**Content Marketing Spring 2020**

University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication  
JMC 3420: 0002  
M-W 2:00-3:15 PM  
AJB W336

Instructor: Meghann Foster (she/her)  
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Phone: 319-325-0920  
Course Website: icon.uiowa.edu  
Walk-in hours by appointment

**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, religious observances, and chronic and/or long-term health issues. 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

**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**
Students who have documentation from Student Disability Services (SDS) for accommodations must present the documents and meet with the professor before the third week of classes. Simply emailing the forms to your TA and professor is not sufficient. For more information, please see the section titled Accommodations for Disabilities under The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies and Resources page at the end of the syllabus. If you have other health or personal circumstances (not covered by SDS) that might affect your ability to be successful in this course, please speak with the professor as soon as possible.

**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

Wednesday, January 22nd
- Welcome, Introductions, Syllabus Overview
- Assign working groups
- Introduce and assign clients

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

Week Two

Monday, January 27th
- Lecture and Discussion: Introduction to Content Marketing

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

Wednesday, January 29th
- Introduce Speak Human Assignment (Due Monday Feb. 10™)

Week Three

Monday, Feb. 3rd
- 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 Speak Human assignment.

Wednesday Feb, 5th
- Offsite content audit

Week Four
Monday, February 10th
• Lecture and discussion: Reimagining and Repurposing Your New and Existing Content
• Introduce Reimagining Assignment (Due February 24th)

Wednesday, Feb. 12th
• Work on in-class assignment: rough draft of organizational background

**Week Five**

Monday, Feb. 17th
• Lecture and Discussion: Content & Social Media

Wednesday, February 19th
• 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**

Monday, February 24th
• Lecture and discussion: Written content & blogging
  • Introduce Written Content Assignment (Due Monday March 9th)

Wednesday, February 26th
• In-class assignment: outline and/or rough draft of written content

**Week Seven**

Monday, March 2nd
• Lecture and discussion: Implementation: How the work gets done, creating a content calendar

Wednesday, March 4th
• In-class assignment: outline and/or rough draft of content calendar

*Assignment: Work on written content assignment, read Content Rules Chapter 16 (pages 197-205)*

**Week Eight**

Monday, March 9th
• Content Spotlight: Video
  • Introduce video assignment (Due Monday March 30th)

Wednesday, March 11th
• Work day, in-class assignment: work on video outline/begin video project
SPRING BREAK (March 15-22<sup>nd</sup>)

**Week Nine**

Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Lecture & discussion: Paid Search & SEO
- Begin work on paid search plan for client

Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>
- Work day; turn in rough draft of paid search plan, continue work on video

**Week Ten**

Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>
- Lecture and Discussion: Monitoring and Measuring the Success of Your Campaign

Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>
- 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**

Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>
- Lecture and discussion: Content Spotlight: Photos & Graphics
- Introduce Visual Content Assignment *(Due November 19<sup>th</sup>)*

Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>
- Work day/instructor check-in

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

**Week Twelve**

Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>
- Lecture and Discussion: Content Spotlight: Podcasting
- Introduce Podcasting Assignment *(Due December 3<sup>rd</sup>)*

Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>
- Work Day

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

**Week Thirteen**
Monday, April 20th
  •  Work day

Wednesday, April 22nd
  •  Work Day

**WEEK FOURTEEN**

Monday, April 27th
  •  Work Day

Wednesday, April 29th
  •  Work Day

**WEEK FIFTEEN**

**MAY 4TH & 6TH FINAL REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**WEEK SIXTEEN**

**FINALS WEEK (NO FINAL FOR THIS CLASS)**
FOLLOW US

Stay up-to-date on deadlines, events, scholarships, internships, alumni & more!

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