BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructors

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Communication
This course is being team taught. Please address all electronic communications to both instructors. We prefer to be contacted by e-mail, unless it is an emergency, in which case you may call us at the cell phone numbers above. We will respond within 24 hours to all student e-mails. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss your work or progress, one of us will be available each week for an hour prior to class.

Blackboard Site
A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary venue for outside classroom communications between the instructors and the students. Students can access the course site at https://blackboard.gwu.edu. Support for Blackboard is available at (202) 994-4948 or helpdesk.gwu.edu.

Academic Integrity
All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity.
Support for Students with Disabilities
GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class
If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave here, we will meet at Juan Valdez Coffee Shop, 1889 F St., NW in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.

Attendance Policy
Attending class is required. Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact us as soon as you are aware of the issue to let us know that you will absent, otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and it will negatively count against your participation grade.

Course Evaluation
At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW’s online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. We welcome your feedback about the course throughout the semester. It is helpful for us to hear how you are progressing with the materials and what exercises, readings, and lectures you find most helpful to learning about digital strategy.

THE COURSE

Course Description and Overview
This class aims to give you the skills to develop and implement a comprehensive digital strategy by employing the tools and tactics appropriate for the political situation.

Course Learning Objectives
In this course, you will learn how to develop an integrated digital strategy for use in U.S. advocacy and electoral campaigns. It will not only introduce you to the theoretical concepts, distinctive technologies, applied skills, and legal considerations associated with digital campaigning, but it also aims to teach you how to strategically plan all online facets of a campaign. Students will learn how to leverage the full spectrum of available communications channels -- earned, owned, and paid. In addition, students will have the opportunity to practice content creation, evaluate its reach, and how to communicate digitally during a crisis.

By the end of the course, students will know how to:

1. Design a digital strategy for a client (candidate or organization)
2. Deploy the strategy, or implement and execute on the developed digital plan.
3. Implement and manage the digital tools associated with the strategy
4. Measure and adapt the digital strategy
5. Approach and resolve legal and ethical concerns associated with a digital strategy
### Evaluation and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Campaign Status Reports: Innovative digital strategies are happening right now. Students will track how an organization and its primary opponent is using digital, evaluate the effectiveness of their strategy, and assess how the campaign may have improved its effort.</td>
<td>Design a digital strategy for a client; and measure and adapt the digital strategy.</td>
<td>Called at random to report; expect 2-3 times during the semester</td>
<td>15 points (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #1: Write an RFP for the campaign website you want a vendor to build</td>
<td>Build on political management business skill of scoping a programmatic need, and developing criteria for success.</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>5 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2: Write an op-ed on how you would change Facebook to be more useful to campaigns.</td>
<td>Strategic thinking about what makes a content platform useful for politics.</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>5 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #3: Write a memo to your client proposing elements of a social media policy for the organization. Include a rationale for your guidance.</td>
<td>Approach and resolve legal and ethical concerns associated with a digital strategy.</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>5 points (5%)</td>
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<td>Assignment #4: Create an email and social media editorial content calendar for the final month of your campaign, and write one email and set of social posts.</td>
<td>Show competency in how to plan and execute on a core component of a digital strategy – content.</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>10 points (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #5: Write a blog post for or against use of cookies and remarketing tools.</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of the privacy aspects of marketing and personalization techniques.</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>5 points (5%)</td>
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<td>Assignment #6: Write an op-ed about how digital strategy differs between electoral and advocacy campaigns.</td>
<td>Show an understanding of the types of political organizations and how they use digital to achieve desired outcomes.</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>5 points (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Strategy</td>
<td>Working in pairs, students will develop a written digital strategy for a candidate or organization and verbally present at the end of the semester.</td>
<td>Weeks 12-13</td>
<td>40 points (40%)</td>
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Class Attendance/Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Attendance/Participation</th>
<th>Continuous</th>
<th>10 points (10%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important to be in class and to be engaged with class. Much of what will be learned will be taught in class and will not be available in the readings alone.</td>
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Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grading Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100 Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93 Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89 Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86 Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a “B” is viewed as unacceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82 You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79 Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76 Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72 (lowest grade to pass) Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70 Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.</td>
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*Please note that you may be penalized for late submission of assignment(s).

Marking Criteria

It's important to see your assessments as a valuable part of the learning process. The assessments have been designed to help you hone certain critical skills and identify areas you are strong in. While your mark is important for your overall performance, it's also important to help you identify areas you need to work on to improve your skills. At the beginning of the semester you'll be given the specific marking criteria for how you'll be assessed in your assignments.

Declaration of Originality

In this age of sharing content, each student is asked to make a declaration with the submission of each assignment that their media content was created specifically for this class. It is fine for you to create content that you may use in your work, however, you cannot use material that was created before this class.
**Reading Required Text and Learning Materials**

Digital media is a fast-evolving field. As such, new insights and thoughtful content is published constantly. To ensure the best reading list, you'll be issued a revised reading list at the first meeting and updates to the reading assignments are likely throughout the course. A large part of your reading for this class will be online and involve following the latest developments in new media.

**Required Books:**
- *Content Marketing: Think Like a Publisher - How to Use Content to Market Online and in Social Media*, by Rebecca Lieb, 2011.

**PDFs on Blackboard:**
- PDFs and links to other required reading will be added throughout the semester.

**Tentative Course Calendar***

**August 27 (Week 1)**
Topic and Content Covered: Digital Strategy – What is it? What isn’t it?
- Introductions
- What this class is and what it is not
- Digital trifecta - earned, owned, and paid media
- What is a digital strategy and why is it important?
- Campaign and organization assignments
- Grading and the final examination

**September 3 (Week 2)**
Topic and Content Covered: Strategic Planning, Acquisition, and Reactive
- Strategic planning for digital
- Introduction to acquisition strategy
- Strategic reacting

**September 10 (Week 3)**
Topic and Content Covered: Websites, Mobile, and Content
- Website tech primer
- Website theory
- Mobile
- Content strategy
- Content marketing

*Assignment: Write an RFP for the campaign website you want a vendor to build.*
September 17 (Week 4)
Topic and Content Covered: Social Media, “Going Viral”, Video, and Design

- Social media
- Virality
- Digital branding and graphic design
- Web video

Assignment: Write an op-ed on how you would change Facebook to be more useful to campaigns.

September 24 (Week 5)
Topic and Content Covered: Legal and Community Aspects of Campaigning Online and Using Data to Drive Strategic Planning

- Digital and the Law – privacy, fair use, copyright
- Wikipedia
- Data

Assignment: Write a memo to your client proposing elements of a social media policy for the organization. Include a rationale for your guidance.

October 1 (Week 6)
Topic and Content Covered: Email and Landing Pages

- Managing an email program
- Landing-page optimization

Assignment: Create an email and social media editorial content calendar for the final month of your campaign, and write one email and set of social posts.

October 8 (Week 7)
Topic and Content Covered: Raising Money Online and Paid Advertising

- Online Fundraising
- Digital Advertising

Assignment: Write a blog post for or against use of cookies and remarketing tools.

October 15 (Week 8)
Topic and Content Covered: Using Digital in a Crisis and the Digital Consulting Profession

- Role of digital during a crisis
- The consulting function and client relationship
- Building and making a pitch
- Servicing a client
- Introduction of final exam

October 22 (Week 9)
Topic and Content Covered: Digital Strategy for Candidates and Government Organizations

- Digital strategy for candidates and government organizations

Assignment: Write an op-ed about how digital strategy is differs between electoral and advocacy campaigns.
October 29 (Week 10)
Topic and Content Covered: Digital Strategy for Issue Advocacy Campaigns
- Issue activism
- Digital strategy for organizations

Live exercise: How do you react digitally to this breaking situation on your issue? Work in pairs and present.

November 5 (Week 11)
Topic and Content Covered: Measurement and Digital Management Tools
- Analytics
- Tools Roundup
- Questions about the final presentations

November 12 (Week 12)
- Final presentations – Group 1

November 19 (Week 13)
- Final presentations – Group 2

December 3 (Week 14)
- Discussion of how digital shaped midterms
- Discussion of where digital strategy goes from here
- Class evaluations

*The instructors reserve the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress or teachable current event opportunities. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar posted on Blackboard.