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Office Phone: (319) 325-0921
Office Hours: Before/after class & by appointment
Email: nick-westergaard@uiowa.edu
Twitter: @nickwestergaard


Additional articles may be assigned for each class. It is your responsibility to print out materials and come to class prepared to discuss them.

Assignments: Assignments will be noted in class and posted on the web site. It is your responsibility to print out materials for lecture and discussion section and come to class prepared to discuss them.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Digital Brand Development

In this course students will learn how digital media such as websites, email, social networks, and online content helps individuals, organizations, and movements create and communicate cohesive brands. This course will review the fundamentals of effective brand development and mass communication — positioning, storytelling, and community-building — through the lens of digital media. We will examine the impact of Facebook, Twitter, and other emerging platforms on personal brands, commercial brands, political and non-profit brands, and social movements.

The class will be a lively mix of lecture, discussion, special guest visits from social media practitioners (in person and via Skype), and engagement both in the classroom and online using hashtags and other social tools. Students will apply what they’ve learned by reviewing a well-known brand’s digital strategy and through a final project designed to help students develop a digital brand strategy for a real-world business or organization.
COURSE INFORMATION

Grading
Final grades will be based on my perceptions of your performance for the five main requirements, according to the following weights:

- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 20%
- Attendance/Participation 20%
- Brand Case Study Review 20%
- Group Consulting Project 20%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-95</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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Once a grade has been assigned it will not be changed. I strive to be objective, but it is natural for an individual student to rate his or her works more highly than someone else does.

Students who feel unduly penalized may always present their case. If their case is valid, I will consider the difference when assigning final grades. In general, however, I want to reward students for their learning and not for their negotiating skills. It is better for students to try to understand the principles being taught and the criteria used for evaluation, than to debate grades.

Students should keep all graded work until the end of the semester; in addition, they should keep back-up copies of any work turned in.

Digital Brand Development classes will be structured as follows:

- Topical Discussion: “This Week in Social” — Exploring recent news from the rapidly evolving world of social and digital media as it pertains to core content
- Core Content — Lecture around primary learning topic; see course schedule
- Break (10 minutes)
- Channel Spotlight and/or Guest Speaker — Overview of specific digital media channels followed by group discussion on which brands are using this channel effectively; see course schedule

Exams
The exam dates and times are in the course schedule. All exams are closed-book. You should bring something to write with, but no other supplies should be necessary. Also have one piece of personal identification, which includes a photograph, available. Be prepared to show your ID.

If you have a class conflict, contact me with documentation of the conflict at least two weeks prior to the exam and a make-up will be arranged. If a make-up exam is needed because of illness or emergency on the day of the exam, contact me first and provide medical or appropriate verification later.
Non-attendance at the regular exam time without an acceptable (University approved), documented reason will result in zero points for the exam. Please note that the make-up exam may consist of 50% essay and 50% multiple choice and may be completely different from the main exam.

- **Midterm Exam** (20% of final grade) – Objective examination covering material from the first half of the semester.
- **Final Exam** (20% of final grade) – Objective examination covering material from the entire semester.

**Attendance/Participation**

It is your responsibility to sign-in using the attendance sheet found at the front of the classroom. Adequate preparation for, regular attendance of, and full participation and involvement in the class sessions and assignments are required. Class participation and involvement is worth 20% of the grade and will be based on my perception of your performance on the above requirements using attendance sheets, quizzes on the cases, and my subjective assessment of your participation throughout the semester.

Participation includes punctuality in attendance. I expect you to arrive, be seated, and be ready for class on time, and to stay in class for the entire session. Participation also includes maintaining a professional atmosphere. This means no texting in class, and refraining from distracting activities during class (side conversations or irrelevant computer use). Cold calls will be directed at a student who walks in late or seems to be inattentive in class.

**Brand Case Study Review**

For the Brand Case Study Review (20% of your overall grade), your task is to choose a well-known brand that’s effectively employing digital media and perform an analysis based on Hanlon’s primal branding system outlined in the book *The Social Code*. Items covered should include:

- Overview and relevant background on the brand
- Breakdown of how they are using the seven (7) pieces of primal code online to build their brand — creation story, creed, icons, rituals, sacred words, nonbelievers, and leader
- Detail on the digital channels they are employing as well as your analysis on what their digital brand objective is
- Anything that can be gleaned from your reading and research on the results of their branding efforts (additional sales, fans, followers, market share, etc)
- Your analysis on why this is a strong brand
- What could be improved

Your paper should be approximately 4-6 pages (12 point Arial or Helvetica, double-spaced). As always, grammar and punctuation are paramount. You are required to reference no fewer than two external sources in addition to *The Social Code*. Please cite your works either parenthetically throughout your paper or via footnotes or endnotes. Please include any relevant links, visuals, and screen shots.

**Group Consulting Project**

For the Consulting Project (also worth 20% of the final grade), we will divide the class into approximately 6 groups of 4 students. Your groups will be chosen at random on the first night of
class. At the end of the second class your group will be presented with your client assignment and necessary contact info.

Each group will work on a real-life project for a local business or non-profit organization — most will be conveniently located downtown businesses. You will act as the "consultant" while the business serves as your “client.” You should think of the relationship in this manner. You are providing a valuable service, and expectations will be high. You are prohibited from accepting any money for your labor.

Deliverables and deadlines are outlined as follows:

- **Background Meeting with Client** — Meet with the business owner(s) to understand their business, the current competitive environment, their long-term objectives, and what they want to achieve in the short term to build their brand through social and digital media. You will also gather information about the resources available to implement your potential strategy.

- **Identify Organizational/Brand Objective** — Based on this meeting, outline the main objective of your digital media strategy. Note that there will not be any specific tactics identified at this time. For example, you might say that the objective is “to gain new clients among working professionals in the Iowa City area,” not “to start a Facebook page and get 100 likes.”

- **Present Objective to Client & Instructor** — Schedule a conference call or in-person meeting with the business owner to share your objective, clarify that all of you are on the same page, and that your objectives are in line with the business’ goals and capabilities. You should be focusing only on the digital and social media marketing aspects of their business. After getting your client’s buy-in, prepare the final form of the objective to turn in via dropbox.

- **Create the Digital Brand Strategy** — After the objective has been approved by the instructor, design a digital brand strategy for the business. Start with an outline and expand it into both report and presentation formats. I encourage you to consult with me on your strategy before finalizing it.

- **Present the Final Plan** — The final presentations will take place during the last two weeks of class, and your client will be in attendance to hear the recommendations. Your clients will weigh in on how well you listened to them and considered their limitations, and this will be factored into your final grade. The written digital brand strategy plan document is due at this time as well.

The final report should be approximately 10 pages (12 point Arial or Helvetica, double-spaced). The final presentation will be 20 minutes in length.

Your grade for the group assignment will be calculated based on how your fellow group members evaluate your contribution. For example, even if your group gets the full points on all the group assignments, should your fellow group member(s) feel that you deserve only 80% of the points, your grade will be calibrated downward suitably (80% of the non-calibrated points). Consequently, even if the non-calibrated points reflect a letter grade of A, you might end up with a B should your fellow group member(s) feel that your contribution was not satisfactory.

See course schedule for specific project deliverables and due dates.
You will be graded on these aspects of your work:

- **35% Quality of strategy** – *Is your recommended strategy in-line with what we’ve learned about effective digital brand strategy? Did you consider the client’s limitations, and address the client’s objectives?*
- **20% Presentation quality** – time, content, professionalism of presenters, etc.
- **20% Written report quality** – addresses all required topics, length, grammar/spelling, etc.
- **15% Group evaluations** – these will be collected twice, once at the mid-term and after your group’s presentation at the end of the semester
- **10% Adherence to deadlines**

**Additional Assignment Guidelines**

*Submission of Assignments* — All assignments must be submitted via dropbox on ICON by the date when they are due. Assignments will not be accepted via email or if they are slid under the door of your TA, the Instructor, or in the Marketing Department office. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

*Late or Wrong ICON Dropbox Submissions* — Late assignments or incorrect ICON dropbox submissions will receive a 20% penalty for each day they are late. Occasionally, a student will miss a deadline because of a verifiable prolonged illness or emergency. Such a student should meet with the instructor to discuss the illness or emergency and to receive a make-up assignment. In such cases the make-up assignment will differ from the class assignment.

**ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Important Policies and Procedures.

**Administrative Home**
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at [http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

**Electronic Communication**
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondence (Operations Manual, III.15.2. at [http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/professional-ethics-and-academic-responsibility#15.2](http://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/professional-ethics-and-academic-responsibility#15.2) - Scroll down to k.11).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. See [http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/](http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/) for more information.

**Academic Honesty**
All students taking CLAS courses have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty ([http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code](http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code)): "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities,
upholding the IOWA Challenge (http://fye.uiowa.edu/youre-here/iowa-challenge). I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook - http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The date and time of every final examination is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of the final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook - http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities#rights).

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator at http://osmrc.uiowa.edu/ for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety website at http://police.uiowa.edu/emergency-communications.

Best Wishes for a Great Semester!
Course Schedule – Fall 2015  
Digital Brand Development JMC:3185:0003

Please note: Guest speakers and dates may change based on availability and schedules.

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<th>Week (Date)</th>
<th>Core Content</th>
<th>Channel Spotlight</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
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| 1 (8/25)    | Introduction to Digital Brand Building  
- Syllabus review  
- Overview of projects  
Introduce “The Hierarchy of Digital Brand Building” | Hanlon Branding Video | - In class you will be divided into groups for the Group Consulting Project |
| 2 (9/1)     | Aligning Social Media with Solid Organizational Goals  
- Understanding the 6 ways digital media can impact organizations and mass communication  
- Planning early for the ROI question | Facebook | - Assigned reading: Likeable - Intro, Ch. 2  
- Read all of The Social Code  
- Come with examples of brands effectively using Facebook |
| 3 (9/8)     | “The Naked Brand” — Movie, watched in class with discussion following | Twitter | Come with examples of brands effectively using Twitter |
| 4 (9/15)    | Defining Social Media Engagement  
- Finding the voice  
- Building a ‘campfire’  
- B2C & B2B  
- C-Level involvement | Google+ | - Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 5-8  
- Group Project: Business Objective Due  
- Come with examples of brands effectively using Google+ |
| 5 (9/22)    | Fueling Social Media with Content Marketing  
- Understanding the basics of building engaging content  
- Blogs, e-books, podcasts, videos, white papers, webinars | YouTube | - Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 11  
- Come with examples of brands effectively using YouTube |
| 6 (9/29)    | Digital Media at Work: Who, Where, & When  
- What kind of social team is right; how does this impact corporate culture & org charts  
- Review staffing models and the ‘social command center’ concept  
- What department ‘owns’ social media  
- 24/7/365 social vs. the traditional 9 to 5 work week (review examples) | Skype Guest Speaker: Patrick Hanlon, Author of The Social Code | - Brand Case Study Review (Project 1) Due  
- Come with a piece of branded content to share |
| 7 (10/6)    | Monitoring & Measurement  
- Tools of the trade — overview of social media monitoring and measurement tools and best practices  
- Key metrics (PIs vs. KPIs); importance of establishing social goals up front | Instagram, Vine | - Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 1  
- Come with examples of brands effectively using Instagram and Vine |
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<th>Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>MID-TERM EXAM</td>
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| 9   | 10/20| The Role of Social Media in Crisis Management Communications  
- Review of social media disasters and what could have been done differently  
- Understanding key components of a social media crisis management plan  
- Review examples such as 'United Breaks Guitars' | *Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 16*  
- Mid-Term Group Evaluations Submitted in Class  
Come with examples of brands effectively using Pinterest |
| 10  | 10/27| The Organizational Impact of Digital Media  
- Internal impact of social media on organization  
- Legal — Overview of risks; understanding on the need for policy  
- Basics of intellectual property — copyright, trademarking, creative commons, etc. | *Skype Guest Speaker: John Michael Morgan author of Brand Against the Machine*  
- **Group Project: Strategic Outline Due** |
| 11  | 11/3 | How to Build a Digital Media Plan  
- Creating a digital media plan  
- Building a budget, gaining approval | *LinkedIn/ Slideshare*  
- **Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 8**  
- Come with examples of brands effectively using LinkedIn and Slideshare |
| 12  | 11/10| The Impact of Digital Media on Other Industries  
- Advertising Agencies  
- Public Relations Agencies | *Blogging Platforms — WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr*  
- Come with examples of your favorite branded blogs |
| 13  | 11/17| Digital Integration: Here, There, Everywhere  
- Online and offline touch points  
- Website integration  
- Email  
- Mobile  
- Social TV | *Snapchat and the Future of Social Media*  
- **Assigned reading: Likeable - Ch. 14** |
| 14  | 11/24| THANKSGIVING BREAK | |
| 15  | 12/1 | Final project presentations | *First Half of Groups Present Final Papers and Presentations Due* |
| 16  | 12/8 | Final project presentations | *Second Half of Groups Present Final Papers and Presentations Due* |
| 17  | 12/15| FINALS WEEK – EXAM TBD | |