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ENG 4760-001: Special Topics in Professional Writing

Angela Vietto
Eastern Illinois University

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English 4760 | Spring 2018

Online Presence: Building Relationships, Reputation, and Relevance for Organizations and Individuals

(overview and policies; complete syllabus to be distributed by the end of Week 1)

Prof. Angela Vietto
Cell: 217-549-3203 (9 am-9 pm)
arvietto@eiu.edu

Office Hours:
MW 10-12, W 2-3 in 3345 Coleman;
TR by appointment in 2nd floor south,
Pemberton Hall; and F by appointment

The online universe offers a million possible points to connect with others. But how can your message be heard in the crowd?

In this course, we will explore the multiple ways that online presence can be created and maintained, building positive awareness of the work that organizations and individuals do and helping them build relationships with members of the public who might not otherwise engage with them.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze a variety of online opportunities for building relationships between businesses, nonprofit agencies, entrepreneurs or artists and the public
- Analyze the different purposes and opportunities available with static websites, online periodicals or blogs, and social media for relationship building
- Explain the role played by branding in relationship building
- Analyze and explain common ethical issues in online communication
- Analyze and explain common legal issues related to online communication
- Adapt and apply principles of culturally sensitive writing to online communication
- Adapt and apply basic editorial principles to the online environment
- Apply basic principles of visual communication to the online environment
- Practice project planning and management skills

Texts

From TRS: *Social Media Communication* (Lipschultz)
Additional readings will be distributed via D2L.

Students with disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Cell Phones

During lecture, discussion, and class presentations, your cell phone should be silent and put away (not sitting on a desk or in your hand, etc.). Given the nature of our class, there may be times when cell phone use will be productive for our work. The rest of the time, however, your attention should be given completely to whatever we are doing, not divided between our activity and a phone or any other electronic device. Failure to abide by this policy will negatively affect your participation grade.

Attendance

The policy: You have four “free” unexcused absences (think of these as vacation or personal days, which you might take for a variety of reasons, say to attend a wedding or stay home with a minor illness). Unexcused absences beyond 4 will reduce your final grade by half a letter grade each. Also note: Being absent for any reason doesn’t excuse you from meeting deadlines. If work was due, it must still be turned in on time. Moreover, if you miss class on a day when we are working in teams on client projects, you *must* contact your team rather than the instructor; if you are absent and your team hasn’t heard from you, your overall participation grade for the semester will be reduced by 10%. *To count an absence as excused, you must provide documentation in writing from a credible third party that you were sick enough to seek medical treatment; had a true, unexpected and serious emergency that prevented you from attending; or were participating in an official University event.*

Why: One of the key skills professional writers need is the ability to provide products on time, which rarely happens when one misses work often. In addition, professionals need to be in the habit of showing up regularly, being responsible to deadlines when they can’t be physically present, and being on time. Finally, note that a personal or vacation day each month is relatively generous compared to what new professional employees typically are allotted in the US.

The Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (<http://www.eiu.edu/~success>) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

The English Department Statement on Plagiarism

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work” (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

English Teacher Education Majors

Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English Department professors with a copy of the yellow "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. These forms are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Melissa Ames (3821 Coleman Hall).

Grade Breakdown

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|-------------------------------------------|-----|
| Homework, quizzes, informal presentations | 10% |
| Participation | 15% |
| Case Study 1 | 10% |
| Case Study 2 | 10% |
| Research poster | 10% |
| Client Project 1 | 15% |
| Client Project 2 | 15% |
| Final Exam | 15% |

Official University Course Description

Official course description: English 4760 provides focused study of professional writing, designed to enhance understanding of workplace writing and provide experience in producing it. The topic varies semester to semester, and the course may be repeated with a different topic with the permission of the Department Chairperson.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M Jan 8 | Introductions |
| W Jan 10 | Introduction to social media concepts |
| F Jan 12 | No class |
| M Jan 15 | MLK Birthday |
| W Jan 17 | Introduction to social media concepts continued; trust in online communication |
| F Jan 19 | No class |
| M Jan 22 | Online identity, relationships & community. HW: Quiz and FB exercise |
| W Jan 24 | Trust & credibility. HW: Quiz and YouTube exercise |
| F Jan 26 | Uses & gratification, crowdsourcing. HW: Quiz and Twitter exercise |
| Sat. Jan 27 | Lions in Winter Creative Writing Festival |
| M Jan 29 | Branding, awareness, engagement, virality. Form teams for research project/posters. HW: Quiz and LinkedIn exercise |
| W Jan 31 | ROI, COI, metrics & analytics. Select topic for first case study. |
| F Feb 2 | SEO & search algorithms |
| M Feb 5 | Privacy, big data |
| W Feb 7 | Cultural awareness, cross-cultural and international communication |
| F Feb 9 | Legal issues |
| M Feb 12 | Ethical issues |
| W Feb 14 | Work on case study and team research project |

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| F Feb 16 | Lincoln's Birthday -- no class |
| M Feb 19 W Feb 21 | Review of principles as needed; work on case study and team research project; submit proposals for Student Research Day poster session |
| F Feb 23 | Deadline for proposals for Student Research Day (Mar. 23) |
| M Feb 26 | Collaboration. First draft of case study #1 due |
| W Feb 28 | Audience: Analysis, Research, User Testing Form teams for client projects |
| F Mar 2 | Concision and clarity. Comments on case study #1 returned |
| M Mar 5 W Mar 7 | Design principles. Working on research projects, client projects, revision of case study #1 |
| F Mar 9 | Final version of case study #1 due; team work day |
| Mar 12-16 | Spring Break |
| M Mar 19 | Working on research projects, client projects |
| W Mar 21 | Finalize posters for Research & Creative Activity Day |
| F Mar 23 | Research & Creative Activity Day |
| M Mar 26 | Select topic for case study #2; continued work on client projects |
| W Mar 28 F Mar 30 M Apr 2 W Apr 4 F Apr 6 M Apr 9 | Review of online communication principles and theory and professional writing principles and theory as needed. Client projects and case study #2; progress reports on client projects requested as needed |
| T Apr 10 | English Student Conference |
| W Apr 11 F Apr 13 | Client projects and case study #2 |
| M Apr 15 | Optional draft of case study #2 due |
| W Apr 18 | Client projects and case study #2 |
| F Apr 20 | Final draft of case study #2 due |
| M Apr 23 | Final report on client projects to clients |
| W Apr 25 | Final report on client projects to Dr. V. |
| F Apr 27 | Last day of classes: course evaluation, review, self-evaluation |
| M Apr 30 2:45-4:45 | Final exam/final portfolio (The final portfolio will constitute a portion of the exam) |