

SI 489: Designing Engagement through Social Media

University of Michigan, School of Information

Fridays 1-3:50 pm, 1265 North Quad

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PROFESSOR

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Please book appointment slot online at least 24 hours beforehand: bit.ly/profpierce-officehours

GSI

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is the capstone project course for the Social Media Analysis & Design path in the BSI program. The goal of this course is to provide students with real world experience in working on a challenging social media project with a client. In the projects, students apply their obtained skills and knowledge in social media analysis, design, management, technology implementation, marketing, and evaluation.

Over the course of the semester, a team of 3-5 students will analyze and address a social media problem specified by a client. The student team will analyze available social media data provided by the client, evaluate the client's current use of social media, and design a solution using social media that addresses the client. This course heavily relies on effective and productive team work.

Class time will be used primarily as a weekly standup meeting in which each team presents a status report of their project (progress, challenges, issues and accomplishments in the previous week, plans for the current week). These standup meetings provide the opportunity to gather feedback from the professor and student peers, exchange ideas and learn from each other. This course is meant to be a creative and collaborative process, and the goal of the weekly standup meetings is to help each other produce the best project outcomes possible.

PREREQUISITE

This course requires completion of SI 405 (BSI Final Project Preparatory Course) in the previous term. In SI 405, student teams are formed, teams are matched with a client, and teams develop a project plan for the specific project with their client.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Apply concepts and methods relevant to social media to address a challenging organizational problem in coordination with a project client.
- Work together in teams to systematically define and develop the project, as measured by progress on regular milestone assignments.
- Elicit, clarify and formalize client requirements
- Effectively present their work to stakeholders (client, instructor, fellow students) in stand-up meetings, formal presentations and written reports
- Use social media tools and platforms to design, manage, and optimize social campaigns

- Analyze and present data into actionable insights for your client’s social media strategy
- Develop engaging social media content that aligns with your client’s organizational strategy and goals

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Written assignments are due **9AM EST** by the date listed in the course schedule via Canvas. Rubrics will be posted on Canvas. Since this is a team-based, project course, all of the grades are assigned as a group. **However, your grade will be adjusted per the peer evaluation feedback form. This also needs to be submitted by the assignment due date.**

Final grades will be based on points for the following items (100 points total):

Requirement	Points
Project Objectives & Research Plan	5
Milestone 1: Data Collection & Analysis Report	15
Milestone 2: Social Media Strategy Development Report	20
Milestone 3: Social Media Strategy Evaluation Report	15
Milestone 4: Social Media Strategy Implementation Report	5
Final Client Report & Presentation	12
Weekly Standup Presentations (12 total; 2 dropped; 1 point each)	10
Milestone Presentations (4 total; 2 points each)	8
UMSI Exposition Presentation	1
Individual Reflections & Peer Evaluations (4 total; 1 point each)	4
Individual Participation	5

Teams must satisfactorily complete **all** milestone assignments **on time**, including written reports and presentations, weekly standup presentations, final report and participating in the UMSI Expo — regardless of grade — to pass the course. At the discretion of the professor, a bonus of up to 5% may be awarded for especially creative, high-quality projects.

Milestone reports should be revised based on feedback from the client, peers and instructor. Revisions can be used to improve grades for individual milestones. When submitting a revision, the team must separately describe the changes made.

You should request feedback from your client as you send deliverables. Clients will formally submit an evaluation at the midterm and after submitting your final report. Client evaluation will factor into your grades for the individual participation and final report.

The final score out of 100 will be converted to a letter grade on the following scale:
A+ 98; A 95; A- 90; B+ 87; B 83; B- 80; C+ 77; C 73; C- 70; D+ 67; D 63; D- 60; E 50; F 40.

Project Objectives & Research Plan

Based on your initial interaction with the client and the project scoping conducted in SI 405, describe in detail what your client's goals are for social media and what deliverables your client is expecting as part of your final report. You should be specific about the deliverables you have agreed upon with your client as this will be considered in your grade for the final report and presentation. The purpose of the research plan is to receive early feedback for the Data Collection & Analysis Report milestone. Your research plan should clearly articulate what questions you are trying to answer for your client as they relate to their specific problem and project objective. You should be clear what social media metrics are relevant, why they are relevant, which social media listening platforms you have access to, what are the limitations you might encounter and how you will address those limitations. You should also include what data you will want to collect that is not from social media platforms (e.g., employee interviews, customer surveys, financial reports) and how that addresses your project objectives. **I strongly encourage teams to meet with me during office hours or class time following the standup presentations to discuss your research plans prior to submitting.** Your thoroughness for this assignment will help you in completing Milestone 1.

Milestone 1: Data Collection & Analysis Report

In this research phase, you will evaluate your client's existing digital channels and assets as you detailed in your research plan. The client projects will vary, but some of the elements of this report will include an audit your client's owned/earned/paid media value, a competitive analysis, qualitative/quantitative organizational data, observations or digital trace data from users and financial data. The milestone report will summarize your findings.

Milestone 2: Social Media Strategy Development Report

In the strategy development phase, you will propose the recommendations based on the data you collected and analyzed in your report. This should be a strategy that aligns with the project objectives and be feasible given your client's existing resources. The details for each strategy will vary by client project, but some of the elements of the report may include a content calendar, user personas, create a marketing campaign to increase audience size and engagement, user personas, a plan for owned/earned/paid media campaigns. At this stage, you are developing your strategy; you will present the final recommended strategy in your final client report. The milestone report will summarize your strategy recommendations and detail how you will evaluate your strategy for Milestone 3.

Milestone 3: Social Media Strategy Evaluation Report

In the strategy evaluation phase, you will implement and test components of your recommended strategy. You should discuss with your client what aspects of your strategy that they will allow you to implement. You will be expected to monitor and track the appropriate social media metrics to assess how you might adjust your proposed strategy. The report will include a summary of how you assessed your strategy, the outcomes of your assessment and how you will refine your strategy accordingly. **It is important to plan ahead for this milestone.** You will need to allow for enough time to confirm the implementation plan with your client and monitor the social media strategy.

Milestone 4: Social Media Strategy Implementation Report

This report details your recommendations for implementing your social media strategy. Specifically, you should include: (1) any estimated costs (including financial and time) to implement your strategy, (2) what social media policies your client should implement to support your proposed social media strategy, and (2) a measurement plan for monitoring and evaluating the performance of your proposed strategy. You should consider the organizational and industry factors when developing your policy recommendations. You should also consider what metrics are appropriate in calculating social media ROI given your client's needs and objectives. The report will include a summary and rationale for your proposed policy and measurement plan.

Final Report & Presentation

The final report will combine all milestone reports into a consistent documentation of the project. The final report will serve not only to describe the project and its outcomes, but the rationale for important decisions in approach or method, and the final recommendations for the client. You can draw heavily from previous milestone reports, but you should carefully curate what information you present in the final report and how.

The final report should be designed and written with your client in mind. This means you should have an appealing layout and visual design, well-written textual documentation, as well as meaningfully integration of graphics and figures. You will want to use professional layout and publishing tools (e.g., Adobe InDesign) rather than Word to prepare your final report. The final report should be high quality, highly polished and professional product effectively converting your project's research findings, social media strategy, proposed content, evaluation and implementation recommendations for the client.

Weekly Standup Presentations

This course operates like a design agency. All student teams work with different clients on different projects. Developing social media strategy is a creative, collaborative, research-focused process. The weekly class time provides an opportunity for all teams to share and learn from each other's experiences, the approaches taken in respective projects, as well as help each other achieve excellent results in each project.

We achieve this through weekly standup meetings, in which each team provides a status report on their project's progress. This status report should include:

- The team's accomplishments and issues in the previous week
- A plan that specifically states your activities for the upcoming week.
- Specific questions to the other teams regarding issues, challenges, approaches, etc.

A productive standup presentation requires that each team has properly prepared a concise update and asks meaningful questions. Updates are limited to 5 minutes per team plus 5 minutes discussion. Teams should create slides for their standup presentation. The slides should be uploaded to Canvas for the specific standup week.

All students are expected to actively engage with the other projects by asking questions and providing feedback and input. Engagement during standup presentations factors into your individual participation. (See attendance policy for additional details.)

To facilitate engaged interchange among teams, projects will be organized into approximately one-hour clusters. All social media analysis & design (SMAD) capstone students are assigned to the **Friday, 1-2:10PM** time slot. SMAD capstone students cannot switch to the standup session for another capstone path (UX, IA). You must attend the entire standup session as scheduled. Active participation and engagement is expected from everyone during the standup session.

During the rest of the class time, students are expected to work in their teams to advance their projects. This may include scheduling your weekly client meetings at those times. You are free to use the classroom for your work time. You can use the following rooms for team work. **Again, these times are for your work time; you cannot re-schedule your assigned stand-up meeting time.** At the stated times, one of the GSIs is present and can help you with questions regarding your project:

- Mondays, 5-6pm, 1255 NQ
- Mondays, 7-8pm, 1255 NQ
- Wednesdays, 1-4pm, 1255 NQ (GSI present)
- Fridays, 2:15-4pm, 1265 NQ (GSI present)

Note that two hours of team work during the scheduled class time will not be enough to make sufficient progress on your project. **You and your team should schedule additional meetings and block off**

additional regular time to work on this capstone project outside of class time.

Milestone Presentations

Each milestone report will be followed by a formal presentation in class (8 minutes per team). Each of the four milestone presentations is worth 2 points, compared to 1 point for regular standup presentations. Teams will also formally present their milestone outcomes to their client at the next client meeting.

The final project presentations will take place on the last Friday class session for the **full class session**. Clients will be invited to attend as well. Your individual participation grade will also reflect your engagement during the final presentation day. All students are expected to be present, ask questions and give feedback to the presenting teams. **You cannot pass the course without attending the final presentation.**

UMSI Exposition Presentation

It is a requirement to participate in the UMSI Exposition showcasing the work you have done with your client. **The Expo is scheduled for Monday, April 8 (12-3pm)**. Your team will need to put together a display presentation (poster board or digital). All team members are expected to participate in the creation of the presentation. Please contact Prof Pierce if you have a class conflict during this time. At least 1-2 students should be present at the presentation for the duration of the event (team members may rotate in and out).

Individual Reflection & Peer Evaluations

Students are asked to individually write reflections on the project work, team dynamics, and individual team members' contributions after each milestone and at the end of the course (each worth 1 point). The goal is to individually reflect on what is working well in the project/team and what could be improved and how. A courteous and constructive tone is expected in these reflections and evaluations. Feedback will be anonymized and shared with the whole team. The team should then work together – with support from the instructors and GSIs – to address identified challenges.

While we hope that all group members strive to equally contribute to the group project, we realize that this is not always the case. Therefore, the grade you receive on team assignments will depend on your individual contribution to the project. Freeloading is not an option in this course.

You will be expected to complete a peer evaluation for yourself and your group members after each milestone. The team evaluation form will be included as part of your individual reflection. You are required to submit the evaluation form in order to receive the grade for your individual reflection. The late policy applies to your submission of your peer evaluation forms.

Individual Participation

Your individual participation grade will be based on your peer evaluations, client feedback, GSI feedback and the professor's assessment. Regular attendance during the standup presentations and scheduled meetings also factor into your individual participation. **Please review the attendance policy for additional details.**

Report Revisions

Teams are expected to integrate feedback from client, peers, instructors and GSIs into their milestone reports and can submit a revised version of the research and design reports to improve their points for the milestone. The revision deadlines for these reports are due two weeks after the original deadline.

Instructor meetings in each phase

In addition to the weekly standups, teams have to schedule at least one individual team meeting with the instructor in each phase (three total), during my office hours (see details for booking appointment slots above) or your group's scheduled work time (i.e., class time following the standup meeting). Either way, your team has to pre-schedule the three meetings for the entire term with the instructor by **Monday, Jan**

14th. If you are scheduling during office hours, please book using the scheduling link at the top of the syllabus. If you are scheduling during the class work time, please send a Google calendar invite (20 min.) including all team members on the invite.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for teams to discuss their progress, questions and issues that arose during standup meetings, or to discuss project aspects that are not relevant or appropriate for the standup meetings. Teams and individual students are welcome and encouraged to make use of both the professor's and GSIs' office hours beyond those three meetings.

Client Meetings & Communication

Each team is expected to meet once per week with their client. These meetings must be scheduled for the whole term at or before the first client meeting of the term. All team members should attend all meetings with the client. At the same time, it is important to respect and accommodate the client's schedule. If no time for the weekly client meeting can be found at which all team members are available, a suitable time at which most team members are available should be selected. The instructor and GSI have to be informed via email about this arrangement, including your team's plan for updating absent team members.

In this course, we will work with clients from all over the country. If your client is local, you should meet in person if possible. If your client is remote, you should use video conferencing if possible. Only as a last resort use audio-only phone conferencing. Ask your client if they have a preferred conferencing service they would like to (or must) use. If not, suggest a video conferencing solution that both the client and all team members are comfortable with. Examples are BlueJeans (<http://its.umich.edu/communication/videoconferencing/blue-jeans>), Google Hangouts or Skype.

Professional communication and conduct with clients is of high importance. This includes (1) respectful, well-written and relevant email communication, (2) responsiveness to client communication (you should reply within 24 hours), (3) being prepared and punctual at meetings, as well as (4) professional conduct and attire at client meetings.

POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Written Work

Written work will be submitted to Canvas as a pdf. Your team name and the title of the assignment should appear on every page in the upper right hand margin and page numbers should appear in the lower right hand corner. For all your written work, please take time to organize your thoughts, spell check, and proofread your work. You should also use professional design and layouts when submitting any written work.

Attendance

You are expected to arrive on time and attend all classes during your scheduled stand-up meeting time (1-2:10 PM) and be an active participant. You should always inform your team in advance if you cannot attend a standup session or scheduled meeting. Your attendance will be factored into account when I assess your participation grade.

Understandably, you may encounter unexpected emergencies or extenuating circumstances that prevent you from attending class. If an *unforeseen emergency* prevents you from meeting a course requirement, **please email me within 24 hours**. If you miss three or more stand-up meetings without providing me a valid reason via email, you will receive a 5% penalty on ***your overall grade*** for each additional day that you miss.

To be clear, work conflicts, job interviews, being delayed by traffic, trips you planned before registering for class, other scheduled events and faulty alarm clocks are **not** the type of events that fall into the category of unforeseen emergencies. These non-emergency type of events can count as your two

attendance “freebies” without any penalty to your final grade. As for job interviews, I strongly encourage you to reserve your freebies if you are on the job market and expect to miss class for possible interviews. I am supportive of students interviewing for jobs; please email me if you will miss class more than two times due to job interviews so we can make arrangements.

If longer term *extenuating circumstances* prevent you from meeting course requirements, please contact the UMSI Office of Student Affairs (OSA) so they can assist you. OSA will then let me know you will need special accommodations to complete the course. I am understanding of life hardships and will be flexible to find reasonable alternatives for your specific situation. Again, these special accommodations are reserved for *extenuating circumstances only* and does not apply to job interviews, a busy course load or demanding extracurricular schedule.

Late policy

Assignments will automatically be marked as late if they are uploaded on Canvas after the due date. You have a 1 day grace period to upload your assignment after the due date listed in the course schedule. After the grace period, assignments will receive a 5% penalty for each late day, up to two days maximum. I will not accept late assignments after 2 days and late assignments will receive a 0 grade. If there are unforeseen emergencies or extenuating circumstances preventing you from completing an assignment on time, please discuss these with me *before* the assignment is due.

Etiquette for using technology in the classroom

You are encouraged to bring laptops to class and to use them actively as learning tools keeping the following points in mind:

- Use laptops for taking notes, conducting research required for activities, and other specific classroom tasks as assigned by the instructor. During class, you should not check e-mail, chat, IM, play games, or perform other off-task activities. Make sure the volume on your laptop is muted.
- Engage in class discussion, **which includes other teams’ weekly reports**. The computer should not become a barrier to one-on-one interaction, but instead should help facilitate the exchange of ideas and engagement in classroom contact.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to others. You should not display screen images, including wallpapers and screen savers, which might be distracting or offensive to other members of the class.
- Please silence or place your phone on vibrate. If your phone is out on your desk, please place it face down to avoid distractions.

What you can expect from me

- I will be available to you via e-mail and will promptly return your e-mail messages. During the week, you can expect a response within 48 hours; however I do not guarantee email replies over the weekend.
- I will be available to you for office hours during the available appointment slots listed in the scheduling Calendly link.
- I will maintain the Canvas web site with current materials and announcements, and will resolve any content-related problems promptly as they are reported to me.
- I will hold our written or verbal communications in confidence unless requested by you. I will not share or post your assignments without notifying everyone in advance of my plans to post them.
- I will treat all class members fairly, and will do my best to accommodate individual learning styles and special needs.

Academic Integrity

Cheating is the attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation. Among the forms this kind of dishonesty can take are: obtaining a copy of an examination before it is officially available or learning an examination question before it is officially available; having a substitute take an examination; copying another person's answer to an examination question; consulting an unauthorized source during an examination; or changing a score or a record of an examination result.

Plagiarism is the representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own. The most obvious form of this kind of dishonesty is the presentation of all or part of another person's published work as something one has written. Perhaps less obvious but no less dishonest are, without proper acknowledgment of the source, the adoption of a part of another's writing into one's own discussion, the paraphrasing of another's writing, or the presentation of another's ideas as one's own.

Accommodations

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at the beginning of the semester. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make us aware of your needs, we can work with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; <http://ssd.umich.edu/>) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. We will treat any information you provide as private and confidential. Please let me know if you require any other special accommodations due to religious practices, physical requirements, medical needs, or any other reasons.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and <https://caps.umich.edu/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (732) 764-8320 and <https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs>, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a more comprehensive listing of the broad range of mental health services available on campus, please visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Your team should complete the recommended team activities listed by the Friday of your scheduled stand-up session. It is up to each team to tailor their weekly team activities to fit the specific details of your client project.

Date	Class Session	Team Activity	Assignment Due
Week 1 Jan 11	Course introduction Primer: Creating research plans	Read syllabus Schedule future client meetings Book 3 team meetings with Professor Pierce (<i>use Calendly for office hour schedule, send Google calendar invite for times during Friday class time</i>) <i>Begin working on project objectives & research plan</i>	
Week 2 Jan 18	Standup 1	Meet with client to finalize project objectives and preliminary feedback on research plan Confirm access to any needed data, social media platforms, etc. with client	<i>Due Jan 14: Schedule 3 team meetings w/ Prof Pierce</i> <i>Due Jan 18: Project Objectives & Research Plan</i>
Week 3 Jan 25	Standup 2 Primer: Channel Evaluation	Begin data collection	
Week 4 Feb 1	Standup 3 Primer: User Personas	Finish data collection Begin data analysis	
Week 5 Feb 8	Standup 4	Finish data analysis	<i>Due Feb 8: Milestone 1</i>
Week 6 Feb 15	Standup 5 Primer: Creating a social media content calendar	Present findings from Milestone 1 to client Discuss preliminary strategy ideas and confirm strategy evaluation plans with client	<i>Due Feb 11: Reflection & Eval</i>

Date	Class Session	Team Activity	Assignment Due
Week 7 Feb 22	Standup 6	Present strategy development Milestone 2 to client Begin testing/revising strategy	Due Feb 22: Milestone 2
Week 8 Mar 1	Standup 7 Primer: Creating monthly social media reports	Continue testing/revising strategy	Due Feb 25: Reflection & Eval
Week 9 Mar 8	No class meeting - Spring Break		
Week 10 Mar 15	Standup 8 Primer: Developing a brand voice	Finalize strategy evaluation Prepare evaluation report	
Week 11 Mar 22	Standup 9	Finalize evaluation report Present findings from evaluation report from Milestone 3 to client	Due Mar 22: Milestone 3
Week 12 Mar 29	Standup 10 Primer: What do social media managers do?	Prepare policy and measurement management Milestone 4	Due Mar 25: Reflection & Eval
Week 13 Apr 5	Standup 11	Prepare Expo poster and presentation Revise strategy recommendations based on client feedback	Due Apr 5: Milestone 4
Week 14 Apr 12	Standup 12	Prepare final project presentation	UMSI Expo poster & presentation Mon, Apr 8, 12-3 PM Due Apr 8: Reflection & Eval
Week 15 Apr 19	Final Client Report & Presentation	Finalize project presentation and report	Due Apr 19: Final Presentation
Due Apr 22: Final Report; Individual Reflection & Peer Eval			