

2016

JOMC: 491/891: Special Topic: News Engagement Lab—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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Hassler, Michelle Carr, "JOMC: 491/891: Special Topic: News Engagement Lab—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio" (2016). *UNL Faculty Course Portfolios*. 17.
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Peer Review of Teaching 2015-2016
JOMC 491/891 Special Topic: News Engagement Lab

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Abstract

This benchmark portfolio analyzes a collaborative elective course offered by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications in partnership with NET News, the state's public media organization. The Spring 2016 course offered students hands-on experience creating, implementing and assessing social media content and engagement strategies for NET News. This portfolio showcases the innovative nature of the course while also demonstrating its pedagogical underpinnings. The portfolio provides a broad overview, including course goals and how activities and assignments are aligned with them. Using several assessment strategies, the inquiry focused on the course's final project, in which students were required to synthesize course concepts and material to develop viable engagement ideas for two NET News projects: a documentary on sex trafficking and coverage of the November 2016 death penalty referendum. In collaboration with UNL's Office of University Communications, students also were given access to NUVI, a sophisticated social monitoring tool that helped them study prospective audiences. Digital audience engagement is a relatively new concept in the news industry and journalism education, but is gaining importance. The assessment strategies documented in this portfolio may be helpful for journalism educators who are interested in developing similar experiential learning courses in the "teaching hospital" method but desire an effective assessment framework. The portfolio also might serve as a model for journalism educators who want to incorporate audience engagement concepts and practices in new or existing journalism courses to keep up with industry trends and prepare students for new jobs.

Keywords: Journalism education, news engagement, audience engagement, analytics, public media

Objectives of Peer Review Course Portfolio

The intent of this benchmark portfolio is to provide a broad overview of the course, including course goals, aligning activities with those goals and creating meaningful assessment strategies. I developed this portfolio to help me showcase the innovative nature of this special topics course while also demonstrating its pedagogical underpinnings. I was particularly interested in documenting and assessing the final project, in which students were required to synthesize the course concepts and material to develop viable engagement ideas for a news media outlet.

The assessment strategies documented in this portfolio may be helpful for journalism educators who are interested in developing similar experiential learning courses in the “teaching hospital” method but desire an effective assessment framework. Teaching hospital courses prepare students to cover news with the help of top news professionals. “This better connects journalism schools with the rest of the university, encourages deep subject knowledge and involves the teaching of digital innovation and development of open collaborative work models” (Newton, et al). While this particular course did not involve news coverage, it did focus on digital innovation and collaborative work through the creation of social media content and engagement strategies for use by a news entity.

This portfolio also might serve as a model for journalism educators who are interested in incorporating audience engagement concepts and practices in new or existing journalism courses to keep up with industry trends and prepare students for new jobs. Students who understand engagement principles and techniques are increasingly in demand in the news industry. “To help navigate their relationship with digital audiences, news outlets across the country are hiring engagement editors – jobs that are critical as the number of publishing platforms expands, the ability for users to interact with journalists and media outlets increases, and the metrics used to measure content popularity become more sophisticated” (Powers).

Description of Course

This course – JOMC 491/891: Special Topic: News Engagement Lab – is a newly created elective that offers students hands-on experience creating, implementing and assessing social media content and engagement strategies for a professional news partner, NET News. In the syllabus ([Appendix A](#)), I described the course as a place where students will experiment to find the best ways to engage today’s distracted audience and help them find the important news they need to know. Students study the engagement practices of news organizations and learn how to use both social media and traditional methods to engage a variety of audiences.

Course goals

My overarching goal was to encourage students to be creative, innovative and fearless in taking risks with their ideas and strategies. I called the course a “lab” because I wanted it to be a place where students could experiment and think creatively about the challenges facing digital news outlets. While the course’s collaborative partner, NET News, has the final say on what content might be used and what strategies might be implemented, staff there were extremely willing and enthusiastic to be part of the experiment.

Another goal was to provide students with valuable insight into how professionals handle the process of gathering and producing news. Through the interactions with NET staff, students were able to gain an understanding of the constraints and challenges newsrooms face in today’s digital world.

Overall, I wanted students to have the understanding, knowledge and background so they could develop, create and oversee effective and measurable engagement strategies for news outlets.

The specific learning objectives included:

1. Research and analyze audiences – including niche and diverse audiences – to determine the best way to engage them;
2. Understand and practice how to use social media for engagement;
3. Study how news organizations and others use engagement strategies to successfully engage audiences;
4. Study and practice how to use a variety of analytical tools to analyze engagement strategies to determine effectiveness;
5. Study and practice creative and design thinking processes;
6. Practice how to clearly communicate ideas and persuade others to adopt them;

Enrollment/demographics

The course included 13 undergraduates and one graduate student from the college’s three majors – advertising/public relations, journalism and broadcasting. I made the course open to all three majors because I wanted to include students with a variety of backgrounds and skills. The advertising/public relations students are likely to have more experience and knowledge in creative and design thinking, audience analysis and analytics, while the broadcasting and journalism students will have been exposed to news concepts and development and using social media for news engagement.

My hope was that the mix of students would create a classroom environment in which students can be inspired by and learn from each other. Today’s journalism and broadcasting majors need

to understand how to analyze their audiences and develop creative ways to engage them. They can learn a great deal about marketing and promotion concepts from their peers in advertising and public relations. In turn, today's advertising and public relations majors can gain valuable insight by engaging a group (news consumers) that they might rarely work with.

Instructional Practices

Teaching methods

Class time – 75 minutes twice a week – was largely split between lectures, in-class exercises and activities and independent group work.

Group work was heavily emphasized because of the nature of the assignments and the course work. Students completed four major assignments as part of groups. I created the four groups – two with three members and two with four members – based on student answers to the following skills and personality assessment (*Figure 1*).

Answer Choices	Responses
Visual thinker; good at design or photography or video or all three.	7.14% 1
Good at writing, researching, reporting and synthesizing information.	28.57% 4
Comfortable interacting with people and understanding their needs; empathetic.	28.57% 4
Verbal; outgoing; good at presenting, explaining and talking to groups.	14.29% 2
Analytical, especially with concepts and/or numbers; detailed-oriented; organized.	7.14% 1
Strategic and creative thinker; good at seeing big picture and leading others to it.	14.29% 2
Total	14

Figure 1: This skills and personality assessment was used to create groups.

My goal was to have each group comprise students with a variety of skill sets. The four students who self-selected as writers/researchers and the four who said they were empathetic and good interacting with people formed the basis for each of the four groups. From there, I tried to create groups with a balanced assortment of skills by spreading out the students who identified with the remaining skills. For example, the two identified strategic thinkers were placed in two different groups. I also tried to create a good mix of majors, where possible.

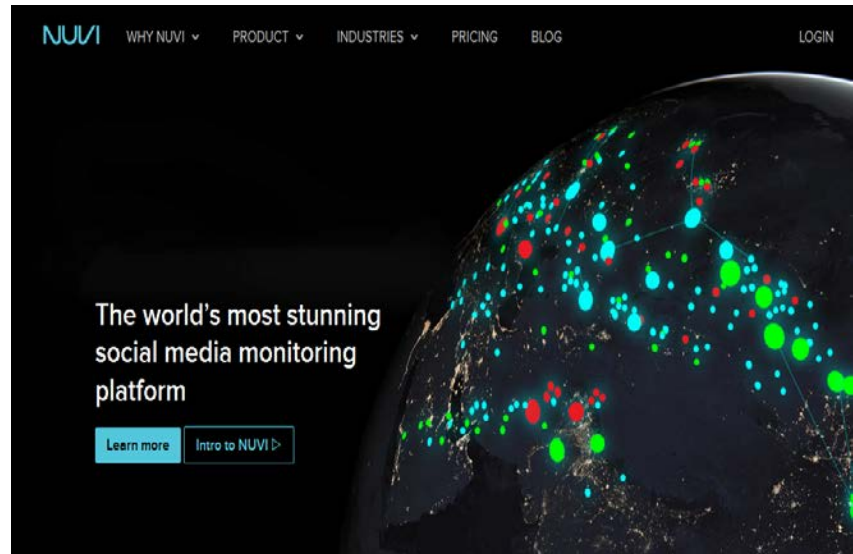
Because of the heavy emphasis on group work, I tried to offer as much class time as possible for the groups to interact, discuss and actually work on their assignments. Since this course was called a “lab,” I tried to keep traditional lectures to a minimum and focus on in-class activities that could enhance the learning of the concepts.

Course materials

Students were required to complete weekly readings from a list that included online articles, videos and selected chapters from [Engaged Journalism: Connecting with Digitally Empowered News Audiences](#), written by Jake Batsell. The book, published in February 2015, examines the changing relationship between news producers and audiences and the methods journalists can use to gain the attention of news consumers.

In addition, I suggested that they follow the NPR Social Media Desk [blog](#) on Tumblr, where NPR engagement editors discuss their efforts to engage a public radio audience. I also suggested they sign up for an [email newsletter](#) written by Melody Joy Kramer, a former social media editor at NPR. Both resources provided helpful ideas that were relevant to public media news organizations.

In collaboration with the UNL Office of Communications, students also were given access to and training for [NUVI](#), a social media listening tool. They created monitors for two separate assignments and were able to develop reports and insights based on their search queries. Tyler Thomas, UNL's social media coordinator, provided a valuable training session, which helped the student identify keywords and search strategies.



All course assignments were posted on Blackboard. Materials also were shared in a shared Google folder.

In-class activities

Each class period focused on the corresponding course topic and often included a brief lecture and class discussion. I used lectures to reinforce points made in the reading or to introduce other perspectives. Class discussions primarily centered on the readings for the week.

Once specific assignments were introduced, class periods often shifted into more informal work sessions. I would often take turns sitting in on each group's discussions and was available for consultation during these sessions.

The course also featured the following four guest speakers:

- Dennis Kellogg, NET news director, and Mike Tobias, senior reporter/producer, who discussed their use of social media and upcoming news projects that the class would be working on.
- Eric Martin, NET social media strategist, who talked about strategy as well as giving feedback on student content submissions.
- Tyler Thomas, UNL social media specialist, who provided training for students in using the NUVI monitoring software.

Out-of-class activities

The course featured six major out-of-class assignments that I designed to help students achieve one or more of the learning objectives. Two of the assignments were graded individually; the other four were group assignments with two graded. *Figure 2* shows a matrix of the learning objectives with the assignments.

	Reflections (graded)	Content creation (graded)	Audience Listening (group/not graded)	Homeless Engagement (group/graded)	A/B Testing (group/not graded)	Blue Sky (group/graded)
#1 Research and analyze audiences to determine the best way to engage them.	X		X	X		X
#2 Understand and practice how to use social media for engagement	X	X		X	X	X
#3 Study and practice how to use a variety of analytical tools to analyze engagement strategies to determine effectiveness			X		X	X
#4 Study how news organizations and others use engagement strategies to successfully engage audiences	X			X	X	X
#5 Study and practice creative and design thinking processes						X
#6 Practice how to clearly communicate ideas and persuade others to adopt them.	X	X	X	X		X

Figure 2: How out-of-class assignments met course objectives.

Reading reflections. Students were periodically required to write reading reflections about specific reading assignments. In those seven reflections, they were expected to demonstrate that they read the readings and could reflect critically about the material. In addition, they were instructed to “show that you can analyze the material, based on your own experiences, class discussions and knowledge you’ve gain from the readings. You should be making connections between the readings, class lectures and discussions and your own experience.” The reflections were designed to help students achieve Course Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. They were graded based on a rubric shared with students. (See [Appendix B](#) for assignment and rubric.)

Social content creation assignment. This assignment was designed to help students address Course Objectives 2 and 6. The purpose of this assignment was to reinforce the lectures and class discussions about creating engaging social content and to give students practice writing social posts. NET staff provided links to seven archived stories for which they were interested in having social posts created. Each student was assigned to write two posts – one for

NET's Twitter account and one for its Facebook page. Students were given a chance to rewrite the posts after I provided feedback. This was a graded assignment based on a rubric shared with students. (See [Appendix C](#) for rubric and examples of student work.)

Group assignments. Many of these were interrelated and were assigned in stages so that once the group completed one task, it would move on to the next.

- **Audience listening assignment.** This was the precursor to the Homeless Engagement Assignment and was designed to also help students address Course Objectives 1 and 3. Secondly, the assignment offered a way for them to get acquainted with using NUVI software and helped them identify keywords they could use to monitor social media conversations. As part of the assignment, I asked students to turn in a list of possible keywords so I could give them feedback before they continued on to the next steps. This assignment ([Appendix D](#)) was not graded.
- **Homeless engagement assignment.** The purpose of this assignment was to create social posts that NET could use to engage local and/or national influencers for its [series](#) on homelessness in Nebraska (*Figure 3*). Each group had a specific topic to research and create content for. I decided to add this assignment because it seemed like a great entrée for the final blue sky project and met Course Objectives 1, 2, 4 and 6. This assignment ([Appendix E](#)) was graded based on a rubric shared with students.
- **Social media testing assignment.** The purpose of this assignment was to introduce students to analytics and help them practice social media post writing with a focus on audience. Students developed a hypothesis to test, then selected a story to promote and crafted the social posts to test the hypothesis. After several days, students looked at the each platforms' analytics to determine the number of link clicks and the engagement rate to see if their hypotheses were borne out. This assignment was not graded. (See [Appendix F](#) for an example of student work).
- **Blue sky project.** This was the crucial assignment for the course and one that required students to synthesize the semester's readings, discussions, activities and lectures in order to develop viable engagement strategies for two NET long-range news projects. Students were introduced to the idea for the project at the beginning of the semester, but the project was assigned in stages and accompanied by several in-class activities to help keep them stay on task, refine their ideas and work as a group. Most of the assignments within this project were graded. (This project is discussed in fuller detail in [Analysis of Student Learning](#).)



Figure 3: Students created social posts for NET to use in promoting this special news project. Click on the photo to see the project online.

Rationale for teaching methods

The innovative nature of the course work and the course schedule dictated in many ways how the course was taught.

Meeting the goal of creating engagement viable ideas and strategies for NET necessitated the emphasis on group work. Having 14 students create their own engagement ideas and strategies for the homeless series and the blue sky projects would have been overwhelming and impractical for NET; it made much more sense to have students work in groups to propose four strategies for each project. The same was true for the A/B testing project. In order to test social media posts in a specific frame – in this case, two weeks – it was necessary to limit the number of posts by having four groups develop 24 separate posts instead of having 14 students create 84 separate posts.

NET's schedule had to be factored in as well. Once I learned about NET's proposed series on the homeless, which was set to begin in February, I rearranged my preliminary schedule so that students could work on audience engagement ideas and social posts for the project. I would have preferred to have placed such a sophisticated assignment later in the semester after the material had been completely introduced and discussed and after students had plenty of practice writing social posts. But I accelerated the schedule because I felt having students get the practical experience working on the homeless series was a good trade off and helped them prepare for the final blue sky project.

The Course and the Broader Curriculum

Digital audience engagement is a relatively new concept in the news industry and journalism education. In the recent past, journalists rarely thought much about their stories after publication, but in today's changing digital landscape, what happens after publication is just as important – if not more. Many news industry leaders are beginning to realize that building deeper relationships with audiences is key to building financial sustainability. Suddenly journalists and editors are being tasked with understanding the intricacies of social media distribution and analytics.

To my knowledge, only a few journalism courses devote an entire semester to the study of news engagement. And even fewer do so by partnering with a professional news entity.

The inspiration for this innovative course came from two places. The first was my desire to improve upon an elective I'd been teaching for the previous two semesters. Social Media for Journalists was a 491/891 special topics elective I was asked to create at the request of the college's graduate chair. Several graduate students had expressed an interest in a journalism-specific social media course. The course also filled another need – for undergraduate journalism and broadcasting majors who wanted more focused instruction and knowledge about social media. The course proved to be a popular elective, attracting 20 or more students each semester. After teaching the course twice, I began to think about ways I could make it more hands-on and experiential with a real-world component.

During this time, I attended a [national conference](#) in the summer of 2015 about local news engagement. From discussions I heard there I was inspired to create a news engagement course that partnered with local public media. NET officials were eager as well to venture into the experiment.

This course ties in well with the college's traditions and strategic plan. One of the college's teaching traditions is to offer students opportunities to create content for real-life audiences; we do so with our live TV news show; our news websites; our statewide news service; and our student-run advertising agency.

According to the college's strategic plan, one of the college's primary commitments is “top-quality teaching and learning opportunities for all students with an emphasis on what Eric Newton of the Knight Foundation has called ‘the teaching hospital model,’ rigorous assessment and integrated, experiential learning in diverse disciplines.” This course epitomized integrated and experiential learning as students collaborated with news professionals to provide content and strategies.

This course also corresponds with the college's Number 1 priority in the strategic plan: “Create an Interactive Digital and Social Media Hub that will focus on innovative, cutting-edge curriculum, providing students with the skills necessary for future careers.”

As mentioned earlier, the concept of digital news engagement in the news industry and journalism education is gaining importance. Engagement editors now are in great demand across U.S. news rooms. “‘Audience engagement editor’ is a job that didn't exist until a few years ago. But now those with the title wield heavy influence in the industry, shaping both how journalists cover events and how readers consume news” (Murtha).

Another way this course benefits the larger college curriculum is its inclusivity. Because this course is open to all three majors in the college, I think it helps foster the elimination of the longstanding silos that often develop in journalism colleges. I wanted to create a course that benefited from a cross-pollination of the college's disciplines.

Analysis of Student Learning

Blue sky project

Since many of the assignments were designed to build up to and culminate in the final blue sky project, I was most interested in analyzing the student learning relevant to that project.

The blue sky project was so named because I encouraged students to not be limited by conventional notions of what is practical or feasible. I told them that blue sky projects often are considered imaginative or visionary. I wanted them to come up with ideas unfettered by notions of what the news outlet partner might find feasible. Later in the project, I would work with students to refine their ideas to better fit the news organization's goals and expectations, but at the start of the process, I wanted them to freely propose and discuss all types of ideas.

Students were specifically asked to develop engagement ideas and strategies – to be used in pre-reporting and post-production – for two NET long-range news projects: a documentary on sex trafficking and election coverage of the death penalty referendum, which would be voted on in November 2016. The students were told that NET was particularly interested in engaging millennials in its stories.

The two news projects were chosen as the centerpieces for the blue sky project because of the nature of their publication deadlines. The documentary was in production and was scheduled to be released sometime in the fall of 2016. The news coverage about the referendum wouldn't gear up until after the May 2016 primary. This allowed students to propose strategies for all phases of production, including pre-production and pre-publication.

As noted in *Figure 2*, the blue sky project was designed to help students achieve all six learning objectives in some form or another.

Students were introduced to the idea of the blue sky project at the beginning of the semester, but the project wasn't formally assigned until late February, when I started giving the groups class time to meet to discuss their ideas.

In assigning the project, I broke down specific tasks and set deadlines for each of those so students weren't so overwhelmed at semester's end with one giant project and one deadline. First, I required each group to write a project update on which I provided feedback. Then several weeks later, I required them to compile a list of all of their ideas so I could provide feedback in meetings with each group. I also gave them feedback on the final report and allowed them a week to make revisions.

Here is how I parceled out the assignments ([Appendix G-I](#)):

- **Due March 14:** Project update
- **Week of April 4:** Final brainstorming. Last chance to come up with any additional ideas.
- **Due April 11:** A list of all of your engagement ideas with brief descriptions. How many? As many as you can come up with! In addition to a list of ideas, please include any specific influencers or potential sources you've identified.

- **Week of April 11:** Finalizing and firming up ideas. You'll pick the best of the bunch and refine them so they are fully formed and well thought-out tactics and suggestions. How many? A minimum of five, but the more the merrier, right?
- **Due April 18:** Final project report. This should include discussion of your ideas, clearly and fully explained with solid rationale (including citing research where you can.) In addition, it should include a section on influencers and potential sources you've identified.
- **Week of April 18:** Develop presentations for NET staff. Your presentations should highlight the information in your report; they should be succinct, complete and engaging.
- **Due April 25:** Oral presentations to NET.

In presenting the project in stages, I was able to provide ongoing assessment and feedback rather than simply assessing the final product at the end of the semester.

In between project deadlines, students often completed in-class exercises to help with them focus on upcoming tasks. Those included:

- Directed discussion focusing on examples from the readings. Each group was to answer a series of questions and identify examples from a report on digital journalism best practices among U.S. public broadcasters that they might adapt for use in their projects. (See [Appendix J](#) for assignment.)
- During preliminary discussions of ideas, the groups were encouraged to follow the steps outlined in the design process, which we discussed in detail during one class period.
- When the groups seemed to be stagnating and running out of steam, I tried another class activity to stimulate additional brainstorming. I paired up the death penalty groups with the sex trafficking groups and then instructed each group to brainstorm ideas for the other group's topic. Using Post-it notes, the brainstorming groups identified several ideas while the other groups observed (*Figure 4*). After a joint discussion about the ideas, the group's switched roles so that the observation groups then brainstormed the other groups' topic. I think this activity invigorated the groups and helped them think of new ideas or refine existing ones. Students reacted positively to the assignment in a post-course survey.
- The week before the final presentation, we held a dress rehearsal in which students presented their material and fellow students provided feedback.



Figure 4: Using Post-it notes, students from one group brainstormed ideas for a different topic than the one they had been working on.

In the end, I considered a number of assessment measures to analyze the learning associated with the blue sky project. Those included:

- Evaluation of student presentations by a panel of news and social media professionals and educators.
- Evaluation of written reports.
- Student pre- and post-course skills and knowledge assessment.
- Student ratings of effectiveness of course assignments.
- Reading reflections.
- Project reflections.

Evaluation of student presentations. I think it was extremely valuable for the students to have news and social media professionals rate their presentations. Knowing that they would present to professionals helped the students be better prepared, and I think they took the assignment more seriously. After working closely with the students to refine their ideas and rehearse their presentations in the previous weeks, I noticed dramatic improvement on the day of the presentations to NET. I was impressed with their professionalism and eloquence.

In addition to a numeric ranking on three aspects, the evaluators were asked to make comments and to include any ideas that seemed to catch their attention. (See [Appendix K](#) for evaluation form.)

The evaluators included Dennis Kellogg, NET news director; Mike Tobias, senior reporter/producer; Eric Martin, NET social media strategist; Tyler Thomas, UNL social media specialist; Stacie Sikora, college social media coordinator; and Jill Arth, college academic adviser (*Figure 5*).

The average score of the four presentations was 4.25 on a 5-point scale. The highest score was 4.35 (Group 3); the second highest score was 4.33 (Group 2); and the other two groups each received a score of 4.17 (Groups 1 and 4). (See [Appendix L](#) for group presentations.)

Evaluation of written reports. The average score for the four written reports I assessed was 89.25 percent. Group 4 received the highest, 92.75; Group 2, 92.50; Group 1, 88.50; and Group 3, 83.25.

Overall, I was impressed with many of the ideas students developed and the reasoning outlined in the reports ([Appendix M](#)). In some cases, however, the ideas did not seem cogent or effective. Additionally, what was lacking in every report in varying degrees was sufficient research and better stated rationale. In many cases, certain points weren't clearly explained. I think this often happens in situations where students have spent a significant amount of time



Figure 5: This tweet shows NET staff and others listening to and scoring students' engagement presentations.

discussing ideas; they know the material so well but fail to think about the audience when writing.

Interestingly, the highest rated oral presentation received the lowest written report grade and the highest written report score received the lowest oral presentation score (**Figure 6**). But I think this is to be expected. In my experience, students as a whole typically present material more clearly and concisely during oral presentations than they do in written form. I noticed quite often that the groups excelled at explaining points in their presentation that had been unclear in their preliminary written report.

	Oral presentation score	Written report score
Group 1	4.17	88.50
Group 2	4.33	92.50
Group 3	4.35	83.25
Group 4	4.17	92.75

Figure 6: Oral presentation scores compared with written report. Highlighted cells are the highest scores.

Pre- and post-course skills and knowledge assessment. I had students complete a survey on the first day of the course and another on the last day. Included in those surveys were a series of questions asking students to assess their skills and knowledge. These assessments provided helpful insight as to what areas students thought they showed the most improvement. With regard to the blue sky project, I thought these three areas were the most relevant:

- In rating their ability to develop engagement strategies for news organizations, the percentage of students self-reporting in the intermediate to expert level increased from 21 percent in the pre-course survey to 100 percent in the post survey (**Figure 7**).
- In rating their knowledge of how news organizations and others use social media for engagement, students in the intermediate-expert level increased from 43 percent in to 100 percent (**Figure 8**).
- In rating their knowledge of the news industry’s audience engagement best practices, students in the intermediate-expert level increased from 29 percent to 100 percent (**Figure 9**).

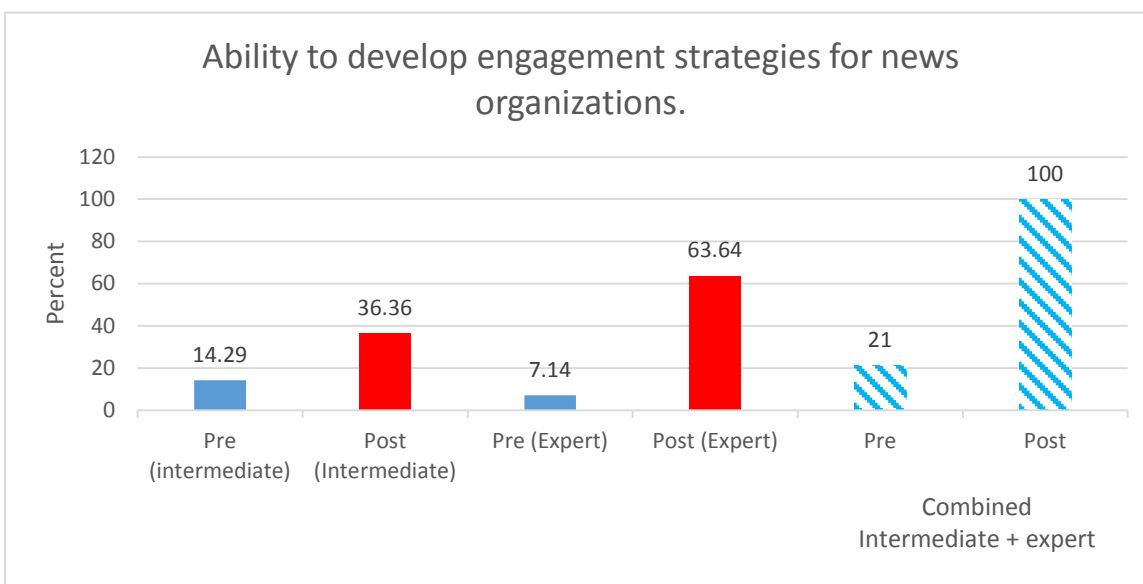


Figure 7: Pre and post results for ability to develop engagement strategies.

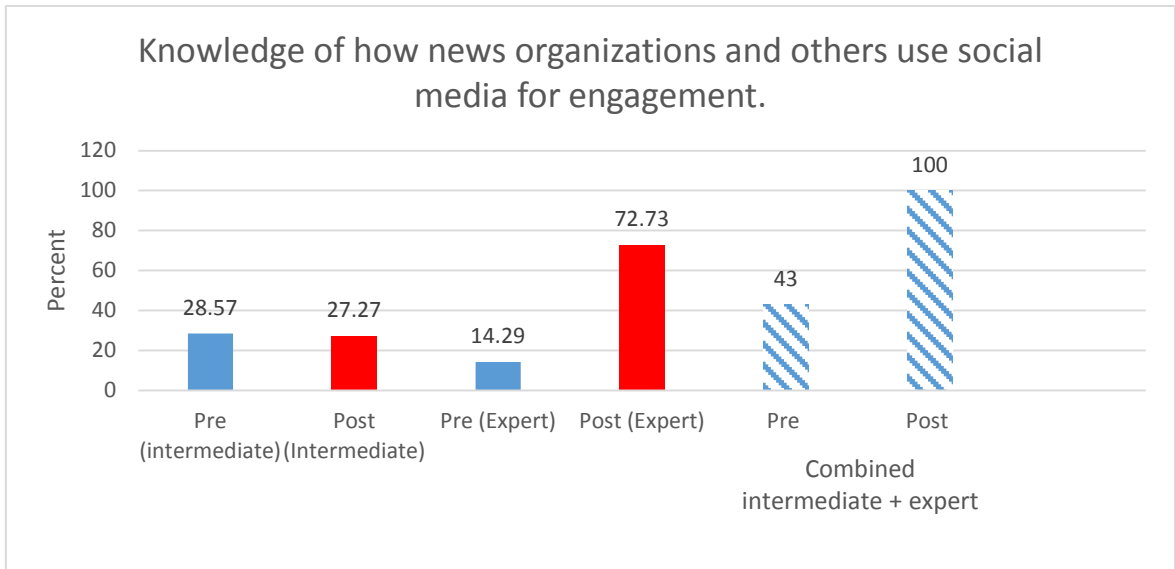


Figure 8: Pre and post results for knowledge of social media engagement.

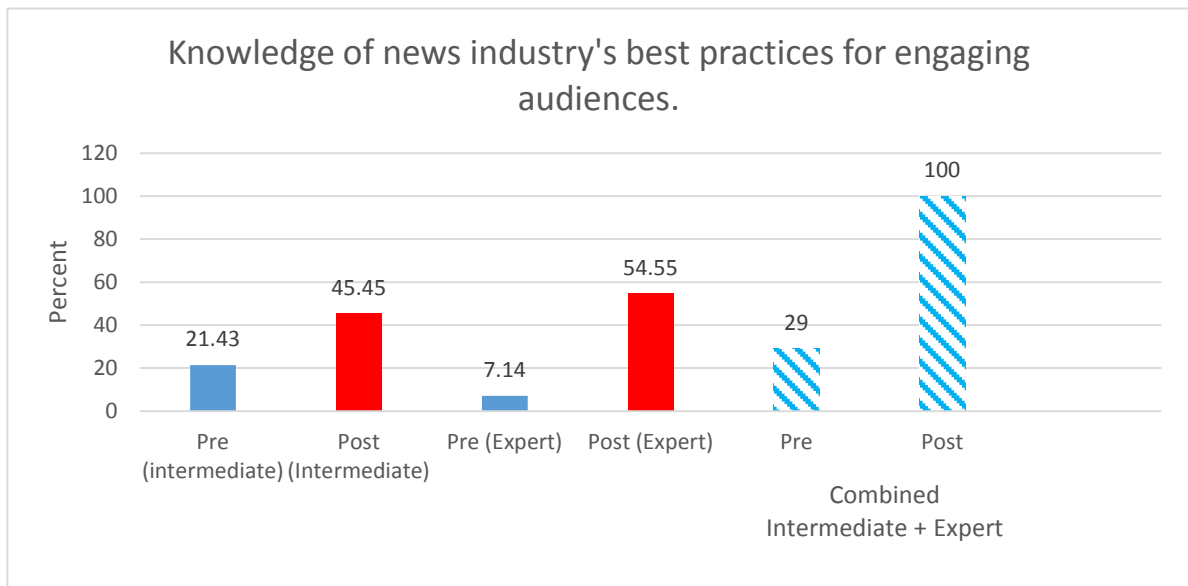


Figure 9: Pre and post results for industry best practices in engagement.

Student ratings of course effectiveness. Four facets of the blue sky project were among the top six assignments or activities that students said contributed the most to their learning in the course. These ratings were part of the post-survey students completed on the last day of class. The four components of the blue sky project cited by students were research, brainstorming, presentation and report writing (*Figure 10*).

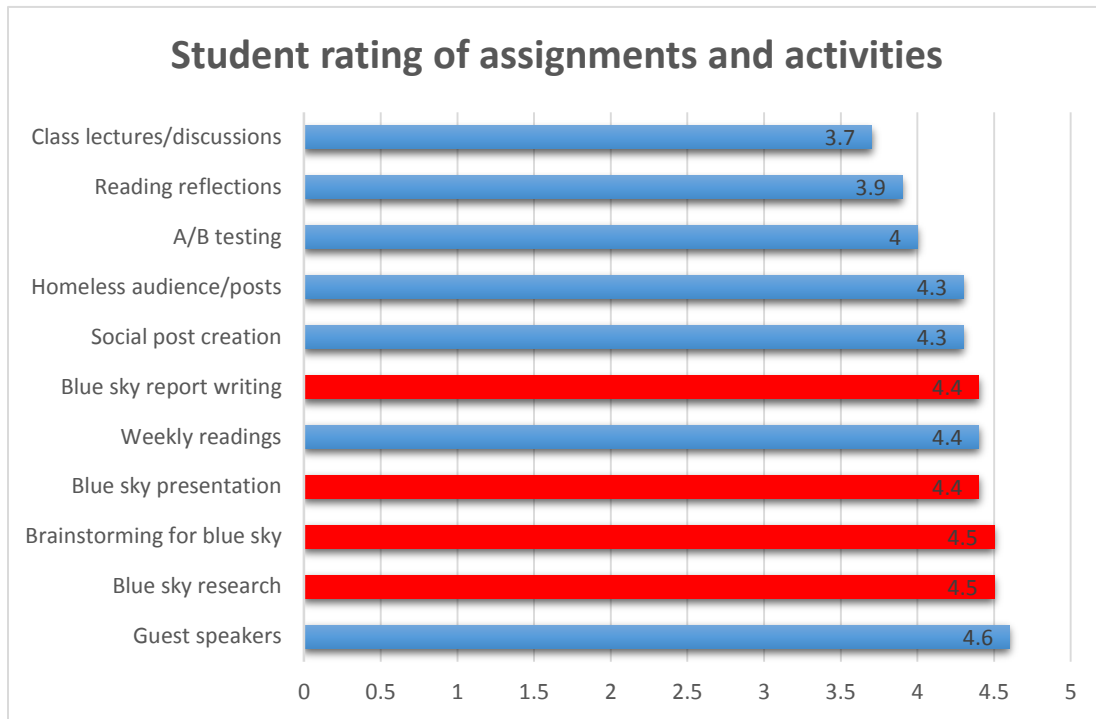


Figure 10: In rating course activities, students highly ranked blue sky project activities, shown in red.

Reading reflections. As mentioned earlier, the main purpose of the reflections was to make sure students were keeping up on the reading and to encourage them think critically about the material. I was extremely excited to see when students started making connections and discussing ways to transform concepts and theories into practical applications for the blue sky project. To encourage students to keep making those connections, I often tried to point them out in class. I sometimes used excerpts from their reflections as prompts in class discussions or as inspiration to spur groups to keep brainstorming.

In this example, a student made an observation that later became the cornerstone of his group’s blue sky project:

Millennials' social media habits got me thinking about our Blue Sky presentation. Another point the article made was that lots of people use social media for brief updates on news, but then look deeper into issues that interest them. NET does a great job of this in-depth coverage that interested millennials seek. I'm starting to think about an NET social media campaign that pushes out brief snippets on the death penalty vote and teases millennials into their stories. Also, since millennials use search to find in-depth coverage, SEO is incredibly important when they post their stories to their site.

This excerpt, written by another student, became a discussion prompt:

Another strategy from the best practices that can be used for the blue sky projects is using visual elements to makes posts stand out. According to the article, visuals in social media feeds especially appeal to millennials. In my group's blue sky project, we were considering using an interactive photo project on both Facebook and Twitter to promote NET's stories on human trafficking. After these readings, I'm thinking of letting the photos do most of the talking instead of the text on the social media post. By incorporating text into the photo, I think the posts will be even more visual and appealing to millennials.

Project reflections. After completion of the blue sky project, I asked students to assess themselves and group members in a short project reflection ([Appendix L](#)). Despite the extensive group work, there were surprising few complaints about fellow group members. In discussing what they learned from the blue sky project, students cited a variety of topics, including how to monitor social conversations with NUVI; the importance of holistic engagement strategies (not just social); the importance of audience and influencers; and how to work in groups.

Students also were forthcoming in what they could have done better, including conducting more research and spending more time refining their ideas.

Summary of blue sky project analysis

Given all of the assessment measures I considered, I think it is well documented that the blue sky project was successful in showing that students could synthesize the course material and transform the engagement research, concepts and ideas they studied during the semester into practical and original news engagement strategies. Through the blue sky project, students were able to meet most, if not all, of the course's stated learning objectives. That being said, I think the teaching methods could be altered to increase the students' understanding of engagement concepts and help them to develop stronger ideas, as I note in the next section, Planned Changes.

Planned Changes

JOMC 491/891 Special Topic: News Engagement Lab provided me with a great opportunity to test my teaching skills in an innovative and experimental educational experience. And it was even more rewarding to be teaching about a subject – digital news engagement – that I am particularly interested in.

As is the case with any good experiment, tweaks should be made and retested in the next go-around. And I think teaching this course again as a special topics course would afford me an opportunity to try and assess changes before proposing this as permanent elective.

Syllabus and schedule

I think the syllabus accurately reflected the course framework, objectives, policies and schedule. The only objective that I felt got short shrift was the one on creative and design thinking objective. While I spent a class period explaining design thinking and doing several in-class activities to supplement the lecture, I don't think that was enough. I think a better way to effectively teach design thinking is to infuse it throughout the course from the beginning instead of introducing it as part of the final group project.

As mentioned earlier, I rearranged the course schedule to include the homeless engagement assignment once I learned in November that NET was doing it. While I think it was a helpful and worthwhile assignment, upon reflection, I might have been better off sticking with my original plan. That would have opened up room for more targeted lectures and in-class activities to slowly and methodically introduce students to important concepts. And because we had a rather quick deadline to complete the homeless assignment, I felt that we did not get to spend as much time working with NUVI in more systematic way.

I initially had planned to have NET staff discuss the specifics of the two news projects once students began working on the blue sky project. However, finding a convenient time for NET staff became problematic later on in the semester. I think the students working on the blue sky projects could have benefitted from having more background about and insight into the NET sex trafficking documentary and its planned death penalty referendum coverage. In retrospect, I would have had the guest speakers talk more specifically about the projects during their appearances earlier in the semester.

Teaching methods and class activities

Group work. As stated earlier, group work was necessary to complete many of the assignments. While students didn't necessarily object to group work, several did say they disliked working in the same group all semester. While I was a bit worried about that aspect, I also thought it might help them more easily navigate the blue sky project by working through as a group the earlier assignments that built up to the final one.

If I felt it were important to keep so many group assignments in a future course, I would create different groups for different assignments. I also would include more class time on discussing team building and team effectiveness. At the May 10, 2016 Peer Review of Teaching poster session, I was particularly intrigued with Karen Cannon's presentation on how her course used teams – and how she included team building into her course activities. She will be a great resource as I move forward in making changes to how groups operate in the course.

Course lectures. I intentionally limited the number of lectures for three reasons: 1) to allow for the groups to have more time in class to work on their projects; 2) to incorporate the homeless engagement assignment earlier in the semester; and 3) to appease students who seem to generally dislike lectures and prefer more hands-on activities. After considering the assessments and evaluations, I think I may have gone too far in limiting class lectures and will definitely add more in to the mix.

Although students ranked lectures and class discussions as the lowest activity in helping them learn, at least three students mentioned in the same survey that they wished the course would have had more lectures, particularly on the readings, and more in-class activities to cover more material (*Figure 11*). And I agree. I think I tried to squeeze in too many assignments and activities at the expense of making sure students were fully exposed to the weekly course topics. In any future version of this course, I would streamline assignments, activities and course lectures so they were more targeted and focused. Now that I have covered the material once, I am much more attuned to what concepts should be highlighted in lectures and class discussions.

Q30 What three things would you change about this class.

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	Getting new groups for each project instead of staying with the same group the whole time. More discussion as a class to help brainstorm together. One project where we had to actually go out and engage with audiences on campus or on the street.	4/27/2016
2	1. amount of time spent on each project, can be shorter 2. That's all that I have	4/27/2016
3	More work with NET, it was hard to develop ideas and engagement strategies without really having any idea what the documentaries would talk about. Second, the reflections had a weird spacing, I think it would be more beneficial to have one due every week at the same time or just do them for a few weeks in the middle of the semester. Third, I feel like a lot of the days I had a lot of extra time left and I wasn't sure what to do with it, so maybe spacing out material or adding in an extra optional day for work and covering more material on class days.	4/27/2016
4	more specific instructions, the huge emphasis on group work, clearer explanations of the readings/more lecture time	4/27/2016
5	More organized, interact with clients before starting projects and more organized group structures so everyone does their part.	4/27/2016
6	Less reflections and readings, add more projects similar to blue sky in place of less reflections.	4/27/2016
7	I wouldn't change anything.	4/27/2016
8	I'd make some of the in-class activities (like audience research tools) more guided, more clearly lay out Blue sky expectations and maybe do more AB testing	4/27/2016
9	less reflections, more engagement projects, more in-class activities	4/27/2016
10	I wouldn't change anything about this class	4/27/2016
11	1. More lectures. 2. Less group work. 3. Actual social media posting	4/27/2016

Figure 11: Student responses in a post-course survey about what aspects they would like to see changed.

Assignments and assessments

In a question in the post-course survey, I asked students to list three aspects of the class students they would not change -- and they overwhelmingly agreed about the value and importance of the blue sky project and the collaboration with NET (*Figure 12*).

Q31 What three things would you NOT change about this class?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

#	Responses	Date
1	The guest speakers were awesome! The final project/presentation was really fun to work with NET. Learning how to use NUVI was really helpful and interesting.	4/27/2016
2	1. the projects 2. guest speakers 3. Location	4/27/2016
3	I liked the build up to the final Blue Sky project, I think the order in which we did things helped prepare us for doing the final project. Second I really liked the wide variety of topics covered and third I really liked working with an actual news organization to develop ideas, although I don't think NET was the best and most interesting for this demographic, but I think the idea is still very interesting.	4/27/2016
4	the quick response and feedback for assignments, the group brainstorming, the reflections	4/27/2016
5	Discovering NUVI (get more experience with it first), guest speakers, presentation as the final	4/27/2016
6	Blue Sky project, social post practice, Guest speakers.	4/27/2016
7	I like the readings and the group work.	4/27/2016
8	The readings were great, the end goals of the course were on point and getting to work with a real newsroom was a great way to convey the material	4/27/2016
9	class speakers, NET social post assignment and keep the textbook	4/27/2016
10	I wouldn't change anything about this class	4/27/2016
11	Collaboration with NET	4/27/2016

Figure 12: Student responses in a post-course survey about the best aspects of the course.

I think it was helpful to have assigned the blue sky project in stages and to have scheduled in-class activities and staggered deadlines to keep students on task and prepared for the final project. But I think I could extend that methodology to the beginning of the course as well. I could then better tie in course material and have additional focused activities that lead up to the blue sky project. I also would start the ideation process earlier and work more closely with students in helping them develop ideas and refine them to improve the overall quality.

I also think additional less time-intensive assignments and activities about audience listening and research and social media content creation would be helpful. In a future class, I would require weekly reflections. This was my original intent, but I reduced the number because I was apprehensive about creating an assignment perceived to be repetitive and too much work for an elective course. Looking at the feedback from students and considering the teaching value of the reflections, I have changed my mind and would require weekly reflections. Perhaps, I could provide specific prompts to freshen up the assignment from week to week and keep students engaged.

Before settling on any changes, I would consult with NET staff to brainstorm additional ways the course and student work could be more helpful to them while remaining true to the course's pedagogical objectives. I can't stress enough what a great partner NET was for this course throughout the semester. Their enthusiasm and advice in the planning stages was invaluable. And I appreciate the time and expertise they shared with the students during the delivery of the course, namely the guest lectures, periodic feedback and the final presentation evaluations.

I also want to recognize the invaluable help and collaboration offered by Tyler Thomas. He helped facilitate the collaboration with the Office of Communications and the college that

allowed the students in the course to use NUVI, the social monitoring tool. He spent a great deal of time creating accounts and helping students get access, and he provided an excellent training session for them. He also graciously agreed to be an evaluator for the final presentations.

Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process

JOMC 491/891 Special Topic: News Engagement Lab was innovative, novel and different from anything I have taught in my 17 years of teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Teaching the course was exciting, rewarding – and extremely nerve-wracking. Nearly every aspect of the course was experimental and untested – from the assignments to the collaboration process with the professional news partner.

But having this course be the subject of my portfolio greatly helped ease my nervousness and trepidation. Through the Peer Review of Teaching process, I was able to devote focused time to develop the course, align course activities with course goals, determine assessment strategies and get valuable feedback from my teaching peers.

I knew the success of this course depended greatly on the collaboration with the media outlet partner – NET News – so I also wanted to be thorough and deliberate in the course design in order to develop course objectives and a mission that were clear for all involved. And that's exactly what happened with the help of Peer Review of Teaching.

Although I have designed new courses before, this is the first time I felt I did so in a strategic and effective way. Starting with backward design, I completed every step in the course creation process in the logical and analytical method outlined by Peer Review. The process and resulting portfolio will serve as a valuable and tested template for me to follow in the future.

Once the course was taught, I found myself enjoying the critical analysis of what worked and what didn't. And it was rewarding to use a variety of assessment techniques to document and quantify student learning. I was able to document and conclude that the final course project was effective in demonstrating that students synthesized the course material and applied their knowledge. I'm excited to move forward with new versions of this course – and others yet to be designed – with the solid pedagogical foundation and insight Peer Review of Teaching provided.

Works Cited

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Appendices

Appendix A: JOMC 491/891 Syllabus

JOMC 491/891 Syllabus

Room 29 | Andersen Hall
M-W 1:30-2:45 p.m.

Instructor: Michelle Hassler
243 Andersen Hall
403-472-7050 | 402-580-5816
mhassler3@unl.edu | [blog](#) | [twitter](#) | [diigo](#)



Welcome to the News Engagement Lab, a place where we'll be experimenting to find the best ways to engage today's distracted audience and help them find the important news that they need to know.

Digital news engagement is a relatively new concept – so we'll be on the cutting edge of research and practice. The hope is that from our research and experimentation this semester, we can begin to develop insights into how news organizations and others can best to engage their digital audiences.

In this hands-on course, you will create, implement and analyze audience engagement strategies for news projects produced by NET and the CoJMC Mosaic website. You will study the engagement practices of news organizations and learn how to use both social media and traditional methods to engage a variety of audiences.

This course will cover the following topics: social media for engagement, including news engagement case studies and best practices; audience analysis (including social listening) and research; testing, tracking, measurement and analytics; creative thinking processes; working in teams; and report and proposal writing.

Knowledge of and experience in social media content creation, engagement, social listening and analytics will open up additional job opportunities for you. Employers are eager to hire individuals who know how to plan, execute, monitor and measure engagement opportunities through both traditional methods and social media.

This is an elective course that is open to all CoJMC majors with the hope that a mix of majors can create a classroom environment in which students can be inspired by and learn from each other.

Learning objectives

To research, develop, create and oversee effective and measurable engagement strategies for news outlets, we will focus on the following learning objectives:

- Research and analyze audiences – including niche and diverse audiences – to determine the best way to engage them;
- Understand and practice how to use social media for engagement;
- Study how news organizations and others use engagement strategies to successfully engage audiences;
- Study and practice how to use a variety of analytical tools to analyze engagement strategies to determine effectiveness;
- Study and practice creative and design thinking processes;
- Practice how to clearly communicate ideas and persuade others to adopt them;

Student expectations

Follow these and you'll have a much richer and rewarding educational experience:

Be creative and innovative and do not be afraid to take risks with your testing, content creation, ideas and strategies. The course is called a lab because it is a place of experimentation. It is OK to try and fail.

Be a good team member. Much of the work in the class will be done in teams. Don't be the slacker or undependable team member.

Give your full attention. I work hard to create engaging and interesting lectures and in-class activities, including arranging for guest speakers. In return, I ask that you give your full attention to me, guest speakers and your fellow students at all times. At the beginning of each class, I will give a signal that means all laptops must be closed, all desk computers off and all phones turned off. Please abide by this so you and your neighbors will not be distracted and can focus on any presentations, exercises and discussions.

We will be using the computers in the class, but only during designated times. If you want to take notes during class, which I strongly suggest, I encourage you to use paper notebooks.

Come to class fully prepared. When readings or videos are assigned, you should have carefully read them (or watched them) and be prepared to elaborate on main points during class discussions. I'm not planning to require reading quizzes, but if it becomes apparent that you aren't reading the material before class, I may institute quizzes.

Course requirements

While there is no required textbook, you will have weekly required readings from a supplemental list I have compiled.

Please have personal accounts opened in all of these as soon as possible:

- Google Drive
- Twitter

- Facebook
- Diigo – a social bookmarking site.
- HootSuite or TweetDeck
- Tumblr

Here is a breakdown of how we will use these and other programs:

Blackboard – Where you can find assignment details, assignment rubrics and the syllabus. You will upload most assignments to Blackboard. If you don't know how to properly upload an assignment to Blackboard, please watch the tutorial on Blackboard. You also will need to use Blackboard to access some of the readings. Click on the Library Readings tab on the left side of the Blackboard course home page.

GoogleDrive – you will be compiling group notes and reports here. Some assignments may also be uploaded here as well as course resources.

Diigo – we will be using a class group on this social bookmarking site to help you stay organized with any research we come across.

HootSuite or TweetDeck – you will be monitoring audiences and feeds.

Tumblr – you will be following and/or researching the NPR Social Media Desk blog: <http://socialmediadesk.tumblr.com/>

Email newsletter – sign up for [Melody Joy Kramer's](#)

Opportunities to learn

You will learn through lecture, discussion, reading, hands-on activities, exercises and assignments.

Major assignments will include:

- Audience analysis research assignment for a series NET stories on homelessness. We will be using state-of-the-art monitoring software for this assignment, which will be done in groups.
- Social media creation and A/B testing assignments for Mosaic and NET. Some assignments will be done individually and some will be done in groups.
- Strategy project (final project). You will develop comprehensive engagement strategies – both pre-reporting and post-production – for two NET long-range news projects. This assignment will be done in groups. The plan is to present these to NET news and marketing staff.

Other regular assignments or exercises:

- Reflections. You will be asked to reflect specifically on the readings, lectures and work you did for the major assignments. For the reflections you will do on the readings, lectures and class discussions, I will be expecting you to start making

connections between what you have read, what we have discussed in class and the class work you are doing. These typically will be one page and will contain questions you will need to answer. For the reflections you will do for the major assignments, you will be asked to reflect on your performance.

- Progress reports and final reports. We will be documenting everything we do in some form or another.

Graduate students will complete additional, research-related work to fulfill the graduate portion of this class, worth 20 percent of your grade. We will identify something you'd like to study, and your research could include any combination of interviews, lit reviews, content analyses or surveys. The final product will be a 10- to 15-page paper and a presentation to the class. You must complete that work satisfactorily to pass the course. You will work with the instructor to find a project that fits with your interests. A written proposal describing what you want to study should be turned into the instructor by Feb. 22, and your project will be due April 28.

Grading

Most assignments, reflections and exercises will have a posted rubric (on Blackboard) with grading criteria so you will know what is expected. You will earn letter grades for all your work based on the following:

- 15 percent for reflections
- 20 percent for project updates and other exercises
- 30 percent for major assignments
- 35 percent for engagement strategy project

Course grading scale

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	
A = 94-96	B = 84-86	C = 74-76	D = 64-66	
A- = 90-93	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73	D- = 60-63	F = 59/below

Attendance policy

You are expected to attend every class. Two unexcused absences will severely affect your grade, so please, talk to me when you must miss a class. Obviously, serious illness or family emergencies are legitimate reasons for not attending, but try when possible to let me know ahead of time. If you are going to miss a class, it is your responsibility to:

- Notify me
- Make-up the missed assignments. Please note that your grade may drop for late assignments.

Please be on time to class. We have a lot of material to cover, and I try to start each class promptly. Being late is unprofessional. It also is rude to me and others when you arrive late and interrupt the class.

ACEJMC competencies

The College of Journalism and Mass Communications is accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). This course addresses the following ACEJMC competencies:

1. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the journalism profession, audience and purposes students serve;
2. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work;
3. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
5. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
6. Think critically, creatively and independently.

Academic integrity

In this college, we take ethics very seriously. As an aspiring journalist, you are expected to demonstrate integrity and follow the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics. In the classroom, that means also following the UNL Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the UNL Bulletin. Plagiarism generally results in firing in the journalism profession. Students who plagiarize or fabricate material may receive a failing grade on an assignment or for an entire course and may be reported to the Student Judicial Review Board. The work a student submits in a class must be the student's own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Students wishing to build on an old project or work on a similar project in two classes must discuss this with both professors.

Academic dishonesty includes:

- Handing in another's work or part of another's work as your own.
- Fabricating quotes, interviews or other material for any content you submit in this class.
- Turning in one of your old papers (including something you wrote in high school) for a current class.
- Turning in the same or similar paper for two different classes.
- Using notes or other study aids or otherwise obtaining another's answers for a quiz or an examination.

Anything and everything you include in your papers that comes from another source must be attributed with proper citation. That includes ideas and opinions. Plagiarism consists of using phrases, sentences or paragraphs from any source and republishing them without alteration or attribution. The sources include, but are not limited to, books, magazines, newspapers, television or radio reports, websites and other students' papers.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Diversity

The College of Journalism and Mass Communications values diversity, in the broadest sense of the word – gender, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, income, religion, education, geographic, physical and mental ability or disability, sexual orientation. We recognize that understanding and incorporating diversity in the curriculum enables us to prepare our students for careers as professional communicators in a global society. As communicators, we understand that journalism, advertising and other forms of strategic communication must reflect society in order to be effective and reliable. We fail as journalists if we are not accurate in our written, spoken and visual reports; including diverse voices and perspectives improves our accuracy and truthfulness. In advertising, we cannot succeed if we do not understand the value of or know how to create advertising that reflects a diverse society and, thus, appeals to broader audiences.

Course schedule

(Warning: This is subject to change; additional exercises and readings may be added and due dates may be changed. If this happens, I will alert you and post a revised schedule to Blackboard. Due dates for other assignments will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

Date	Topic(s)	Reading	Reflections/Assignments
Mon., Jan. 11	Course overview; What is engagement?	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement: Buttry • Engagement: Mayer 	
Wed., Jan. 13	Audience analysis and research	Reading for next class period (Jan. 20): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building listening for newsrooms • Pew study • Audience analysis study (Twitter) • How Chalkbeat is building an audience. 	
Mon., Jan. 18	NO CLASS: MLK Day		

Wed., Jan. 20	Audience analysis and research	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with diverse audiences • Guide to crowdsourcing (Read Parts 1, 3, 5 and 8.1) 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building listening for newsrooms • Pew study • Audience analysis study (Twitter) • How Chalkbeat is building an audience.
Mon., Jan. 25	Audience analysis and research	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chapter 2 (Library readings on Blackboard) • NPR Facebook engagement • 25 most engaged brands on Twitter 	
Wed., Jan. 27	Audience analysis and research Creating engaging content on social channels	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPR: Social media graphics • NPR callouts 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with diverse audiences • Guide to crowdsourcing • Batsell, Chap. 2
Mon., Feb. 1	Creating engaging content on social channels	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 killer social ideas • Visual content 	
Wed., Feb. 3	Creating engaging content on social channels	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BP: Zamora 	
Mon., Feb. 8	Creating engaging content on social channels	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting frequency 	
Wed., Feb. 10	Creating engaging content on social channels	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upworthy testing 	
Mon., Feb. 15	Testing and tracking		

Wed., Feb 17	Testing and tracking	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics, metrics everywhere • Think audiences 	
Mon., Feb. 22	Testing and tracking Analytics	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic factories 	Graduate research paper proposal due.
Wed., Feb. 24	Analytics	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chapter 5 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metrics, metrics everywhere • Think audiences • Traffic factories
Mon., Feb. 29	Creative and design thinking; working in teams	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BP: Public broadcasting report (read section on “Best Practices and Examples”) 	
Wed., March 2	Creative and design thinking; working in teams	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennials and news 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chap. 5 • BP: Public broadcasting report
Mon., March 7	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennials: best practices 	
Wed., March 9	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chapter 1 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennials and news • Millennials: best practices
Mon., March 14	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BP: BuzzFeed 	Progress report on strategy project due at class time.

Wed., March 16	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period (March 28): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online polls and quizzes 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chapter 1 • BP: BuzzFeed
Mon., March 21	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK		
Wed., March 23	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK		
Mon., March 28	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BP: Growth editors • BP: Kramer 	
Wed., March 30	Engagement strategies/best practices	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment study • Comment section roundup 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BP: Growth editors • BP: Kramer
Mon., April 4	Engagement in the comments section	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood meters • Predictions: Comments 	
Wed., April 6	Engagement in the comments section	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictions: Engagement • Predictions: Community 	
Mon., April 11	Issues in engagement	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batsell, Chapter 4 	
Wed., April 13	Issues in engagement	Reading for next class period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You Gotta Read This 	Upload to Blackboard by class time: reflection over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictions: Engagement • Predictions: Community • Batsell, Chapter 4
Mon., April 18	Ethics		Strategy project due at class time

Wed., April 20	Verification		
Mon., April 25	Presentation of strategy project		
Wed., April 27	Presentation of strategy project		

Appendix B: Reflection and rubric

Due: **Wednesday, Jan. 27**, at class time.

Readings: Engage with diverse audiences, Guide to crowdsourcing (parts 1, 3, 5 and 8.1); Batsell, Chap. 2

Reflection papers

In these papers, you must - in your own words - review the week's readings, highlighting the key points. Each paper should:

1. Demonstrate that you read the readings
2. Demonstrate that you have thought about what you read
3. Show that you can analyze the material, based on both your own experiences, class discussions and knowledge you've gained from the reading. You should be making connections between the readings, class lectures and discussions and your own experience.

These papers should contain brief but thoughtful **analysis** of the reading. If you simply summarize what's been said without analyzing and drawing thoughtful conclusions, your grade will be lowered.

Remember this is a journalism class: So these brief papers must be well-written and free of errors. These are due at the beginning of the class. Each paper should be about 400 to 500 words.

Name	Reflections rubric		
Description			
Rubric Detail			
	Levels of Achievement		
Criteria	Proficient	Competent	Novice
Content Weight 33.00%	90 to 100 % Captures key points from the reading. It is clear the writer has read the assignments. Used critical thinking to draw conclusions and analyze topics and makes connections between readings, class discussions and the real world.	75 to 89 % Answers were rudimentary. Or weak or minimal analysis of material presented. Or partial capture of key points.	0 to 74 % Fails to address key points or contains factual errors or no analysis.
Writing Weight 34.00%	90 to 100 % Clear + concise. Easy to follow. Paper is well-written and edited.	75 to 89 % Writing is hard to follow in parts. Sentences are wordy and somewhat confusing.	0 to 74 % Writing is sloppy and disorganized. Hard to follow. Sentences are confusing.
Grammar/mechanics Weight 33.00%	90 to 100 % Well-edited, with two or fewer grammar, style or spelling errors.	75 to 89 % Three to five mechanical errors.	0 to 74 % More than five mechanical (style, spelling or grammar).

Appendix C: Social post creation examples and rubric

Link to promote	Twitter post (assume a photo + link; keep post within 96 characters)	Story headline	Facebook post	What photo would you suggest?
http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1010363/americas-dairy-cows-are-milk-producing-machines-there-ceiling	Dairy cows are more productive than ever. But is it ethical?	America's dairy cows are milk-producing machines, but is there a ceiling?	Meet Gigi, the "diva" cow who produced 8,700 gallons of milk last year. She's the darling of the dairy industry but animal rights activists worry about her welfare.	
http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1010363/americas-dairy-cows-are-milk-producing-machines-there-ceiling	Dairy cows are producing more milk than ever, but some livestock advocates have concerns.	America's dairy cows are milk-producing machines, but is there a ceiling?	Gigi the cow is one of the reasons milk production is an all-time high. But livestock advocates have concerns.	A picture of Gigi the cow
http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1007510/reacting-islamophobia-nebraska	Islamic mosque take strides to conquer "Islamophobia" in Nebraska.	Reacting To Islamophobia In Nebraska	The Islamic Center of Omaha wants to end the vandalism of its building through education and outreach.	The photo with a quote by Horace Mann
http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1007510/reacting-islamophobia-nebraska	How an Omaha mosque practices tolerance and understanding despite anti-Muslim acts.	Reacting To Islamophobia In Nebraska	Such anti-Muslim acts haven't been seen since the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.	http://netnebraska.org/sites/default/files/styles/largepopup/public/Islamic%20Center%20of%20Omaha%20vandalism.jpg?itok=6i_NR8V-C
http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1004059/growing-renewable-energy-resources-farm-fewer-fossil-fuels	A farmer in northeast Nebraska uses solar panels and cover crops to reduce energy consumption.	Growing renewable energy resources to farm with fewer fossil fuels	Producing food consumes around one fifth of the nation's energy supply, so a farmer in Northeast Nebraska is using solar panels and cover crops to reduce his energy consumption.	http://netnebraska.org/sites/default/files/styles/largepopup/public/Bar_n.jpg?itok=J_OMpcP4

Examples:

RUBRIC:

Name: NET social posts

Exit

Grid View

List View

	Proficient	Competent	Novice
Clarity	29.7 (29.7%) - 33 (33%) Your social posts are relevant to the story and are clear.	24.75 (24.75%) - 29.37 (29.37%) Some parts of the posts are not relevant to the story or are unclear and/or confusing.	0 (0%) - 24.42 (24.42%) The posts are not relevant or confusing.
Content	30.6 (30.6%) - 34 (34%) Your social posts are creative, interesting and engaging. They likely will draw clicks and engagement.	25.5 (25.5%) - 30.26 (30.26%) Your posts are somewhat creative, interesting and engaging.	0 (0%) - 25.16 (25.16%) You posts are not creative, interesting and engaging.
Mechanics	29.7 (29.7%) - 33 (33%) You had two or fewer spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	24.75 (24.75%) - 29.37 (29.37%) You had three to five spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	0 (0%) - 24.42 (24.42%) You had five or more spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.

Name: NET social posts

Exit

Appendix D: Audience listening assignment

Audience listening/research groups

1. Make introductions and trade contact information.
2. Decide how you might divvy up searching social media and online communities to get a taste of what is out there. See [social media listening PDF](#) in the Google folder. Go ahead and get started on that now – then get back together.
3. By the end of class, develop some keywords you might use to do a NUVI search. [Post those on the Google doc](#). You can have more than one set.

What are we looking for?

Influencers who could help spread social media posts.

Potential sources for stories.

Posts we should share/retweet/repost/

Story ideas.

People curious about things we've covered lately. Would they appreciate a link?

Windows into what matters to our community.

Conversations about our content. Feedback we should be aware of.

People we should invite to contribute their own content.

Conversations we should capture to share with our readers?

Posts we should hit "like" on as the brand? Or ask a question about? Or ask permission to republish?

New followers we should follow back?

On Twitter specifically, set up lists with people whose conversations you especially want to keep tabs on. And search "near:zipcode" to get a sense of local conversation.

Other things?

Hashtags

Blogs

Forums

Facebook groups

Appendix E: Homeless engagement assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to provide social posts that NET editors and/or reporters could use to engage local and/or national influencers or hashtags, in the hopes of getting more engagement for their Signature Stories and special programming on the homeless.

Here are the deadlines for your Excel sheets to be completed:

Group 1 (education): Wednesday, Feb. 17 by class time.

Group 2 (legal): Monday, Feb. 22 by class time.

Group 3 (rural) Monday, Feb. 29 by class time.

Group 4 (mental) Monday, March 7 by class time.

The minimum number of solid examples you should have is 12. That's the minimum. If you have more, you'll get a higher grade and fewer, a lower grade. (See the rubric below.) Aim for a good mix of local (statewide) and national.

Be sure everything is clearly explained, makes sense and is error free. Try to make it easy for the folks at NET to use. Take advantage of being in a group; for example, you could appoint one person – or more – to be the final editor(s).

To be as clear as possible, look over the following:

Platform

- Be sure to name the influencer and/or hashtag and use links so it is easy for them to find the influencer's Twitter and/or Facebook page.
- If you are suggesting some social posts to use without engaging an influencer, be specific on what NET channels you are suggesting, such as @NETNebraska Twitter or @NETNebraskaNews Twitter.

Purpose

- Be clear here in explaining how you are trying to engage with an influencer and/or hashtag and why. Example: Share an article from this influencer on @NETNebraska Facebook page and tag them.

Text of the post

- This should also include the link to the NET story or page you are trying to drive traffic to.

Rubric:

Name Homeless engagement

Description

Rubric Detail

Criteria	Levels of Achievement		
	Proficient	Competent	Novice
Clarity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Explanations are clear and it is obvious you have thought about being helpful and useful to your audience.	75 to 89 % Some parts of the document are unclear and/or confusing.	0 to 74 % Most of the document is unclear or confusing.
Content Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Your suggestions represent good engagement opportunities and the social posts are engaging.	75 to 89 % Some of your suggestions do not represent good engagement opportunities or some of your social posts are not engaging.	0 to 74 % Most of your suggestions don't represent good engagement opportunities or most of your social posts are not engaging.
Mechanics Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % You had two or fewer spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	75 to 89 % You had three to five spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	0 to 74 % You had five or more spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.
Quantity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % 12 or more suggestions are offered.	75 to 89 % 10 to 12 suggestions are offered.	0 to 74 % Fewer than 10 suggestions are offered.

Appendix F: A/B Testing examples

An example of a group's A/B testing document:

Group 2 AB Test Template											
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help All changes saved in Drive											
Time of post (i.e., 9 a.m.)											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1											
2	Tests (A or B)	Platform	Date of post (i.e., Thursday, March 3)	Time of post (i.e., 9 a.m.)	Tweet or post content	Story link	Photo link (if using one or is applicable)	Hypothesis	Link clicks	Engagement rate	Reactions, comments, shares (Facebook)
3	Story 1 A test	Facebook	MONDAY, MARCH 7TH	7:30 AM	This is a story about what it means to be foreign-born. Ten Lincoln High School students give insights into why they came to the United States and what they hope to accomplish here. https://youtu.be/uHE6i2UoH4g	http://cojmc.unl.edu/mosaic/2015/05/04/pasts-futures-lincoln-highs-foreign-born/	N/A	Will featuring multimedia or other stylistic elements make our posts more engaging or encourage more of a clickthrough rate on the post?	6	1.82%	
4	Story 1 B test	Facebook	TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH	7:30 AM	Ten Lincoln High School students give insights as to why they came to the United States and what they hope to accomplish here.	http://cojmc.unl.edu/mosaic/2015/05/04/pasts-futures-lincoln-highs-foreign-born/	N/A	Through using videos, photos and stylistic elements we think we can encourage interaction with the post as well as with the links and content from Mosaic	8	2.12%	
5	Story 1 A test	Twitter	MONDAY, MARCH 7TH	8:30 AM	This is a story about what it means to be foreign-born. Ten Lincoln High School students give insights into why they came to the United States and what they hope to accomplish here. https://youtu.be/uHE6i2UoH4g	http://cojmc.unl.edu/mosaic/2015/05/04/pasts-futures-lincoln-highs-foreign-born/	N/A	Will featuring multimedia or other stylistic elements make our posts more engaging or encourage more of a clickthrough rate on the post?	2	4.50%	

An example of the group's Facebook post and the analytics it generated:

Post Details
Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

Nebraska Mosaic
Published by Michelle Carr Hassler [?] · March 7 ·

This is a story about what it means to be foreign-born. Ten Lincoln High School students give insights into why they came to the United States and what they hope to accomplish here. <http://cojmc.unl.edu/.../pasts-futures-lincoln-highs-foreign-.../>

Lincoln High School
YOUTUBE.COM

352 people reached Boost Post

Nancy Tegeler and 2 others 1 Share

Like Comment Share

352 People Reached

9 Reactions, Comments & Shares

6 Like	3 On Post	3 On Shares
1 Love	0 On Post	1 On Shares
1 Comments	0 On Post	1 On Shares
1 Shares	1 On Post	0 On Shares

18 Post Clicks

0 Photo Views	6 Link Clicks	12 Other Clicks
---------------	---------------	-----------------

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post	0 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

Appendix G: Blue sky project overview and rubric

Blue sky project overview

Blue sky definition: *Not limited by conventional notions of what is practical or feasible; imaginative or visionary:*

You will develop comprehensive engagement strategies – both pre-reporting and post-production – for two NET long-range news projects: a documentary on sex trafficking and election coverage of the death penalty referendum, which will be voted on in November. NET is particularly interested in engaging millennials in its stories.

This assignment will be done in groups. The plan is to present these to NET news and marketing staff toward the end of the semester.

Sex trafficking:

Group 1: Tyler, Gloria, Chloe and Becca

Group 2: Pat, Bethany, Sarah

Death penalty:

Group 3: Mason, Nikita, Mercedes

Group 4: Drew, Molly, Ali, Mecca

What it will encompass:

Audience research:

- Identifying influencers and suggest ways to engage with them before production, during production and after the stories are published.
- Listening to conversations to help inform reporters working on the stories.
- Identifying possible sources.

Tools/techniques: Internet research, Twitter lists, NUVI, Diigo for sharing bookmarks.

Engagement ideas:

Come up with some solid suggestions for ways NET can engage audiences for these particular topics. This could be through social or any other means. The sky is the limit here – no suggestion is too far-fetched or innovative. Think about the Joy Mayer video in which her students used white boards to get reaction to a council woman's death – because that was how best to reach a core audience.

You also will create some mock-up social posts that tie in with your research and ideas.

Project update: Due March 14

Final report rubric:

Name Final Blue Sky Report

Description

Rubric Detail

Criteria	Levels of Achievement		
	Proficient	Competent	Novice
Clarity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Explanations and rationales are clear and logical. It is obvious that you have written this in a way that is helpful and useful to your audience.	75 to 89 % Some parts of the document are unclear and/or confusing.	0 to 74 % Most of the document is unclear or confusing.
Content Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Your suggestions represent good engagement opportunities and you have backed them up with research and/or examples.	75 to 89 % Some of your suggestions do not represent good engagement opportunities or research and examples are minimal.	0 to 74 % Most of your suggestions don't represent good engagement opportunities or lacking in research and examples.
Mechanics Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % You had two or fewer spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	75 to 89 % You had three to five spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	0 to 74 % You had five or more spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.
Quantity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % You offer at least five solid suggestions.	75 to 89 % Three to five suggestions are offered.	0 to 74 % Fewer than five suggestions are offered.

Appendix H: Blue sky progress report

Preview Upload Assignment: Blue Sky Progress Report

You are previewing the assignment - your submission will not be saved.

ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Due Date Monday, March 14, 2016 1:30 PM	Points Possible 100
--	-------------------------------

Upload one per group by class time on Monday, March 14.

Outline initial ideas you have discussed.

What things you are investigating or thinking about.

What do you want to continue working on or get done in the coming weeks.

[Blue-sky projects assignment.docx](#)

Appendix I: Blue sky deadlines and rubric

Blue sky strategy projects deadlines

I'll try to give you as much time in class as I can to work on these, but you may need to do work outside of class in order to turn in your best and most polished work.

Week of April 4: Final brainstorming. Last chance to come up with any additional ideas.

Week of April 11: Finalizing and firming up ideas. You'll pick the best of the bunch and refine them so they are fully formed and well thought-out tactics and suggestions. How many? A minimum of five, but the more the merrier, right?

Due to Blackboard by Monday, April 18: Final project report. This should include discussion of your ideas, clearly and fully explained with solid rationale (including citing research where you can.) In addition, it should include a section on influencers and potential sources you've identified.

Structure of project report:

1. Start with the goal.

The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET get more millennials to watch a documentary on human trafficking.

The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET get more millennials to read and listen to stories about the death penalty referendum.

2. Discuss the ideas

Title of idea

Explanation – clearly explain the idea. They need to understand fully what they would do to make your idea work.

Consider mocking up your ideas. Visuals are always good.

Rationale (with any research) – explain why do you think this is a good engagement idea that would work for NET.

Cite examples that other outlets have used or research.

Think about obstacles NET might have and how you can get around those.

Here's an example:

Engage with influencers

Explanation: We have identified several influencers that could be tagged on social media to help spread the word about the NET documentary before it is released and during its publication schedule.

The list includes:

Rationale: Influencers can be instrumental in helping spread the word. Everyone should have an idea that involves engaging with influencers.

*** *Everyone’s report should include a list of influencers NET could use to get the word*

Also decide:

- How do you want to write the report? One person – or several splitting up the task? *You probably should assign one person to edit once it is completed.*
- Do you want to create a visual presentation when you pitch your ideas to NET? Who will create it?
- How do you want to handle your presentation? One person from the group or more than one person?

Name	Blue sky project idea list		
Description			
Rubric Detail			
	Levels of Achievement		
Criteria	Proficient	Competent	Novice
Clarity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Explanations are clear and it is obvious you have thought about being helpful and useful to your audience.	75 to 89 % Some parts of the document are unclear and/or confusing.	0 to 74 % Most of the document is unclear or confusing.
Content Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % Your suggestions represent good engagement opportunities and the social posts are engaging.	75 to 89 % Some of your suggestions do not represent good engagement opportunities or some of your social posts are not engaging.	0 to 74 % Most of your suggestions don't represent good engagement opportunities or most of your social posts are not engaging.
Mechanics Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % You had two or fewer spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	75 to 89 % You had three to five spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.	0 to 74 % You had five or more spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.
Quantity Weight 25.00%	90 to 100 % 12 or more suggestions are offered.	75 to 89 % 10 to 12 suggestions are offered.	0 to 74 % Fewer than 10 suggestions are offered.

Appendix J: Blue sky group work

As a group, review and answer the following audience questions as best you can.

Then discuss engagement examples from the readings and video that could be used in a similar way in your Blue Sky Projects. (Public broadcasting report: <http://go.unl.edu/u6oz>)

See if you can identify at least three that might be adapted for use in your project.

- Who's already talking about what you're covering? Where/how (offline and online) are those conversations taking place?
- Whose experience or expertise could help you in your reporting? What sources are you looking for, and how could we get creative about finding them? (This could be specific people, or communities of people.) Or should we invite someone to contribute their own voice as a companion to your story?
- Is there an opportunity for — and would there be benefit from — letting the community know what you're working on as you're still reporting? Is there any danger in doing that?
- What do you hope your story will accomplish? Is there conversation that might (or should?) follow? If so, what could (should?) we do to facilitate or be a part of that?
- Who's your target audience? Who do you think most needs — or would most enjoy — the story you're telling and information you're providing? How can you make sure they're invited to see what you produce, and interact with it?
- What can the audience DO with your story, or in response to it?

Appendix K: Presentation evaluation

News Engagement Presentation Evaluation

Your name (optional) _____

Thank you for talking the time to share your thoughts on these presentations.

1. The explanations about the engagement ideas were clear and understandable.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Exceptional

Any specific comments?

2. The group backed up their ideas with sound rationale and/or research.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Exceptional

Any specific comments?

3. The presentation was polished, organized, logical and interesting.

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Exceptional

Any specific comments?

4. What particular ideas caught your attention and why?

Appendix L: Blue sky presentations

Human Trafficking

News Engagement Campaign

Group 1

Becca Mann

Chloe Brimm

*The other two group members did not want to be identified.

Strategy One;

Ongoing social media.

Compose new Tweet



Interviewing a group of women impacted by trafficking in NE today. They hope to continue the conversation, to stop the violence. #NETvoices



1

 Tweet

Compose new Tweet



I look forward to watching this documentary with my children when it comes out, to educate them on real issues in our community. #NETvoices



1

 Tweet

Strategy Two;

*Promotion from UNL Athletic
Department.*



Strategy Three ;

*Reach out to criminal justice departments
who might want to partner with NET.*

NUSAMS, Justice Mission Chapter

Strategy Four;



Network with Nebraska State Troopers.

Strategy Five ;

M/F?

Student/Faculty?

What does human
trafficking mean to
you?

Creating polls.

How many human
trafficking cases do
you believe Nebraska
has each year?

Do you know someone who
has been a victim of
human trafficking?

Strategy Six ;

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

*Have a screening of the documentary at
the Ross or Film Streams.*

FILM  STREAMS™
AT THE RUTH SOKOLOF THEATER

Strategy Seven ;

Live Tweet Alongs During Screenings.

Compose new Tweet



I am impressed w/ the initial statistics of the NET documentary. I didn't know human trafficking was that prevalent in NE. #NETtrafficking



2

 Tweet

Compose new Tweet



This scene was difficult to film as a reporter, because of the emotional impact of those affected in that moment. #NETtrafficking



11

 Tweet

Thank you.



BLUE SKY PROJECT

| HUMAN TRAFFICKING |

PRESENTED BY GROUP 2: BETH HEDLEY, PAT RADIGAN & SARAH BERGER



The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET get more millennials to watch a documentary on human trafficking.

OUR STRATEGIES



| HANDOUTS & SNAPSHOTS |
| 'BEHIND THE SCENES' |
| MEANINGFUL MEMENTOS |
| MOBILE-FRIENDLY MICROSITE |
| ONLINE QUIZZES |
| E-NEWSLETTERS |
| TWITTER LISTS |
| INFLUENCERS |

- Engage with some of the on campus influencers listed below and partner with them to create a hand out and snapshot project.
 - Reaching out to partner with groups can be done through social media or through directly emailing contacts/presidents/representatives from each group.
-

Who are the victims of human trafficking?



BEHIND THE SCENES



- As the series continues to be filmed, NET could use Snapchat to promote the making of the series. The stories could include clips of interviews, set-up, and planning. This can be done throughout the whole process in order to lessen the workload for NET.
- As the series comes closer, clips could become previews of the actual documentary.
- In addition, a geotag with a specific hashtag promoting the series could also be included in the snap stories to create more unity between all the other engagement ideas.
- According to Business Insider, $\frac{2}{5}$ of 18-year-olds said they use Snapchat multiple times a day, and most users are between the ages of 18 and 25.



BEHIND THE SCENES



MEANINGFUL MEMENTOS



- **Option A** - Hand out replica pieces of jewelry, a trinket or other meaningful object, and spark a word-of-mouth movement among those reached
- **Option B** - A mixed handout/snapshot specifically targeted toward awareness and participation on social channels
- **Option C** - A social-based 'deliverable' that allows individuals to tag their own images or graphics with a themed filter, overlay or other feature



MOBILE-FRIENDLY MICROSITE



- **A landing page similar to what NET already has done for previous issues, but geared toward mobile and direct interaction with digital content**
 - **Tweak expectations to match content, depth, and then measure it using the microsite and targeted analytics**
-

ONLINE QUIZZES



- **An issue oriented news quiz that sources answers to NET or other PBS material that explains the context and facts around the issue.**
 - **Can go beyond fact-based answers and quiz readers over the details of cases and first-hand accounts of survivors to truly expose people to the reality of human trafficking in a question-by-question format.**
 - **Questions could be as follows: “How many arrests are made on trafficking related offenses in Nebraska?” ... “How did a majority of the girls recovered in Nebraska fall into a trafficking situation?”**
-

- **Newsletters will provide constant updates about the documentary in order to generate interest and awareness throughout Nebraska.**
 - **The newsletter can include, but is not limited to, links to the stories, documentary teasers and links to the microsite.**
 - **Current subscribers to NET's can receive this newsletter as well as new subscribers from the handout/snapshot experiment and social media posts.**
-

INFLUENCERS



Local Sphere

@UNLNews @NEWesleyan
@UNK_StudentLife #UNL
@TheBayLincoln @Huskers @UNLGreek
@CortinaTweets @UNLincoln
@UNLDigitalArts
@itsgabrielleu



| THANK YOU FOR LISTENING |

THE DEATH PENALTY

>> ENGAGING MILLENNIALS <<

GROUP 3: Nikita Higgins, Mercedes Price & Mason Porterville

Goal

The goal of our engagement strategies is to provide NET with ideas to help them better engage with millennials to bring in more traffic to NET's social media outlets concerning the topic of the death penalty.

ENGAGEMENT PLAN:

- Include the link from NET's story from their website within each engagement strategy so our audience can easily see NET's coverage for this topic.
- Use the hashtag #NETDeathPenalty unless otherwise specified.
- Give millennials a voice.
- News by the people not for the people.

PRIMARY INFLUENCERS:

>> Start with millennials who already care about this topic <<

- UNL: ASUN
 - Spencer Hartman (student body president & student regent)
- UNK: student government
 - Evan Calhoun (student body president & student regent)
- CU: Creighton Student Union
 - Kayman Nixon (student body president)
- UNO: SG-UNO
 - Brock Lewis (student body president & student regent)



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY #1

#NETFactOfTheDay- Hashtag Campaign

#NETFactOfTheDay Campaign:

- The week leading up to the vote we will have NET post to social media a fact about the death penalty or about how to vote for this issue.
- We believe that if you want millennials to be interested in something, you first have to make sure they know enough about it.
- Keep the engagement going on this issue by being active on social media via repetition.
- These facts can be made into a graphic so the information is more visually appealing.

#NETFactOfTheDay Campaign

- Examples:
 - “Did you know: It costs roughly \$36,000 per year to house a death row inmate.” #NETFactofTheDay
 - “Did you know: From 1973-2013, 31 death sentences were given.” #NETFactofTheDay
 - “Did you know: You can vote on this issue by clicking on this [link](#) to register.” #NETFactofTheDay



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY #2

#NETPassItOn- Hashtag Campaign

#NETPassItOn Campaign:

- After posting a story we suggest that NET then asks their current followers to tag 3 friends who might be interested in this story and encourage them to pass it on.
- We want to also ask the student government groups to tag 3 of their friends on their campuses. Start with millennials to reach more millennials.
- Using hashtag campaigns can keep the conversation active and easy to participate in.
- Simple way to spread the word and have more of a reach by creating a chain effect where more and more people engage with the story and pass it on.
- This idea is already happening with a lot of videos but no one is really using it with sharing news.



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY #3

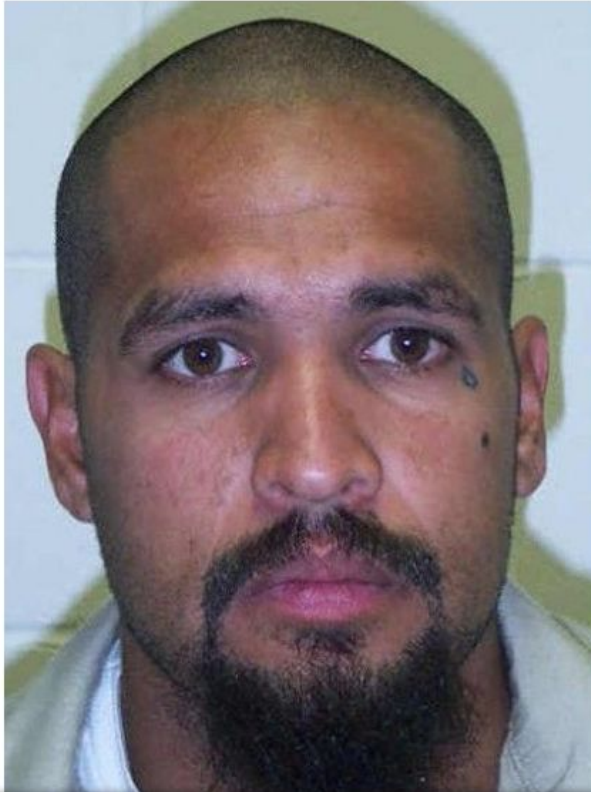
Online Quiz

3. Raymond Mata was convicted of killing and dismembering his ex girlfriends son. He then fed his body parts to a dog and kept some to himself which he later showed his ex girlfriend. Would you sentence this man to death?

Yes

No

Raymond Mata



ONLINE QUIZ

- Create an online quiz on social media with the goal of informing readers on the current issue of the death penalty.
- The quiz will include recent local death penalty cases in Nebraska so that they can be informed because the truth is that millennials don't usually vote especially if they don't know the issue that they are voting on.
- We suggest to share the results of the quiz on social media.
- We recognize the provocative nature of this quiz but our goal in this is to give millennials a voice and allow them to weigh in on the topic and be heard. We want to create a buzz and make this informative, interesting and eye catching.

Carey Dean Moore



1. Carey Dean Moore murdered two Omaha cab drivers within five days. One of his victims was shot three times "just to prove he could take a man's life all by himself," Moore said. Would you sentence this man to death?

- Yes
- No

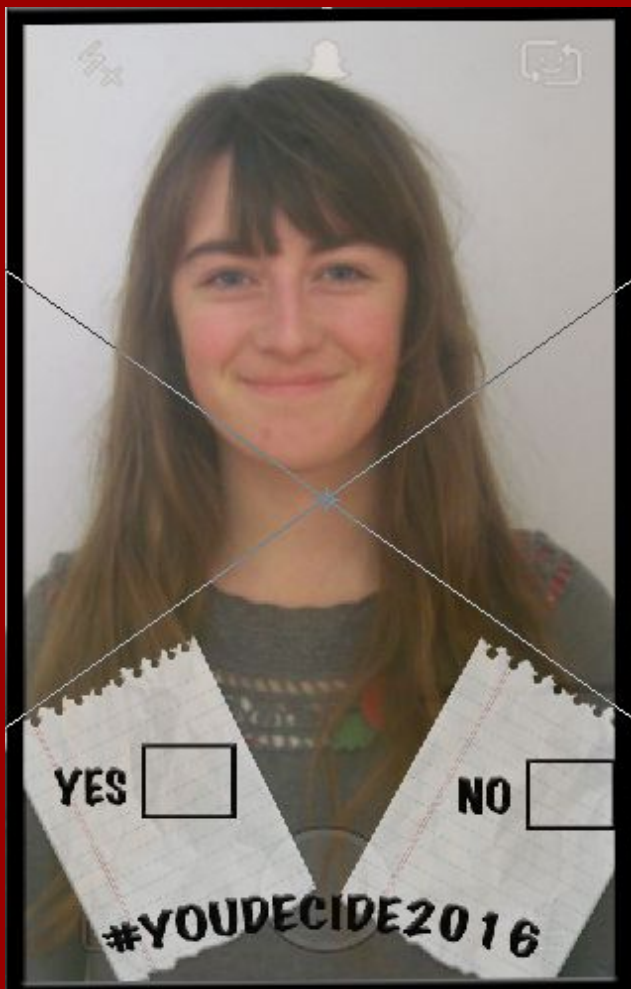


ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY #4

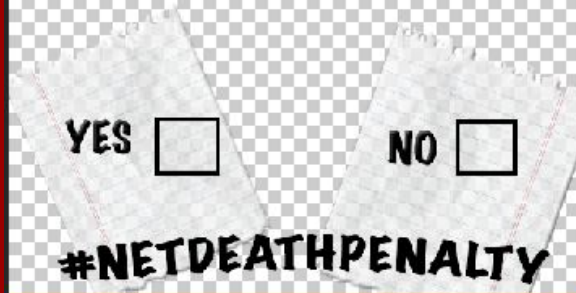
Snapchat

SNAPCHAT

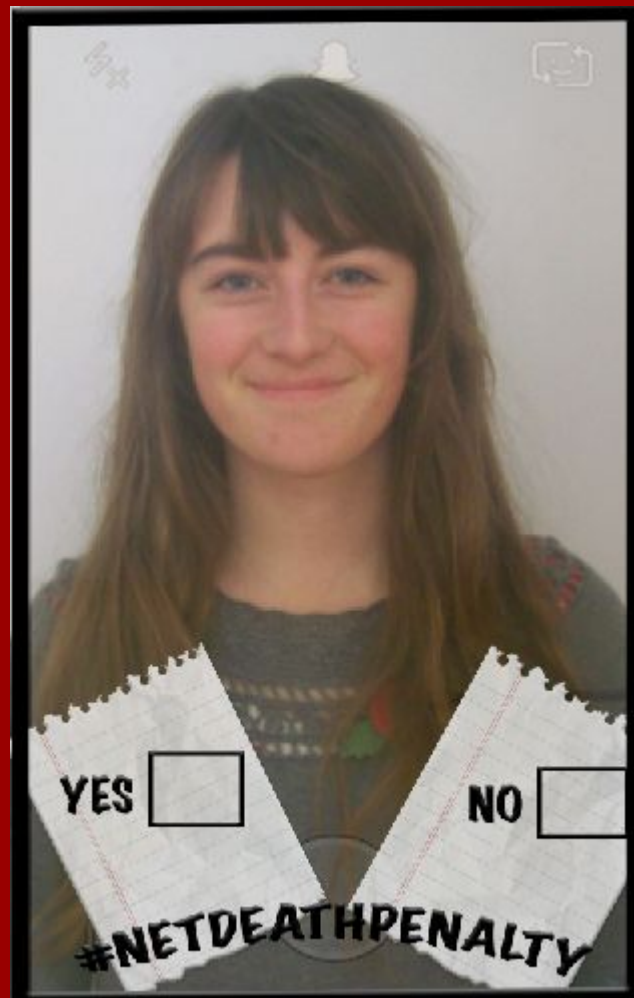
- Start an NET snapchat.
- Once the account is started, we will make a submission to www.snapchat.com/geo for the filter.
- The filter will have a fake ballot with the Lincoln capitol and the words “You Decide 2016.”
- Advertise NET’s account at the Instagram event
- Use this platform as a way to do engagement for other upcoming news stories.



BUFFER ZONE (149 PX) - AVOID PLACING IMPORTANT IMAGE ELEMENTS HERE.



BUFFER ZONE (149 PX) - AVOID PLACING IMPORTANT IMAGE ELEMENTS HERE.



SNAPCHAT

- We believe this will be effective because the millennial generation uses snapchat in a more personal/political way since the information does not stay public for long.
- Snapchat is a good way to highlight NET's day to day coverage of media events, specifically on the death penalty.
- **According to Business Insider, Snapchat has over 200 million monthly active users. According to eMarketer, 18-24 year olds make up 45% of all Snapchat users in the U.S. and 20% of all iPhone users are on Snapchat.**
- **Cost for geofilter for the union is \$28.92**

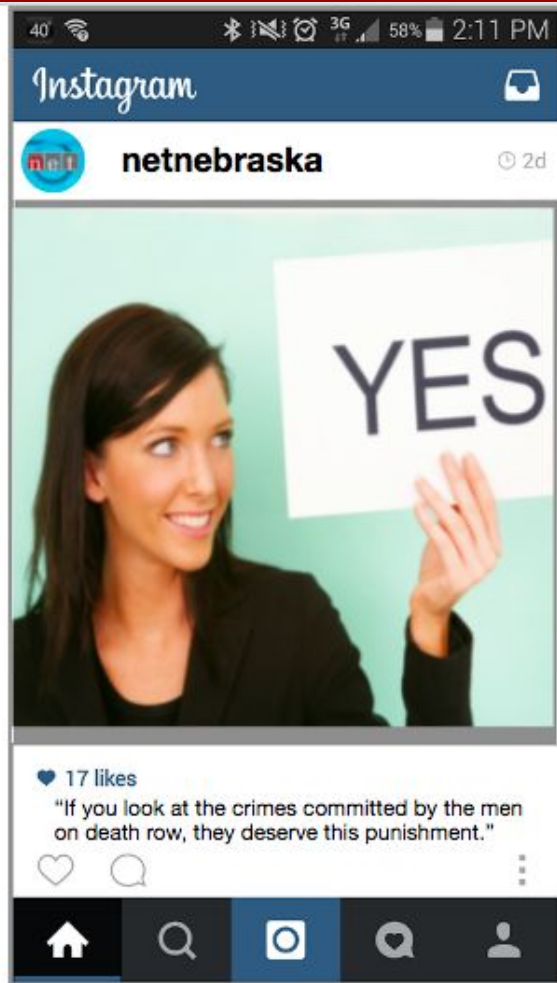


ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY #5

Instagram- You Decide

INSTAGRAM EVENT- “You Decide”

- In September of 2015, Instagram surpassed Twitter with its number of users by 100 million.
- The day of or before a photo booth/polaroid camera will be set up in the union by the student government groups and students will be asked to share their opinions on the death penalty. We will ask them to hold a “YES” sign if yes and a “NO” sign if no. If they don’t have an answer well have them hold a sign that says “Undecided.”
- Using the Snapchat geofilter at this event to promote the snapchat account.
- We will collect all of their pictures on a bulletin board. We will post their photos to Instagram. Under each photo will be a one or two sentence quote from the subject in the photo.



INSTAGRAM EVENT- “You Decide”

- We hope to inspire the audience to join the conversation in a visual way where they can see their friends and people on the campus. By creating a series of visuals NET can generate familiarity with the posts and encourage their audience to engage.
- With real local students, NET can create a buzz and let millennials know that NET is the news source that will let them be heard and have a voice.
- A good way to be more creative on Instagram and start a big following.

OTHER INFLUENCERS:

- Amnesty Creighton Chapter
- Governor Pete Ricketts
- Senator Ernie Chambers
- Sec. of State John Gale



THE END

>> ENGAGING MILLENNIALS <<

GROUP 3: Nikita Higgins, Mercedes Price & Mason Porterville

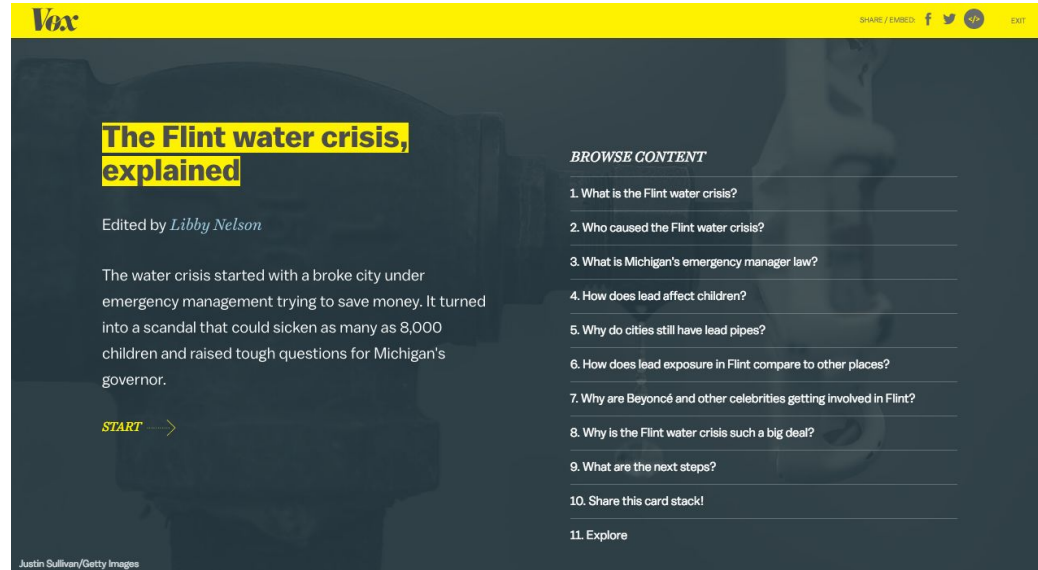
Death Penalty Referendum Coverage

How to engage millennials

**Group 4: Drew Preston, Molly Chapple, Mecca Slaughter and
Ali Huppert**

Issues page

Create issues page on NET's site for millennials to find comprehensive information about the referendum and other death penalty info.



The screenshot shows a Vox article page with a yellow header. The article title is "The Flint water crisis, explained" in white text on a dark background. Below the title, it says "Edited by Libby Nelson". The main text begins with "The water crisis started with a broke city under emergency management trying to save money. It turned into a scandal that could sicken as many as 8,000 children and raised tough questions for Michigan's governor." There is a "START" button with a right-pointing arrow. On the right side, there is a "BROWSE CONTENT" section with a list of 11 items, each with a horizontal line below it. The items are: 1. What is the Flint water crisis?, 2. Who caused the Flint water crisis?, 3. What is Michigan's emergency manager law?, 4. How does lead affect children?, 5. Why do cities still have lead pipes?, 6. How does lead exposure in Flint compare to other places?, 7. Why are Beyoncé and other celebrities getting involved in Flint?, 8. Why is the Flint water crisis such a big deal?, 9. What are the next steps?, 10. Share this card stack!, and 11. Explore. The Vox logo is in the top left, and social media icons and "SHARE / EMBED" are in the top right. A small credit "Justin Sullivan/Getty Images" is at the bottom left.

Vox

SHARE / EMBED f t

The Flint water crisis, explained

Edited by *Libby Nelson*

The water crisis started with a broke city under emergency management trying to save money. It turned into a scandal that could sicken as many as 8,000 children and raised tough questions for Michigan's governor.

START →

Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

BROWSE CONTENT

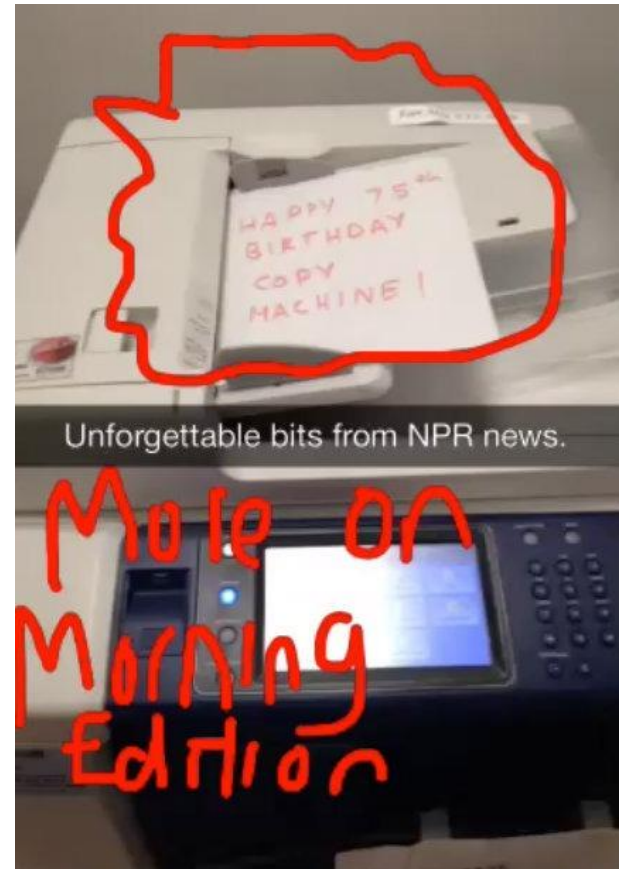
1. What is the Flint water crisis?
2. Who caused the Flint water crisis?
3. What is Michigan's emergency manager law?
4. How does lead affect children?
5. Why do cities still have lead pipes?
6. How does lead exposure in Flint compare to other places?
7. Why are Beyoncé and other celebrities getting involved in Flint?
8. Why is the Flint water crisis such a big deal?
9. What are the next steps?
10. Share this card stack!
11. Explore

Snapchat

NET employees could walk around places they're working and ask people their opinions on the death penalty.

These short responses could be posted on their account.

Snapchat could also be used for behind-the-scenes footage of NET reporters reporting on death penalty stories.



Screenshot courtesy of [Mashable.com](https://www.mashable.com)

Online polling

Online polls could be done on NET's social media or website.

These polls not only help you engage audiences, but can be useful in finding out what kind of focus or coverage readers want to see about the death penalty issue.



The screenshot shows a tweet from the Los Angeles Times (@latimes) asking for opinions on California's minimum wage plan. The poll results are displayed as horizontal bars: 48% for 'It seems fair.', 32% for 'It's too high.', and 20% for 'It's not high enough.' The tweet has 62 retweets and 56 likes, and was posted on March 28, 2016.

LA Times @latimes Following

What do you think about California's plan to increase the minimum wage to \$15 over the next 6 years?

32% It's too high.

20% It's not high enough.

48% It seems fair.

3,456 votes • Final results

RETWEETS 62 LIKES 56

5:34 PM - 28 Mar 2016

Email newsletters

Per the API, email is the most common digital activity.

Like the separate Web page, a separate newsletter for the issue highlights interest in it.

They're popular nowadays and an easy, personal way to directly reach audiences.

Like the issues page, this should be a one-stop shop and include lots of info in the email itself.

The New York primary has some Sanders fans crying foul even before the polls close; Iraq's political meltdown; Great Britain proves it can't have nice things like democracy.

Vox Sentences is written by Dylan Matthews and Dara Lind.

TOP NEWS

New York enjoys rare taste of political relevance



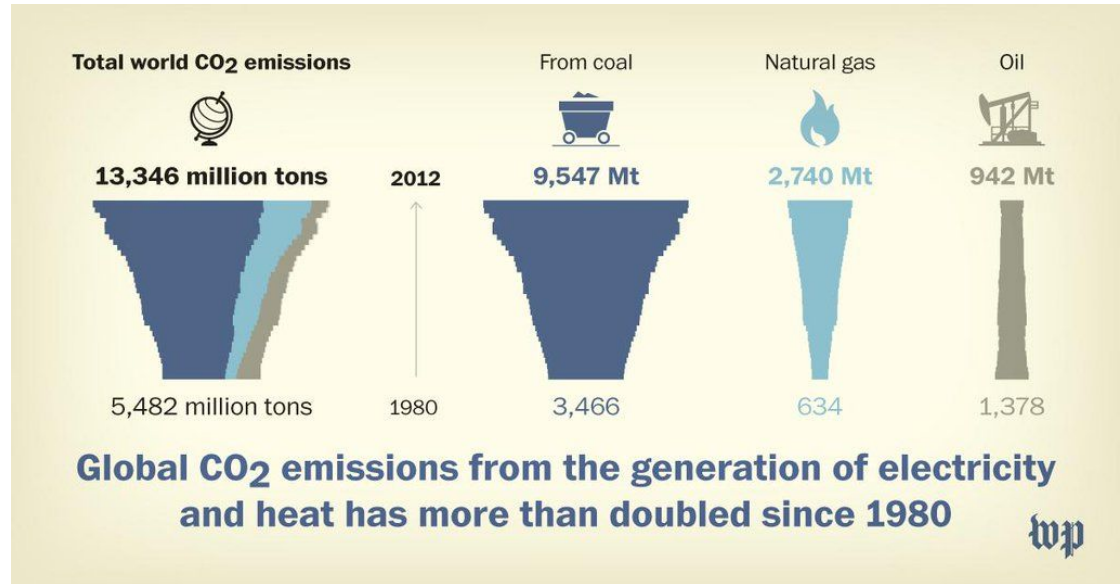
- In case you have somehow missed weeks of exhaustive (not to say navel-gazing) coverage in New York-based media, the New York primaries are today. [Vox / Andrew Prokop]
- Donald Trump is expected to win. Donald Trump is still expected to win the nomination. This is despite the fact that he's had a rough enough month to engage in a full-blown campaign staff shakeup (arguably the most traditional thing he's done yet)... [CBS News / Major Garrett]
- ...and despite his referring to "7-11" instead of 9/11 at a rally in Buffalo last night. (Greg Sargent has a nice meditation on why this might matter to New Yorkers.) [Washington Post / Greg Sargent]
- Meanwhile, Hillary Clinton is expected to win the Democratic primary — despite the fact that Bernie Sanders is gaining momentum. [Vox / Ezra Klein]
- One big reason for this is that New York state only allows registered Democrats to vote in the Democratic primary, and the party-registration deadline closed six months ago — far earlier than it does in other states. [FiveThirtyEight / Leah Libresco]
- Many Sanders supporters are attacking this as undemocratic or unfair. At least one celebrity Sanders endorser (Vampire Weekend lead singer Ezra Koenig, the most famous Ezra K. born in 1984) is already saying, before the polls have even closed, that the primary is illegitimate. [Ezra Koenig via Twitter]
- Closed primaries aren't unusual, and the six-month deadline is probably restrictive but not disqualifyingly so. The bigger problem might be that 50,000 voters have mysteriously vanished from the rolls in Brooklyn, and city officials don't really know why. [New York Post / Yoav Gonen and Carl Campanile]

Infographics

Infographics can be easily shared and understood

Shown to increase audience by 12 percent, according to unbounce.com.

- Cost of the death penalty
- Number of people executed
- States still practicing the death penalty
- Timeline of the issue



Video content

A series of for/against videos series could be helpful to to be shown on NET's Website and/or Facebook account.

Man on the street, student group, affected families interviews.

A variety of content encourages more people to engage with the channel.



Influencers

Sources for stories can also be used to promote the content that involves them.

-Sen. Ernie Chambers has a large following on Facebook and would be inclined to share articles by NET.

-Sen. Adam Morfeld also has a large following made up of a lot of millennials because UNL city campus is in his district. He is also likely to share articles by NET.



Ernie Chambers
April 13 at 9:42am · 🌐

Yeah, they're talking about Nebraska and [Ernie Chambers](#) in the [The New York Times](#) today.

"It means that now when people start organizing at the neighborhood level, it matters because we can get one of those votes," said State Senator Ernie Chambers of Omaha, a political independent who led the opposition to the bill.



Nebraska Legislature Rejects Winner-Take-All Electoral Vote System

The current system allows for Electoral College votes to be split between candidates and parties, and...

NYTIMES.COM | BY MITCH SMITH

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

👤 Pat Temple Reilly, Ian Eli Lee and 378 others

Chronological

93 shares

In-person events

- Plaza Event
 - Marketing Team/Department
 - Student Groups (Ambassadors)
 - Death Penalty Information
 - Opinion Section
 - Extras
- Q&A Event
 - Family members
 - Prosecutors
 - Influencers
 - Student Opinion



Appendix M: Blue sky reports

Human Trafficking

NET News Engagement Strategies

By Becca Mann and Chloe Brim

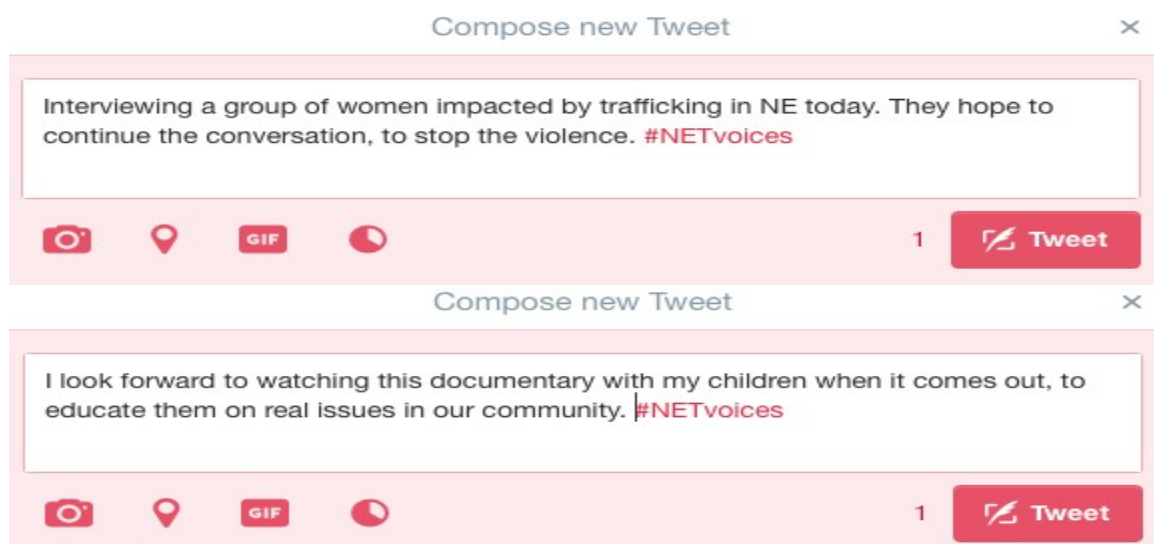
(Two students who were part of the group declined to publicly have their names used)

The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET engage millennials in posts and a documentary about human trafficking.

Idea #1- Ongoing Social Media

Explanation: Using infographics, teasers, Q&A and polls to grab attention of millennials and share information to get people to watch the documentary. Develop a necessary hashtag, so users can interact with each other on the subject. Reporters can also provide a “behind-the-scenes” look at the creation of the documentary through videos and photos, giving followers a chance to feel a part of the documentary before it is even released.

Rationale: Implementing social media campaigns will bring more awareness to NET as a whole, and more specifically the human trafficking documentary they are trying to promote. As millennials are the biggest demographic on social media, this is a great way to reach them.



Influencers:

- Rejuvenating Women- [@ShameNomore1](#)
- National Human Trafficking Resource Center- [@Polaris Project](#)
- Nebraska State Patrol- [@NEStatePatrol](#)
- UNL Human Trafficking- <http://humantrafficking.unl.edu/team.aspx>
- I've Got a Name/The Bay Lincoln- [@TheBayLincoln](#)
- Central Nebraska Human Trafficking and Immigration Outreach- <https://www.facebook.com/cnhtio/>
- Nebraska Family Alliance- [@nebfamily](#)
- Tiny Hands Int.- [@TinyHandsIntl](#)
- Criminal Justice Departments at University of Nebraska Schools as well as other schools in the state of NE- <http://www.unl.edu/criminal-justice/contact-us>
- Nebraska Students Against Modern-day Slavery (NUSAMS)- [@NUSAMS](#)

Idea #2- Promotion from the UNL Athletic department

- **Husker Distinction Council**
- **National Consortium for Academics and Sports**

Explanation: These two organizations were very involved in human trafficking last year and there is a year-round task force that addresses human trafficking issues. There may be something like this at other campuses, as well, and NET can see if the athletic departments can help them get something started. Examples of this could be athletes promoting the cause on social media, word of mouth or supporting the cause through fundraisers. Invite these groups to the premiere of the documentary as well.

Rationale: Students in the athletic department have been involved in human trafficking events in the past and as some are very well known. They may be able to reach people that NET would not normally reach. The NCAS works with athletic departments all over the country to bring attention to hot-button issues like human trafficking. The organization also works closely with UNICEF and its End Trafficking movement. Since the Husker Distinction Council worked on the awareness week at UNL last year, they would have experience. They may also be able to provide advice on getting something started at other universities.

Idea #3- Reach out to the criminal justice department and organizations around campus

- **NUSAMs**
- **Justice Mission Chapter**
- **Similar Organizations**

Explanation: With the help of these organizations, NET can create a discussion panel as well as several showings of the documentary at college campuses. These organizations and departments can increase awareness of events, as well as attendance. They can do this through word of mouth on their campuses, as well as their own social media promotions (their own creative content, or retweeting and interacting with NET's posts). NET could also reach out to students at other colleges and universities in Nebraska:

UNO: <http://bit.ly/1SgoD6W>

UNK: <http://bit.ly/1U32LOd>

Wayne State: <http://bit.ly/1SVtuaB>

Rationale: These are groups of students who already have knowledge on human trafficking and they are passionate about the topic. Reaching out to those who are already interested can help spread the word to those who may not be as informed.

Idea #4- Networking with Nebraska State Troopers

Explanation: Reach out to the Nebraska State Troopers and ask them to use their social media to tweet posts, or pictures with stats or facts they have on trafficking. Potentially have them hand out flyers or cards with information about the documentary on it, as well as when it airs.

Rationale: Police departments have a solid amount of information and statistics on the subject, and there is a strong chance they would be interested helping develop a general understanding in the community of trafficking in Nebraska. Trafficking is something that we assume Nebraska State Troopers work with directly because of I-80. We would assume that they are the law enforcement agency that would be kind of on the front line of this type of police work. Not only would they be able to help getting the work out on their own, but we are sure other law enforcement groups throughout Nebraska would interact with any social media about something like trafficking that Nebraska State Troopers talk about. So you could have the chance of the social media being seen by a good number of people who normally would not see. Having a group like state troopers providing information about NET's documentary gives NET a chance to reach a large amount of people, they could see interactions from other law enforcement groups in Nebraska like OPD and LPD to evaluate patterns in regards to sex trafficking.

Idea #5- Creating polls

Explanation: NET could partner with groups such as campus newspapers and have a poll on Twitter about trafficking. The poll would target students and people on college campuses to see what they think

about the topic. There could either be one poll question or a series of poll questions and on Twitter, the campus newspaper can choose how long they want the poll up.

Rationale: It's important to see what students know about human trafficking and what they would like to know, as well as break misconceptions.

Example questions:

- **M/F - Student/Faculty - What organization are you affiliated with?**
- **What does human trafficking mean to you?**
- **Do you know someone who has been a victim of human trafficking?**
- **How many human trafficking cases do you believe Nebraska has each year?**
- **T/F - Women are the only victims of human sex trafficking.**

Idea #6- Have a screening of the documentary at a place like the Ross or Film Streams in Omaha

Explanation:

Use a press release and social media interactions to invite the following groups to the premiere:

- **NUSAMS**
- **Husker Distinction Council**
- **UNL Human Trafficking Team**
- **UNL Justice Mission Chapter**
- **Women's Center**
- **Criminal justice professors and interested students**

Also have a panel discussion afterward with reporters who worked on the documentary to answer questions and provide a discussion of their experiences. If possible, also invite people who were featured in the documentary to share their experiences and give a first-hand look into their lives and the obstacles they have faced through being trafficked.

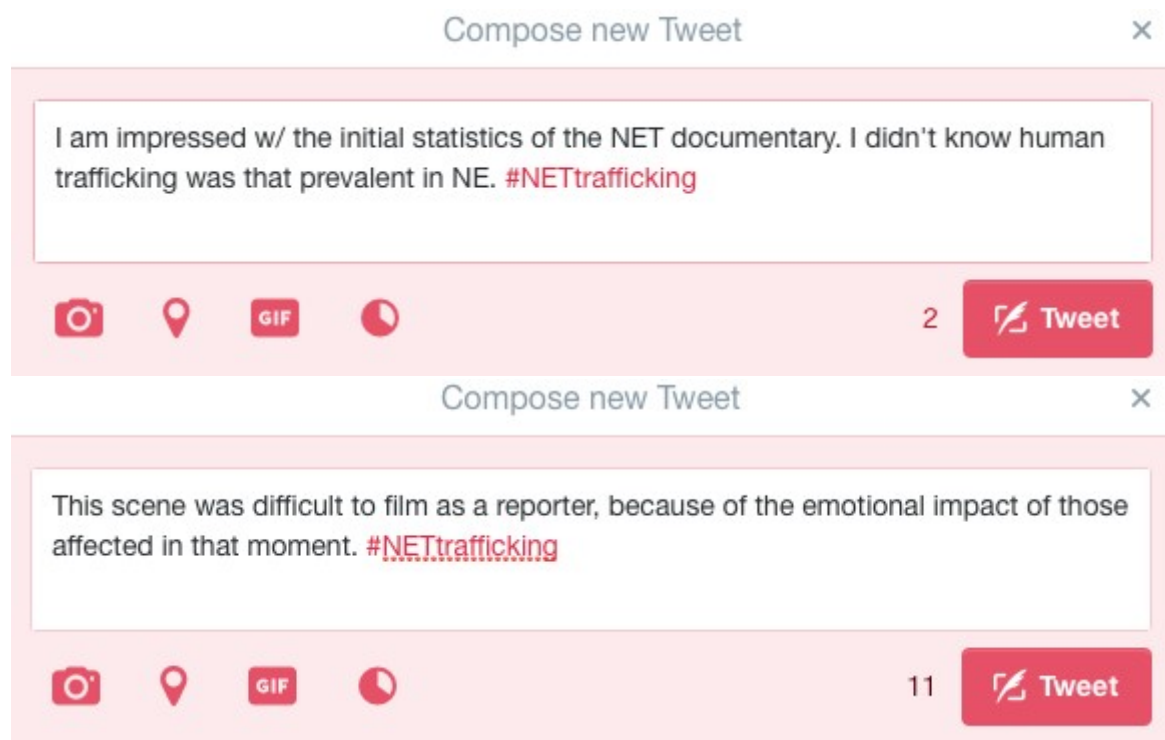
There can be more than one screening, with many different audiences. For example, one audience could be the whole UNL campus while another could be mothers and daughters only.

Rationale: This is an event that can be exclusive to people in the community and provide a face-to-face opportunity to interact with those who are really invested in raising awareness of human trafficking. Asking those who come to the showing to tweet after the premier will also create buzz with their followers leading up to the premiere on television.

Idea #7- Live Tweet along

Explanation: A hashtag can be developed and NET reporters who worked on the project can facilitate a live tweet along during the first couple airings of the documentary. People can use this opportunity to share opinions and thoughts on what is happening on the screen. NET also could work with student organizations to get them to help promote the documentary and tweet along on their campuses. There can be a live tweet along during the premiere of the documentary as well, to start the conversation.

Rationale: This is a way to engage with people as they are watching the documentary. This way they can share in real-time what they think about the reporting and stories as well as propose questions they may have. This is also a way for reporters on the story to share their experiences.



These news engagement strategies have been researched and strategized in order to best provide awareness and audience for NET's human trafficking documentary. Thank you to the NET professionals who came to watch the presentations.

1. Goal

The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET get more millennials to watch a documentary on human trafficking.

2. Discuss Ideas: Explanation and Rationale

Idea #1: Handouts (all inclusive) & Snapshots

- **Explanation:** Engage and partner with some of the on-campus influencers listed below to create a handout and snapshot project. This does not have to be done as a formal event if NET can get an interested on-campus influencer or group to execute the snapshot idea. Reaching out to partner with groups can be done through social media or through directly emailing contacts/presidents/representatives from each group. Once a partnership is made, groups can talk with students/millennials and ask them particular questions surrounding the topic. The students/millennials can then write their answers on a card with the campaign hashtag placed at the bottom (to create uniformity.) Questions can include but are not limited to: “How many girls do you think are trafficked out of Nebraska a year?” or “What are the most common causes/motivations of sex trafficking?” The groups will take a picture of participants and post these snapshots onto social media accounts.

Through having everyday people answer these questions, NET can possibly expose some misconceptions about the topic and can then promote the documentary as an educational tool. If exposing misconceptions is seen as possibly shaming, then identities can be protected and faces do not have to be photographed.

In addition to snapshots, handouts can also be distributed when groups ask people questions around the topics. These handouts can include buttons, stickers, flyers etc. with the date the documentary is going to drop and with a hashtag or logo to create uniformity. They can also include a link of where to find the series.

- **Rationale:** Millennials respond well to interactive and visual campaigns so this can encourage higher engagement rates while building awareness and discussion. By engaging with groups that are already on campuses, NET can lessen the workload for while also connecting with influencers that are passionate about this issue.

Idea #2: Special Handouts

- **Explanation:** In addition to the traditional handouts mentioned above, replica or specially designed faux jewelry or similar handouts to represent the strength of survivors

could also be given out to create a more personal touch while promoting the series. Handouts could include a replica locket, or charm, or other personal item that a trafficking survivor held onto for hope or that was a piece of their past life that they maintained. Sources used in the documentary could help contribute ideas to make these items easier to think of or to make. It's not about an expensive handout, either; it's about something that millennials could hold onto, post pictures with on social media and that could potentially spark conversations about the documentary and the issue of human trafficking in Nebraska. Handouts could be accompanied with a hashtag or latch onto an already existing trafficking hashtag so that the posts generated by NET's campaign become part of a larger stream of social posts and attract new viewers.

- **Rationale:** By making these items more unique and personal, NET can leave more an impact on potential viewers. Few organizations hand out promotional materials like these, and an audience might feel more connected/interested because of it, and this emotional appeal would make it more likely that millennials would personally post or get involved in the conversation. Even if it does not amount to a huge number, entering the social stream of college students and tapping into their network of friends and followers gives an issue like this the potential to at least go semi-viral, and spread beyond Lincoln thanks to just a few quality interactions based on these handouts.

Idea #3: Microsite

- **Explanation:** A page to organize all of the content and material and to drive social traffic. Could be a simple Bootstrap template or just a plain page within the CMS, but either way it would be a static URL that people could check with and that would have social tags on the page and could be easily shared. Emphasis would be on featuring content, especially for mobile devices, so readers could click and play through all of the different stories and features in one visit. NET has done this with other topics, but this site would be geared toward featuring multiple pieces of digital content directly on the page and have individual elements that could be shared on social as well as the page itself.

NET example: <http://netnebraska.org/basic-page/news/campaign-connection-2016>

Our example: <http://www.patrickradigan.com/bluesky/>

- **Rationale:** Having to navigate through a site to find specific pieces of content, especially for a feature series that isn't readily available, not only discourages traffic, but makes it unlikely that people will share content. Having a page that people know is THE page for this issue gives them something to check back on and allows them to easily share with friends and others if the topic comes up in conversation. The isolation of the content on one page also allows analytics to be funneled into just that one page, and could give you a much better understanding of who interacts with the content and how. In distributing content via the CMS and various landing pages, there is still relevant data and analytics to look at but it becomes much harder to pick apart reasoning and correlation between

numbers and actions when there are more variables to consider. Having one page to promote primarily also allows you to better control socially structured metadata and control what the page looks like when shared on Facebook and Twitter.

Idea #4: E-Newsletters

- **Explanation:** Newsletters will provide constant updates about the documentary in order to generate interest and awareness throughout Nebraska. The newsletter can include, but is not limited to, links to the stories, documentary teasers and links to the microsite. Subscribers could include current subscribers to NET's newsletter and new subscribers from the handout/snapshot experiment and social media posts.
- **Rationale:** This newsletter will offer as a reminder to consistent NET viewers and will create awareness to those who had not heard about the documentary or would like to find out more. This could increase viewership to the documentary as the e-newsletters can be emailed a number of different times before an episode of the documentary shows, for instance, right after one episode has aired, the day before the next episode and the morning of latest episode.

Idea #5: Online Quiz

- **Explanation:** An issue-oriented news quiz that sources answers to NET or other PBS material that explains the context and facts around the issue. Can go beyond fact-based answers and quiz readers over the details of cases and first-hand accounts of survivors to truly expose people to the reality of human trafficking in a question-by-question format. Instead of being 'click-bait' type questions and points, though, the quiz would be intended to have articles and cases linked to it and provide context and resources alongside the questions and points raised. Questions could be as follows: "How many arrests are made on trafficking related offenses in Nebraska?"... "How did a majority of the girls recovered in Nebraska fall into a trafficking situation?"
- **Rationale:** These can attract attention to topics, facts and interviews by using a quiz setting to get readers' attention and interest them in finding out more information. Millennials respond especially well to these due to their interactive nature. They could be promoted via social media, specifically Facebook because research has shown millennials mostly access these quizzes on that platform. And instead of just settling on getting them there, like most only quizzes, this platform could be used to drive traffic and interest into the documentary itself, accompanying work or any other PBS/NPR/NET link or property that has to do with human trafficking. This is a subject that PBS has tackled head-on, so there are a lot of materials we think could be linked and referenced in these interactive quizzes.

Idea #6: Behind the Scenes

- **Explanation:** As the series continues to be filmed, NET could use Snapchat to promote the making of the series. The stories could include clips of interviews, set-up, and planning. This can be done throughout the whole process in order to lessen the workload for NET. As the series comes closer, clips could become previews of the actual documentary. In addition, a geotag with a specific hashtag promoting the series could also be included in the snap stories to create more unity between all the other engagement ideas.
- **Rationale:** This visual element could allow the viewers and readers to gain an interest and bring viewers back to witness the documentary due to a sneak peak that has been created. Many millennials are also on Snapchat already, which can help NET meet them where they already are.

Idea #7: Twitter Lists

- **Explanation:** The use of Twitter lists for this project can be instrumental in understanding popular and discussed content. NET can create Twitter lists to follow influencers; they can visualize what those influencers find particularly valuable to share to their followers, they can understand what types of content are received the most successfully and they can follow the trends.
- **Rationale:** This particular strategy will be vital in creating impactful content; NET will be able to create social posts that they can believe will gain high engagement rates, due to research into influencers tweets, shares and favorites. By ensuring higher engagement rates, we can hope for a successful campaign.

List of influencers:

- **Explanation:** We have identified several influencers that could be tagged on social media to help spread the word about the NET documentary before it is released and during its publication. The list includes:

National/Regional Influencers:

- @enditmovement
- @TinyHandsIntl
- @Anti_Slavery
- @APathAppears
- @Traffick911
- @ive_gotaname
- @AGDougPeterson
- @NeCVC
- @nebfamily

On-campus influencers:

UNL

- NUSAMS -- @NUSAMS
- @UNLGreek [Maybe also tweet at more active houses, or houses that have worked on this issue]
- I Hear the Voices: Justice Week 2016
- <https://www.facebook.com/I-Hear-The-Voices-Justice-Week-2016-460540797472117/>
- <http://www.unl.justiceweek.org>
- @UNLNews [Advocates for student/faculty work, maybe would do the same for NET?]
- @HuskerSAAC [Has worked to fight human trafficking in different projects and ways]
- @UNLDigitalArts [Active on-campus voice, thousands of followers, many with university ties]

UNK

- Discover Leadership @UNK_Leadership
- UNKhealthyEDU @UNKhealthEDU
- Student Life @UNK_StudentLife
- UNK Amnesty @AmnestyUNK
- UNK Greeks @UNK_GreekLife
- The antelope (student newspaper) @unkantelope

Creighton

- Cortina Community @CortinaTweets
 - Creighton Green Dot @CUGreenDot
 - Nebraska Victim Assistance Academy based out of Creighton @NebraskaNEVAA
- **Rationale:** Influencers can be instrumental in helping spread the word, and can help you get into conversations and social channels that you normally would not be able to drop into. Even the smaller influencers in these circles have a voice and place in these communities, and by reaching out to them and getting their voice to carry your message about this documentary you can reach millennials in a unique way.

Death Penalty – Group 3

Goal: The goal of our engagement strategies is to provide NET with ideas to help them better engage with millennials to bring in more traffic to NET’s social media outlets concerning the topic of the death penalty referendum.

1. Online quiz

Explanation: Create an online **quiz** with the goal of informing readers on the current issue of the death penalty. The quiz will include recent localized death penalty cases in Nebraska. For example, each of the 10 men in Nebraska that are currently on death row with a description of their crime and ask the simple question: “Would you sentence this inmate to death?” We suggest following up by directing readers to NET’s stories on the death penalty and providing a link with the phrase; “For more information surrounding the debate check out our feature here” After taking the quiz, the total results from everyone who has submitted a quiz could be displayed to inform readers of an overall opinion on these cases by collecting data and putting it into a visual representation.

Rationale: We hope this will not only inform NET listeners and readers, but also encourage engagement on both platforms by enticing people to question their morals and come to a personal decision on the death penalty. We hope that by taking the quiz, our audience will have a better understanding of Nebraska’s death row population. They may not vote if they don’t know what they are voting on. Our creative design approach to the quiz will capture our audience’s curiosity about the death penalty and motivate them to inform themselves on the issue. The purpose of this quiz is to encourage engagement and direct people to NET’s features for its in-depth reports. We know this might come across as provocative but our goal is to give millennials a voice. It is hard to reach millennials and we recognize that by giving them a voice we can create an interest by giving them a place to be heard. In some ways it is like a public service because we will share the results of the quiz. This is their voice not your voice as NET. **Quizzes have been proven to draw more traffic to a website; 96 percent of users who start Buzz Feed-sponsored quizzes finish them.**

2. #DEATHPENALTYNET

Explanation: This would be a “fact of the day” campaign leading up to the vote that would include posts to Facebook and Instagram with a photo with one fact about the death penalty typed onto a visually appealing background. For example: “Did you know there are currently ten people on death row in Nebraska?” and “Nebraska’s last execution was 1997.”

Rationale: It is our hope that this will keep the issue on the minds of people via repetition.

We believe that it will entice people to follow up on the issue by reading the features that NET could share. **Many social networks, such as Facebook, use algorithms that tend to favor trending social topics.**

3. #NETPassItOn Campaign

Explanation: NET could post a recent story on the death penalty to Facebook with a brief summary of the story and ask followers to tag three friends they know will be interested in the story while using the hashtag #deathpenalty.

Rationale: This simple strategy requires minimal effort on the part of NET. By using the hashtag “death penalty,” NET is not only gaining local recognition but also a national and global interest based on those who are searching the “death penalty” hashtag. By using the hashtag “death penalty,” instead of “death penalty in Nebraska,” NET would expose the story to more potential viewers. Our goal is to not only spread NET’s coverage of the death penalty referendum, but to help but also to help NET grow its social media presence. The more people who click on the hashtag, the more people who are likely to “follow,” or “like,” NET’s social media accounts. NET gains potential viewers through the hashtag as well as the three friends who were tagged in the post and potentially their friends. Those three people may share onto their page, which expands the overall reach. We hope this will create a chain effect, where more and more people are exposed to the story than originally anticipated. **According to BufferSocial, shorter posts get 23 percent+ more interaction.**

4. NET Snapchat

Explanation: Start an NET snapchat. Once the account is started, make a submission to www.snapchat.com/geo for the GEO filter. We estimated using the filter at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Union would cost NET \$28.92. This is cost effective and an efficient tool to engage students on the death penalty. The filter will have a fake ballot with the Lincoln capitol and the words “You Decide 2016.” NET could post its snapchat username to Facebook/Twitter to gain followers. If the filter is approved, make another Facebook/Twitter post asking your followers to make a post using the NET filter. If this trial were successful, it could be used on campuses like UNK, UNO and Creighton.

Rationale: We believe this will be effective because the millennial generation uses Snapchat in a more personal/ political way since the information does not stay public for long. Snapchat is also a good way to highlight NET’s day-to-day coverage of media events, specifically on the death penalty. **According to Business Insider, Snapchat has over 200 million monthly active users. According to eMarketer, 18-24 year olds make up 45 percent of all Snapchat users in the U.S. and 20 percent of all iPhone users are on Snapchat.**

5. You Decide 2016

Explanation: NET could set up a photo booth/polaroid camera at the UNL union and ask students to share their opinions on the death penalty. They could be asked to hold a “YES” sign if yes and a “NO” sign if no. If they don’t have an answer, they could hold an “Undecided” sign. The snapshots could be collected on a bulletin board and the photos could also be posted to Instagram. Under each photo will be a one or two sentence quote from the subject in the photo.

Rationale: We hope to inspire the audience to join the conversation in a visual way where they can see their friends and people they know on campus. By creating a series of visuals, NET can generate familiarity with the posts and encourage their audience to engage. Also by using pictures and opinions from real local students, NET can create a buzz and let millennials know that NET is the news source that will let them be heard and have a voice. **According to statistics by Hootsuite, Instagram is considered the most important social media network for teens in the U.S, above all other networks.**

Primary Influencers identified

UNL ASUN:

Spencer Hartman

STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT & STUDENT REGENT Email: asun1@unl.edu

Phone: (402) 472-8921

UNK Student Government:

Evan J. Calhoun

STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT & STUDENT REGENT Email: unkregent@nebraska.edu Phone:

(308) 865-8523

UNO Student Government:

Brock Lewis

STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT & STUDENT REGENT

Phone: (402) 554-2711

CREIGHTON: CREIGHTON STUDENT UNION

Kayman Nixon

STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT & STUDENT REGENT Email: csupres@creighton.edu

Phone: (402) 280-2468

Other Influencers

Creighton organizations who would tweet for the campaign = **Amnesty Creighton Chapter**

Governor Pete Ricketts

- Twitter: @GovRicketts
- Facebook page: Governor Pete Ricketts

Nebraska Senators:

- Hadley Speaker
- Roy Baker
- Ernie Chambers-- 8,000 followers on FB

Group 4 Final Report

Drew Preston, Molly Chapple, Mecca Slaughter and Alli Huppert

Goal:

The goal of our proposed engagement strategies is to help NET get more millennials to read and listen to stories about the death penalty referendum.

Ideas:

Create a landing site/issues page on NET's site for millennials to find comprehensive information about the death penalty referendum in Nebraska this fall.

Explanation:

The landing site would be a place where all of NET's information about the death penalty issue is located, including articles, videos and the infographics we will propose later in this document. The site could be called "The Nebraska death penalty, explained" or something similar.

Additional information could include the following: a "How to vote" section; a section clarifying what's being voted on, something to the end of "how did we get here;" a recent history on the issue; an FAQ for undecided voters (example: what are some of the costs and benefits to the death penalty); a section with their ongoing coverage; and links to social and email newsletter subscriptions.

Rationale:

We think it would be a good idea to create a site where millennials can come for information regarding the death penalty. Social media is a good way to get quick information to millennial audiences; however, it is not the best way to inform them of all the aspects of the death penalty. This plan plays to NET's strength as an in-depth news source as well as the ways that millennials get their news. Millennials like digging deep into issues for themselves, and NET can be that source.

Vox has done something similar on its website. [Here](#) is an example of a site on Vox about the Flint Water Crisis. Having a comprehensive page to provide in-depth coverage once a millennial audience is established will help build on NET's brand as a [trusted, in-depth news source](#)¹ and lead to organic, word-of-mouth growth among other millennials.

¹ Millennials expect their in-depth sources to be well known and transparent.

Create a Snapchat account for NET:

Explanation:

NET employees could walk around campus or downtown and ask people their opinions on the death penalty. These short responses could be posted to a Snapchat story or a live feed. Influencers, influencer groups and other sources could be posted on NET's Snapchat story giving brief comments and input on the death penalty.

It could also be used for behind-the-scenes NET footage. During a campus event (proposed later in this report), a geofilter could be created so that students could "snap" pictures with the event geofilter over it.

Rationale:

Snapchat is free and it is easy to create an account. [NPR uses Snapchat](#) to engage with their audience. When the Pope visited Washington D.C. last fall, NPR took to Snapchat for quick coverage. An [article](#) by Overdrive noted that NPR's Snapchat story contained "about two minutes of videos featuring people lining the streets, kids patiently playing games as they wait, and short clips of journalists interviewing bystanders."

The use of a geofilter is a good idea because it would be a great way to spread the word and get other students to come join in the campus event. It may cause some students to experience FOMO (fear of missing out). A geofilter was used when Bernie Sanders visited campus, and many students took to Snapchat to share the event.

This would be a great way to spread the word and get other students to come join in on the fun, because it may cause some students to experience FOMO (fear of missing out). A geofilter was used when Bernie Sanders visited campus and a lot of students took to Snapchat to share the event.

Snapchat is good for getting quick bits of information and interesting behind-the-scenes footage to audiences. A possible obstacle to overcome is getting people to follow NET on Snapchat. Luckily, it is easy to gain followers by posting your Snapcode to social media sites. Campus events would also be a good way to get more Snapchat followers.

Conduct online polling:

Explanation:

Ask readers what they think about certain aspects of the death penalty or find out what they know on Facebook, Twitter and NET's webpage ([an example](#) of a Twitter poll they could follow). For example, they could run a poll asking which of these reasons **weren't** cited in favor of the repeal during the Legislature's debate.

Rationale:

These polls not only help you engage audiences, but can be useful in finding out what kind of focus or coverage readers want to see about the death penalty issue. Additionally, since election season is an ongoing topic, NET would have time to slightly tweak its coverage according to the information gathered by polling (for instance, if a poll shows particular audience interest in one aspect of the issue). Although the initial polling participants will be a small group of engaged readers, taking their ideas into account will make this small group feel appreciated and part of the NET community, and it's possible that they'll be more likely to share these catered stories, thus increasing the audience size.

Create a special email newsletter for death penalty referendum coverage (or for election season in general):

Explanation:

In order to capitalize on the interest in the death penalty and other election issues, we think a separate newsletter could keep the audience up-to-date on the latest coverage.

Rationale:

Millennials who are interested in the news read newsletters like older generations read the newspaper. Additionally, the notion that email is dying with millennials [isn't exactly true](#); it's still fairly popular.

A good newsletter to follow the example of would be [Vox Sentences, which are](#) brief but jam-packed full of information (young readers like not having to leave the email). They can link recipients to videos and articles they've written, like they do in their current newsletter. [Lots of major news organizations](#) are doing projects similar to this and are seeing good results.

Visualize data into shareable social content:

Explanation:

One of the best uses of death penalty data would be shareable infographics on Facebook and Twitter. The infographics could also be posted on the landing site/issues page, as well as on the presidential campaign.

Rationale:

[Studies have shown](#) that infographics are shared much more than posts without them. According to [unbounce.com](#), platforms that use infographics often gain 12 percent more audience than those who don't. Infographics are easy to read as well as to understand, being a simple, straightforward way to inform millennials. We'd recommend a weekly infographic about some aspect of the death penalty. In terms of audience data, having contact info with the audience is clearly handy for reaching out to them. And, as previously mentioned, catering story coverage towards the results of online polling will be useful. Possible infographics could include: the cost of the death penalty, the number of people executed, the states that still use the death penalty, a timeline of the issue, etc.

Produce shareable video content for the Web:

Explanation:

NET could create a series of for/against video series to be shown on NET's Website and/or Facebook account. The videos would include man-on-the-street interviews, shots from campus events and interviews with student groups and influencer groups mentioned later. It would also be interesting to interview families who have been affected by the death penalty, if possible. Another way to use video content is to create a quick video showcasing the history of the death penalty in Nebraska. The video could contain facts and graphics that inform voters on the topic.

Rationale:

[MSNBC made a similar video](#) to explain what a caucus is. Other news organizations have utilized video on YouTube, such as [Vox](#). Having a variety of content will encourage more people to engage in the video. One obstacle to overcome is actually getting people to watch the videos. They could be posted to social media, and our influencers could be tagged in the content. People are more likely to view the videos if they are kept short and sweet. It's worth noting that there's been an [increase in millennials following brands](#) on video platforms like YouTube.

Host on-campus events to engage millennials in person:

Explanation:

One event NET could do would be similar to a booth on campus. At the event there will be information about the death penalty but also provide students the space to state their opinions. These opinions can be expressed by having white boards or box with note cards. There will also be food/snacks and free pens to get students to stop by. To make sure people actually attend the event, a Facebook event page can be set up by one of the student groups as well as word of mouth and within those student groups.

Another campus event can be to hold a **Q&A panel** on campus with influencers on the topic and use student representatives to spread the word. The panel could potentially hold family members of the people currently on death row as well as prosecutors that are holding the cases. A Facebook event can be shared so more millennial voters, who are not on campus can come.

Rationale:

NET's marketing department could possibly help with events and solicit help from interested student groups who are the on-campus influencers mentioned.

There are many examples of news organizations successfully engaging their audiences through in-person events designed to inform the public about civic issues ([like Billy Penn](#)). Giving NET a face and directly reaching out to millennials demonstrate's NET's interest in them -- and that interest can be reciprocated.

Possible sources:

Eric Berger, UNL professor of law with expertise in the death penalty. He was recently in the Journal Star, penning an Op. Ed. on the SCOTUS vacancy.

Cynthia Willis-Esqueda, psychology professor who studies and does research on death penalty

[Jim Davidsaver](#), a retired police captain with over 25 years experience in the Lincoln Police Department

Influencers:

We have identified several influencers that could be tagged on social media to help spread the word about the NET documentary before it is released and during its publication schedule. These influencers may also share NET's content if tagged in it.

Influencers can be instrumental in helping spread the word. The influencers mentioned are likely to share content and have a large following. Though there are not many senators for reinstating the death penalty that are active on social media, there are influencer groups that could be used to show the other opinion.

Sen. Ernie Chambers has a large following on Facebook and would be inclined to share articles by NET (he has shared other articles from OWH and KETV).

Sen. Adam Morfeld also has a large following made up of a lot of millennials because UNL city campus is in his district. He is also likely to share articles by NET.

Influencer groups:

- Nebraskans for the Death Penalty
- Retain a Just Nebraska

On-campus influencer groups:

- Criminal Justice Department at UNL
- Political Science Department at UNL
- Young Democrats
- Equal Justice Society

Appendix N: Blue sky reflection

Reflection for Blue Sky Engagement Project

Copy and paste these questions into a Word doc, answer completely and upload to Blackboard assignment by class time on Wednesday, April 27.

1. What were the top three things I learned from this assignment?
2. What did I do best?
3. What could I improve?
4. What would I do differently and why?
5. What grade would I give myself for this assignment and why?
6. Additional comments, if any.
7. Please rank yourself and your team members on the following three characteristics on a scale of 5 to 0 (with five being the highest). Be sure to include the team member's name you are ranking. Feel free to include comments.

		Ranking 5-point scale
Problem-solving	Actively looks for and suggests solutions to problems.	
Team work	Performed all duties of assigned team role and contributed knowledge, opinions, and skills to share with the partner/team. Always did the assigned work. Communicates well with everyone in the group.	
Cooperation and leadership	A true team member who contributes a lot of effort and encourages and supports the efforts of partner or others in the group.	