your assignments.
- Attend your instructors' office hours to get help.
- Dress professionally while out on assignment.
- Turn in assignments on time. Assignments are due by 2:30 p.m. sharp Tuesdays. Late work (starting at 2:31 p.m.) will not be accepted. Deadlines in this field are strict for a reason. Time is money.
- Turn in original work. Journalism Team students cannot use others' photography, interviews, video footage, etc. Strat Comm Team students must consult the instructor before doing so. If you have questions, please ask your instructor.
- If you post anything to the social media accounts of the client(s) that would result in a reprimand or firing in the workplace OR if you share passwords of client accounts with others outside of this classroom, the minimum penalty is a two-letter grade deduction to your final course grade. The professor reserves the right to fail you for the entire course.
- Students who have spelling or fact errors in their social posts must submit a correction within 48 hours of notification that describes what the error was and how you will avoid a similar error in the future. Each spelling error = 15% deduction against your grade. Each fact error = 25%. If a correction isn't turned in, your grade will receive another 10% penalty.

## **Course Schedule**

Below is a breakdown of the course schedule, which is subject to change:

### **Week 1: Course Introduction**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Jan. 22

Class Introduction/Social Profiles/Jobs in Social Media/Media Interview  
Assignment & Qs List/Online Training Assignment/Client  
Preview/Questions

### **Week 2: Facebook/Clients**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Jan. 29: Reading/Speaker Qs due/Social Critique Due

Meet the Clients/Facebook/Client Insights/ICE1/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 3: Facebook Live/Instagram/Photography**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb. 5: Social Critique Due/Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Facebook Live/Banjo/Instagram/ICE2/ICE3/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 4: Stories & Influencers**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb. 12: Reading/Speaker Qs due/Social Critique Due  
Influencers/Stories/ICE4/ICE5 Newsroom Planning

### **Week 5: Social Video & Graphics**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb. 19: Reading/Speaker Qs due/Social Critique Due/Online  
Trainings Due  
Working for Facebook/Social Video/Graphics/ICE6/ICE7/Newsroom  
Planning

### **Week 6: Social Advertising/Money**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb. 26: Reading/Speaker Qs due/Social Critique Due  
Social Media Interview Reports & Presentations Due/Making  
Money/Instagram Ads Bootcamp/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 7: Audience Engagement Techniques**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 5: Reading/Speaker Qs due/Social Critique Due  
Audience Engagement/ICE8/ICE9/Planning: Engagement  
Pitch/Newsroom

### **Week 8: Spring Break**

### **Week 9: Community Engagement**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 19: Engagement Pitch Due  
Community Engagement Activity/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 10: Branding/Advertising & Crisis Comm**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 26: Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Branding, Advertising & Crisis Comm/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 11: Software**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, April 2: Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Social News Desk/Meltwater/Hootsuite/Gifs/Newsroom Planning

### **Week 12: Twitter/Podcasts**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, April 9: Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Twitter/Tweetdeck/ICE8/Newsroom Planning/Podcasts

### **Week 13: Research, Analytics & Verification**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, April 16: Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Analytics Review Assignment Completed In Class

### **Week 14: Audience Engagement II**

Readings: NO readings this week

Tuesday, April 23  
Audience Engagement Presentations/Newsroom Planning/Choose Social  
Expert Topics

**Week 15: Entrepreneurship & Expertise**

Readings: See READING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, April 30: Reading/Speaker Qs due  
Starting a Social Business/Social Expert Presentations

**Week 16: Other Social Tools**

Readings: NO readings this week

Tuesday, May 7  
Social Expert Presentations/Final

# Assignment Instructions

*BINGO Shifts & Reflections: 200 points (throughout semester)*

| <b>B</b>  | <b>I</b>                     | <b>N</b>   | <b>G</b>   | <b>O</b>                      |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Facebook posts shift (3 photos/images/videos)<br><br>20 pts | Social Video<br><br>20 pts   | Instagram photo gallery (4-6 pics)<br><br>20 pts | Facebook photo gallery (6-10 pics)<br><br>20 pts | Instagram story<br><br>20 pts |
| Facebook posts shift (3 photos/images/videos)<br><br>20 pts | Social Graphic<br><br>20 pts | Instagram photo gallery (4-6 pics)<br><br>20 pts | Wild Card: Your Choice<br><br>20 pts             | Instagram story<br><br>20 pts |



Reflection papers must be turned in the class period immediately after a shift in order to get your bingo stamp. In this 1/2-page to 1-page paper (double-spaced), you must reflect on what you think you did well during the shift and

what you want to improve upon for the future. Note any difficulties you had during the shift, if applicable.

Strat Comm students must include reference information for fact checking, if applicable.



Unless otherwise directed, all material is posted first in the class Facebook group for review before going out over the client pages.

## B

**Facebook Posts Shift:** The requirements of this shift will depend on what you pitch and will be negotiated during newsroom time. Overall, one shift is completed once three pieces of content are created for Facebook. These could be three unrelated posts over time (i.e. Journalism: a picture from a basketball game, a video from a concert, a picture from a festival; Strat Comm: a promo for a League event, a suffragist graphic, an oral history video) or one mini gallery (i.e. Journalism: three pics from a basketball game; Strat Comm: three suffragist graphics). This will depend on client needs/team strategy/your personal goals discussed during the semester. Regardless, each piece of content must have its own cutline and – if a mini gallery – also an overview cutline.

For journalism students, all content is due in the FB group within four hours of the event/shoot end or the content will not be considered for publication and grade will be reduced by 5% for each hour of further delay. This applies to Strat Comm if covering a live League event.

## I

**Social Video:** Create a 30- to 90-second video.

**Social Graphic:** Create one social graphic.

## N & G

**Photo Galleries:** Each photo must have its own cutline in addition to the gallery overview cutline. For journalism students, all content is due in the FB group within four hours of the event/shoot end or the content will not be considered for publication and grade will be reduced by 5% for each hour of further delay. This applies to Strat Comm if covering a live League event.

**Wild Card:** You can decide the platform. A Facebook Live is another possibility.

# O

**Instagram Story:** Story should consist of at least 6 frames of content.

For journalism students, all content is due in the FB group within four hours of the event/shoot end or the content will not be considered for publication and grade will be reduced by 5% for each hour of further delay. This applies to Strat Comm if covering a live League event.

## *Reading/Speaker Qs: 110 points (Weekly Tuesdays)*

You will turn in two discussion questions each week related to the readings and/or guest speakers. These may be handwritten or typed but must be turned in via hard copy to receive credit. Make sure your name is on them.

## *Online Training Assignment: 50 points (Feb. 19)*

Once you leave this class, it's upon you to take the initiative to keep updated on social media practices and trends. This assignment aims to get you started. You must complete five online trainings this semester. Places to find these include Facebook Blueprint, Hootsuite Academy, The Science of Social Media podcast and the Social Pros podcast. You may propose other alternatives for approval. After completing a training, you will write a half-page to full-page (double-spaced) paper discussing what you learned from the training. You need to complete all five trainings and hand in five reflections by Feb. 19.

## *In-Class Exercises (ICE): 90 points*

We will do several in-class assignments, such as writing social headlines and posts for exercises.

## *Social Critiques: 60 points (Weekly Tuesdays)*

You will turn in a ½ page (double-spaced) typed social critique via hard copy. You may do this from a news or strat comm perspective.

For this assignment, you will analyze how a company or news organization is using social media, or you may look at the social platforms of an individual reporter or spokesperson, CEO, etc. You are encouraged to mix up what you focus on each week.

Your analysis should include:

- What is the company/organization? What social platform did you analyze?
- What strategies do they use in their posts that you find effective?
- Are there any strategies they use that you don't think are effective, and why?
- How often do they post?
- What kind of engagement are they getting, i.e. reader comments, likes, etc? (not applicable with Snapchat)
- Anything else you may want to mention.

### *Social Media Interview & Report: 50 points (Feb. 26)*

You will conduct an interview in person or via phone (NOT EMAIL) with a media professional whose job involves overseeing social media.

We will work as a class to come up with a list of interview questions. Your final report should be a minimum of three pages double-spaced and include who your source was, where the source works, source title, source phone number and a summary of what your source said. You should conclude the report by reflecting on what information was most interesting/relevant to you to learn. You will create a 5-minute presentation (5 slides, max) to give in class with highlights from your interview.

NOTE: Media people are busy. Do not wait until days before to try to line up an interview with someone. The deadline for this assignment – like all others — is firm, and late assignments will not be accepted. Respect others' time by setting up an interview well before the assignment is due to ensure you can fit into your source's schedule and potentially re-fit if the source has to cancel and reschedule due to a pressing work assignment/deadline.

### *Audience Engagement Plan/Presentation: 50 points (March 19 (Pitch) / April 23 (Plan & Presentation))*

Community/audience engagement has been a dominant focus in recent years to the point there are now specific job openings for this type of work.

Your task is to create a community engagement plan for your client to consider implementing. This plan must be **extremely detailed** so that the client is able to follow step-by-step how to implement your proposal. The pitch plan should be a minimum of three pages double-spaced. You may do an individual project or work in a team of two. The project must somehow involve engaging the community and social media.

Consider questions such as:

- How can journalists/strategic communicators invite the community to help shape their agenda?
- How can journalists/strat commers take their content and ideas directly to the people who most need it, meeting them where they are?
- How can social tools help with creating better journalism/strat comm and improve relationships with communities?
- How can journalists/strat commers know if they're serving the needs of their community?
- What community expertise could help inform journalistic coverage/marketing? How could collaboration with people make journalistic processes and products better, online and in person? What content could community members be invited to contribute?
- What other people and organizations share similar information goals, and how could journalists/strat commers work together with them?

Remember, "community" can mean community of interest, affinity, geography, etc.

You must turn in a topic for approval before beginning. This topic is due no later than March 19. Two hard copies of your plan are due by April 23 as well as a class presentation. You must give a 10-minute presentation as to what your topic is, a brief overview as to how it would be implemented and why you think it's beneficial for the client to do it.

### *Analytics Review: 50 points (April 16)*

This will be completed in class.

### *Social Expert Lecture: 50 points (April 19)*

Each student will be responsible for a “deep-dive” report to the class on a social tool or topic not covered in the class. Possibilities include Pinterest, Tumblr, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, etc. Students must sign up for a tool so there are not duplications in reports. Students will prepare a one- to two-page handout for the entire class that covers: 1.) An explanation of what the tool is, its target audience (demographic) and how success/metrics is measured. 2.) Summaries of what others (i.e. Nieman Reports, Poynter, Pew, DigiDay, MediaShift) have to say about the tool 3.) Your opinion on how (or not) this tool would be effective for newsrooms, public relations or advertising companies 4.) Tips on how to effectively use the tool.

A 10-minute class presentation is also required to showcase your tool and how it works. You must also turn in a references sheet.

### *Final Portfolio/Learned Paper (May 7)*

You will assemble your content into a final portfolio to present to the class and write a two-page paper (double spaced) about what you learned this semester, how you think you improved and what more you want to improve on going forward. Hard copy.

## **Policies and Procedures**

**Disabilities:** The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at <http://www.disability.ku.edu/~disability/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone numbers are: 785-864-2620. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

Course materials and lectures are property of the instructor or School of Journalism. You must obtain permission to record lectures electronically or use course materials outside this course.

In the event of inclement weather, KU officials make the decision to cancel classes. Call 785-864-SNOW (7669) to find out if classes have been canceled.

**Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance:**

"No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester. Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent. The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

**The KU Office of Student Financial Aid** is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid. Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communication does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else's ideas, thoughts or words and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person's ideas, opinions and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due.

"Recycling" past assignments from other students and presenting them as your own falls into the category of plagiarism.

Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire story/source or embellishing a fact, quote or statistic to make it sound better. Don't do it. In this course, the penalty for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification is a failing grade for the semester. Additional penalties can include expulsion from the School of Journalism. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please contact me.

You signed a contract of understanding during the j-school orientation that says you know what plagiarism is and its consequences in this school. Don't be the student who has to call home and tell your parents you've been expelled.

**Diversity**

Think about the relationship between media and audiences and learn how to meet the needs of diverse audiences. In this class, it is important that you feel comfortable expressing ideas and opinions. We welcome and encourage you to share differing perspectives and diverse experiences and to be respectful of others whose viewpoints and experiences may not be the same as your own.

**Commercial Note Taking**

Pursuant to the University of Kansas' [Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures](#), commercial note-taking is not permitted in [*insert course name and number*]. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. **Please note:** note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is not the same as commercial note-taking and is not covered under this policy.