Content Marketing Fall 2019

University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication
JMC 3420: 0001
T-TH 12:30-1:45
AJB W332

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Course Website: icon.uiowa.edu
Office hours by appointment only

Course Description and Goals

Content marketing is a strategic approach that focuses on the creation of content to help further an organization’s brand. It focuses on creating content that is useful in meeting the organization’s goals and is appropriate for the target audience.

This course introduces you to the concepts of content marketing and helps you develop the skills you need to create and execute a successful content marketing plan. By the end of this course you will be able to:

• Outline and apply the principles of content marketing, including defining an organization’s content niche.
• Develop compelling content for specific audiences and understand how to target your marketing efforts.
• Build and manage a content editorial calendar and content marketing plan.
• Implement an agile project management process to ensure content plan objectives are met quickly and efficiently.

Additionally, you will continue to develop the writing, editing, and technical skills you will need to be successful in your future strategic communication career.

Required Textbook and Readings

The required book for this course is “Content Rules” by Ann Handley and CC Chapman (revised and updated version.) The book is available at the University Bookstore or Amazon. There is also a reserve copy in the J-School Resource Center. I will also post additional readings to the appropriate ICON module as needed.

Course Requirements
Students are expected to attend classes, contribute to class discussion, work collaboratively within their groups, complete all required readings and projects, and submit assignments on time.

Late assignments and excessive absences will result in lower grades. I reserve the right to deduct points from your final grade for unprofessional behavior, including excessive tardiness, lack of attention to clients and other guests.

**Grading Guidelines**

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**Course Expectations**

**Workload**

This course will consist of lectures, readings, discussion, and individual and group work. There will be time to work in class, but you will need to schedule some client and group work outside of class.

You will be assessed on both individual and group assignments. Individually, you will provide written responses to prompts in the discussion forum. Both individually and in groups, you will develop a content marketing assets and a comprehensive content marketing plan.
Attendance

I will keep a record of your attendance and expect you to be here every day. Absences are excused for internships, job interviews, University-related activities, and religious observances. Missed classes due to common illnesses are not excused; however, you do receive three “free” days during the semester. It’s wise to reserve these days for illnesses or other events that don’t qualify for an excused absence.

Be sure to let me know ahead of time if a class meeting conflicts with any such commitments, and please provide documentation if/when necessary. Let me know in advance when you can, but please note that unexcused absences, for whatever reason, will factor into your final grade as outlined below. Unexcused absences will impact the contribution portion of your grade.

If you find that a serious health or other problem is affecting your work, please discuss it with me ASAP. If you wait until the end of the semester to reach out, I can’t help you make other arrangements. More communication is always better, and I will always try to work with you provided I know what is going on.

If you miss class, you are still responsible for any schedule changes announced. Check ICON and be in touch with a classmate to find out what went on in your absence.

- Three unexcused absences will lower your final grade the next step down (e.g., B+ to B-)
- Four or more unexcused absences will lower your final grade a full letter grade (e.g., B+ to C+)
- Five or more unexcused absences is grounds for failure

Assignments are due at the time specified in the syllabus. Unless otherwise indicated, you will upload your work to the assignment folder provided on the course ICON. Assignments will go down a full letter grade each day they are late. An A assignment due during class that’s received at 5 PM on that day will earn a B, a C the day after, and a D after that.

Collaboration

Much of your work in this class is collaborative. Each student in the working groups is expected to complete a similar amount of work and contribute equally to the projects. Each student will complete a self-evaluation and a group evaluation, describing this equality or lack of it during the group’s work. I may adjust your grade based on your group members’ evaluations.
Contact Me

Feel free to contact me via email at meghann-foster@uiowa.edu. Email is one of the best ways to get a hold of me and I will usually respond within 24 hours; however, I may not respond as quickly over the weekend. You can also call me at 319-325-0920 with any questions or concerns. Office hours are by appointment only.

University/CLAS Policies

Absences and Attendance

Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing their course absence policies, which will vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, unavoidable circumstances, or University authorized activities (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences). Students may use this absence form to aid communication; the instructor will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused (https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM2019.pdf).

Academic Integrity

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty. Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code).

Accommodations for Disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/.
Administrative Home of the Course
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other colleges may have different policies. CLAS policies may be found here: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Communication and the Required Use of UI Email
Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI (Operations Manual, III.15.2).

Complaints
Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. For more information, see https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities.

Final Examination Policies
The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals. Visit https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (diversity.uiowa.edu).
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 must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/.

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 Department of Public Safety website.

Tentative Course Schedule

This is a tentative course outline. Throughout the course of the semester, changes may be necessary. Any changes will be announced immediately on ICON.

Week One: Introductions

Tuesday, August 27th

- Welcome, Introductions, Syllabus Overview
- Assign working groups
- Introduce and assign clients

Assignment: Read Chapters 1 & 2 of “Content Rules” (Pages 3-20).

Thursday, August 29th

- Lecture and Discussion: Introduction to Content Marketing

Assignment for Thursday: Read Chapters 3&4 (pages 21-54) and Chapter 10 (pages 121-137)

Week Two

Tuesday, September 3rd

• Introduce Speak Human Assignment (Due September 19th)

Thursday, September 5th
• Watch “The Story of Content” and discuss
• Department visits, offline content gathering/audit

Assignment: Read “Content Rules” Chapter 6 (pages 69-93)

Week Three

Tuesday, September 10th
• Lecture and Discussion: Understanding your brand voice and how to create helpful content

Assignment: Read “Content Rules” Chapter 5 (pages 55-68). Continue work on your content makeover assignment.

Thursday, September 12th
• Work day & instructor check-in; complete offline content audit from department visit

Week Four

Tuesday, September 17th
• Lecture and discussion: Reimagining and Repurposing Your New and Existing Content

Assignment: Finalize work on your Speak Human assignment. Turn in assignment by noon on September 19th.

Thursday, September 19th
• Introduce Reimagining Assignment (Due October 3rd)
• Work on In-class assignment: rough draft of organizational background

Week Five

Tuesday, September 24th
• Lecture and Discussion: Content & Social Media

Thursday, September 26th
• In-class assignment: work on client social media audit
Assignment: Read Content Rules: Chapter 11 (pages 143-153) Chapter 13 (Pages 171-181) and Chapter 14 (pages 183-187) and Chapter 15 (pages 189-195).

Week six

Tuesday, October 1st
- Lecture and discussion: Written content & blogging
- Introduce Written Content Assignment (Due October 15th)

Thursday, October 3rd
- In-class assignment: outline and/or rough draft of written content

Week Seven

Tuesday, October 8th
- Lecture and discussion: Implementation: How the work gets done, creating a content calendar

Thursday, October 10th
- In-class assignment: outline and/or rough draft of content calendar

Assignment: Work on written content assignment (Due Tuesday, October 15th at noon), read Content Rules Chapter 16 (pages 197-205)

Week eight

Tuesday, October 15th
- Content Spotlight: Video
- Introduce video assignment (Due October 31st)

Thursday, October 17th
- Work day, in-class assignment: work on video outline/begin video project

Week nine

Tuesday, October 22nd
- Lecture & discussion: Paid Search & SEO
- Begin work on paid search plan for client

Thursday, October 24th
- Work day; turn in rough draft of paid search plan, continue work on video

Week ten
Monday, October 29th
• Lecture and Discussion: Monitoring and Measuring the Success of Your Campaign
• Finalize work on your video project

Thursday, October 31st
• Work Day
• In-class assignment: rough draft of monitoring and measuring plan for your client

Assignment: Read “Content Rules” Chapter 18 (pages 211-217)

Week eleven

Tuesday, November 5th
• Lecture and discussion: Content Spotlight: Photos & Graphics
• Introduce Visual Content Assignment (Due November 19th)

Thursday, November 7th
• Work day/instructor check-in

Assignment: Read “Content Rules” Chapter 17 (pages 207-210).

Week twelve

Tuesday, November 12th
• Lecture and Discussion: Content Spotlight: Podcasting
• Introduce Podcasting Assignment (Due December 3rd)

Thursday, November 15th
• Work Day

Assignment: Read “Content Rules” Chapter 17 (Pages 207-210).

Week thirteen

Tuesday, November 19th
• Work day

Thursday, November 21st
• Work Day

NOVEMBER 25TH – 29TH THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week fourteen

Tuesday, December 3rd
  • Work Day

Thursday, December 5th
  • Work Day

Week Fifteen
December 10th & 12th: Final Reports and Presentations

Week Sixteen
Finals Week (no final for this class)
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Stay up-to-date on deadlines, events, scholarships, internships, alumni & more!

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