Syllabi   Course Syllabi

Fall 9-1-2018

JRNL 332.01: Social Media and Audience

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JRNL 332: Social Media and Audience

Scope

This course is about teaching students to appreciate audiences. To be able to identify specific groups and users of information, research their digital and social media use and craft content for social media platforms tailored to reach and engage those audiences. Students will learn the basics of audience research and learn best practices for the major social media platforms.

Grading options

This course may be taken for a traditional letter-grade and may not be taken credit/no-credit. The Montana University System's plus/minus grading system will be used in this class.

Class Meetings

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-4:50 p.m., in DAH 306.

Instructor Info

Lee Banville, Professor, School of Journalism.
Office: Don Anderson Hall 406
Office hours: Mondays 9:30-11:00 a.m. and Thursdays 9:30-11:00 a.m. I'm also available at other times by appointment.
Office phone: 243-2577.
My regular e-mail: lee.banville@umontana.edu.

Required Textbook

There will be reading and quizzes based on those readings, but the readings will be posted on Moodle and distributed in class. There is no required textbook for this class.

Successful JRNL 391 students will:

- Understand the concept of audience engagement and its different uses within a newsroom or any organization.
- Have a basic understanding of active and passive audience research, how to conduct small-scale surveys and focus groups and working knowledge of online analytics.
- Produce content and analyze impact of different kinds of Facebook posts.
- Produce content and assess reach of Twitter posts.
- Produce content for other major social media platforms like Instagram, LinkedIn, SnapChat and Pinterest.

Course Grading
       10% Attendance and Participation
       10% Completion of Google Analytics training
       15% Survey/Focus Group work
       20% Analysis, presentation and content for Facebook
       15% Platform Presentation
       30% Content for social networks

Attendance and participation

Come to class and stay for the entire class period. Three unexcused will result in the lowering of your final grade a full letter grade. Excused absences must be cleared with me ahead of time. A couple of times this semester we may have meetings that fall outside of class time and there may be classes where you will not be expected to attend. If you are unsure of whether your attendance is mandatory, please email me.

Cell phones must be off or on vibrate while you are in class. Desktop computers should only be used for coursework. Anyone whose phone rings during class will be made fun of by me.

Academic Honesty

I expect your honesty in presenting your own work for this course. Academic misconduct at The University of Montana is subject to an academic penalty ranging from failing the assignment to expulsion from the university. Students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.
http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321

Plagiarism

As defined by "The University of Montana Student Conduct Code" plagiarism is: "Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own." This is strictly prohibited in this class and any case of plagiarism in this course will be subject to the penalties outlines in the student code of conduct.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability from Disability Services. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at http://life.umt.edu/dss.

Basic course structure:

1 Week on Audience Engagement goals and understanding
3 Weeks on Audience Research (web research, focus groups, Google Analytics)
2 ½ Weeks on Twitter content and analytics
2 Weeks on Instagram content
3 Weeks on Facebook content and analytics
1 ½ Weeks on SnapChat content
2 Weeks on LinkedIn? Pinterest?

Section I: Audience Engagement as a Goal

It is, as you will find out, a bit of a buzz word. Something that many people want and you can market, but not everyone agrees what it entails and how to do it well. This first week, we will examine the concept, how it is being done and why it is important.

For Wednesday, read this PDF of "The best ways to build audience and relevance by listening to and engaging your community."

Also, read this brief blog post about "Define the Jargon: Audience Engagement"

Assignment: Choose a platform and a news organization or journalist and explore the content and come up for Monday a one-page description of who you think their audience is.

Section II: Audience Research

We will explore how to target and research audiences through the use of active research (surveys, panels and focus groups) and passive monitoring (Comments, Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, etc.)

During this section, you will examine user surveys and analysis of those surveys, construct and conduct a focus group for the School of Journalism and/or other partners and become conversant in the use of major digital and social media analytics.

To begin this section, you will read the chapter of Media Audience Research posted on Moodle as well as the chapter of Jeff Jarvis's book Geeks Bearing Gifts on Metrics (also on Moodle).

Assignment: Develop an online survey for the target groups (j school, etc). Organize and host a focus group for that same group.

Section III: The Social Platforms

As stated in the outline of the class, the bulk of this course will work on creating better content for the primary social media platforms out there. This means we will tackle Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, Pinterest and LinkedIn. For each platform, we will break up our time to understand how users use these places, how best to create engaging content for those audiences and what analytic tools are available to assess the engagement.

Assignments: Facebook page design, content plan and potential posting.

Twitter profile, content and analytics assessment.

Instagram content and plan.

SnapChat assessment of news outlet, filter design.

LinkedIn/Pinterest content.

Additional Resources:

What is engagement?

http://niemanreports.org/articles/engaging-communities-content-and-conversation/

http://niemanreports.org/articles/how-participatory-journalism-turns-news-consumers-into-collaborators/

http://www.niemanlab.org/2016/05/actually-use-the-material-users-give-you-and-other-ways-to-improve-audience-enagement/

Storytelling

https://medium.com/story-design-for-nonfiction/storytelling-design-thinking-ed914117f7c1