Course Title: Online Engagement Strategy – Leveraging the Web and Social Media for Good
Course Instructor: Farra Trompeter
Course Number: PADM-GP 4133 - 001
Meeting Time: Saturdays, June 13, 20, and 27, 10am-1pm + June 20, 2pm-5pm
Location: Global Center for Academic & Spiritual Life, 238 Thompson Street, Room: 269
Faculty Contact Information, including office hours:
  • Best way to reach me is via email: farra@nyu.edu
  • Emails will be returned within one business day
  • Office hours: By appointment

Course Description:
Nonprofit organizations use online communications strategies to engage audiences, increase visibility, shift attitudes, raise money, and create social change. This four-session intensive examines how organizations use social media, websites, email, and mobile technology to build relationships with its community. Through case studies and examples from local, national, and international organizations, students gain a broad understanding of online communications, fundraising, and advocacy in the nonprofit sector. Each student will analyze and develop a strategy for how a nonprofit organization can maximize online engagement to support its mission.

Learning Objectives:
At the end of this course, students will be able to:
  • Understand how websites, email, social media, and mobile communications support the mission, outreach, visibility, advocacy, and fundraising efforts of nonprofit organizations.
  • Select one leading goal (i.e. volunteer recruitment, advocacy, fundraising, issue awareness, brand recognition, etc.) and recognize how the community’s needs influence an organization’s online engagement strategy.
  • Analyze the effectiveness of an organization’s online engagement activities.
  • Produce recommendations for strategies and tactics that organizations should use for online engagement.

Course Requirements
  • No prerequisite courses are required.
  • For your projects, you will need to select a nonprofit organization to serve as your case study. This can be an organization you are already connected to or one you’ve always admired. If you need help selecting an organization, let me know during our first session.
  • We will read selections from the following two books:
  • This course will focus on online engagement strategy and cover big picture topics. If you would like to dig into specific networks or channels, please review the following materials or ask me for resources. These materials can be very helpful when developing your papers.
    o Email 101 for Nonprofits: http://www.fundraising123.org/email-101
    o The Online Fundraising Scorecard 2014: http://www.dunhamandcompany.com/onlinefundraisingscorecard/
    o Social Media for Social Good 2012: http://www.nptechforgood.com/books/
Participation and Attendance

Class attendance and preparation are critical. All of us bring different perceptions and ideas to this dialogue about online engagement. Please prepare for each class by immersing yourself in the readings, and be ready to provide an open and comfortable atmosphere in which to share comments and participate.

As your instructor, I will happily share my knowledge and experience, but I see myself as a facilitator. Our sessions will be interactive and I expect that you'll be ready to share your insights from the readings and engage one another in discussion. This course is not for the student who wants to receive information and then simply present it back. This course is for the student who wants to engage with the material and each other. If speaking in public is difficult for you, please let me know early on.

Since we are only meeting for four sessions, you are required to attend every class and arrive on time. If you are not able to attend a class due to an emergency, you must notify me beforehand. Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency, out of respect for those who abide by deadlines despite hectic schedules. Late submissions of the final paper without prior permission will be penalized by ½ a letter grade per day (eg B+ to B).

Projects

You will have a worksheet, a group presentation and an individual paper to submit during the course. In crafting these projects, drawing from your own experience is fine, however you are expected to synthesize core ideas from all readings, and cite relevant examples. I will grade your papers for clarity and sharpness of the ideas articulated.

Worksheet

Based on the organization your group selects, you will identify a possible primary goal that your organization can might use to guide its online engagement efforts, define a key audience, and then analyze how well that organization engages that audience in fulfillment of that goal on one current online channel (e.g. website, email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tumblr, mobile, etc.). I will provide a document for you to complete. Each member of the group will submit an individual worksheet based on the same organization and goal.

Presentation

In small groups you will develop and present a POST plan based on an organization your group selects in the second session. The POST plan is a four-step approach to an online engagement strategy based on People, Objectives, Strategy, and Technology, originally developed by Forrester Research, Inc. You will need to coordinate developing the plan and presentation between our second and third sessions. Each member of the group will be responsible for producing and presenting two sections of the presentation based on the outline I will share when we meet.

Paper

Submit 8-10 page final paper: strategic framework and communications recommendations for case study organization. You will submit a final paper of 8-10 pages in length by 9am on Saturday July 11 (two weeks after the last session). The paper should include an executive summary that describes the project goals and recommendations in terms that a key decision-maker could understand.

Your paper, for example, might follow this structure:

- Overview: What is the organization you are studying (mission, current practice, etc.) and what is the primary goal you’ve identified for their online engagement strategy?
- Approach: What research did you conduct to diagnose the needs of the organization?
- Main points: What are the highlights of your research or findings?

1 While you do not need to limit your focus to social media, if you are looking for an approach to research for your project, review “Social Media Communications Audit: A Guide To Understanding and Implementation” by NPowerNW at http://www.501commons.org/resources/tools-and-best-practices/technology-knowledge-center/social-media-communication-audit-pdf.
Summary: What strategic direction should the organization focus on?
Priorities: What actions should your organization take immediately and what might be longer term?

Grading
Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worksheet</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will also grade you in accordance to Wagner’s grading guidelines, available for your review at https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/admissions/GradingGuidelines.pdf.

Grading Rubric
I will evaluate your participation based not only on your attendance in our four classes, but on the quality of your contributions, the relevance and clarity of your contributions, and how well you apply/challenge/extend ideas from the readings to the discussion.

I will evaluate your work on the quality of your insights and your ability to demonstrate that you have processed the readings and reflected on our class discussions. I expect your projects to be organized and thoughtful.

Your paper should be well written and reflect professional quality in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and clarity. I will use the following criteria when grading your paper:

- **WRITING (25%)**: The writing is fluid; sentences/paragraphs are well structured; proper grammar; shows command of graduate level vocabulary and understanding of concepts; polished, not drafty.
- **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION (10%)**: Correct spelling/no typos; length limits honored (if given); timeliness and other instructions followed.
- **ANALYTICAL THINKING (25%)**: Uses material from class to develop and support ideas; demonstrates effort to integrate materials; paper has a logical flow that presents and develops a clear, unified position/argument; argument is consistent (no contradictions or gaps) and based on critical thinking.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS (30%)**: Reflects realities of nonprofit organization’s resources, mission, and community; applies insights to a practical discussion of strategic communications.
- **REFERENCES (10%)**: Uses and cites references appropriately. You can use ANY reference system of your choice, as long as you are consistent.

Your group presentation will be based on a combination of an average score from your colleagues and my rating, based on the following criteria:

- **ORGANIZATION (1=confusing/5=solid)**: Presentation is clear and easy to follow.
- **STYLE (1=lacking/5=strong)**: Presenter is comfortable and seems prepared.
- **DESIGN (1=poor/5=excellent)**: Slides are easy to read; professional.
- **CONTENT (1=poor/5=excellent)**: Presenter explains materials well; listener learns insights.

Incompletes and Academic Integrity
This course will abide by the Wagner School’s general policy guidelines on incomplete grades, academic honesty, and plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity.

The Wagner School has a strict policy regarding incompletes. The grade of “Incomplete Pass” will only be available in extreme circumstances such as serious medical emergencies. Students may withdraw from the course up until the date set by the Registrar. Students who withdraw will receive a grade of W and will have to pay for the course again when they retake it. http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies/incompletes
Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the Wagner School’s educational mission and your own personal and intellectual growth. You are expected to bear individual responsibility for your work and to uphold the ideal of academic integrity. Any student who compromises or devalues the academic process will be reported to the administration and be subject to disciplinary action. [http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies](http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies) and [https://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies/academic-code.php](https://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies/academic-code.php).

**Students with disabilities**
Any students requiring accommodations should contact me to make proper arrangements. Please be prepared to share your documentation from the NYU disabilities office regarding appropriate accommodations.

**Course Website**
The course website can be found on NYU’s Classes system, accessible via the Academics tab on NYU Home ([http://home.nyu.edu](http://home.nyu.edu)). Throughout the semester, I will post documents such as lecture slides and supplemental resources. In addition, I will occasionally send emails about course details and logistics to your NYU email account. Please check both the course website and your NYU email account on a regular basis.

**Technology**
As a class that’s about online engagement, you are welcome to use your cellphone, laptop, tablet, or other technology in the classroom. Feel free to tweet any takeaways or ideas between classes using the hashtag: #padm4133. I also suggest you follow conversations and share resources using #nptech and #sm4np. A feed with these hashtags is embedded in a dashboard with great blogs to follow on this topic at [http://www.netvibes.com/farratrompeter](http://www.netvibes.com/farratrompeter).

If you are new to Twitter, check out these resources:  

**Course Schedule**

**Session 1:** Saturday June 13, 10am-1pm  
*Introductions and basic concepts of online engagement*

Read before class:
- *Networked Nonprofit*, 1-2  
- Mansfield: “A Short, Recent History of Nonprofit Website Design and Online Fundraising”  
- Stacy: “Gutenberg and the Social Media Revolution: An Investigation of the World Where it Costs Nothing to Distribute Information”  
- Dixon & Keyes: “The Permanent Disruption of Social Media”  
  [http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_permanent_disruption_of_social_media](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_permanent_disruption_of_social_media)  
- Lee: “Leveraging Social Media for Social Good”  

**Session 2:** Saturday June 20, 10am-1pm  
*Finding your community and strengthening their participation*

Read before class:
- *Networked Nonprofit*, 5  
- *Social Change*, 1-2  
- Pew Research: “Social Media Update 2014”  
- Kanter: “International Organizations and Social Media: News, Engagement, and Social Data for Policy Change”  
  [http://www.bethkanter.org/international-orgs](http://www.bethkanter.org/international-orgs)
• Petronzio: “Race and Social Media: How to Push the Conversation Forward”
http://mashable.com/2014/04/27/race-social-media/ (VIDEO optional:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4yZ6P6w6AI)
• Fankhauser: “What Brands Can Learn From charity: water's Digital Strategy”
http://mashable.com/2013/08/19/charity-water-digital/

Meet with your groups and select organization for which you will develop a POST plan.

Submit your worksheet by 12pm, Sunday June 21.

Session 3: Saturday June 20, 2pm-5pm
Developing advocacy and fundraising campaigns

Read before class:
• Networked Nonprofit, 10
• Social Change, 3-5
• Livingston: “HOW TO: Turn Slacktivists into Activists with Social Media”
http://mashable.com/2010/05/13/slacktivists-activists-social-media/
• Shirky: “How Social Media can Make History” http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media
• Jackson: “How Social Media can Start a Revolution” http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/48124-how-social-media-can-start-a-revolution
• Johnson: “Don't Let "Black Lives Matter" Become Another Ice Bucket Challenge”
http://www.newrepublic.com/article/120575/black-lives-matter-i-cant-breathe-are-not-next-ice-bucket-challenge
• Sharma: “With #IceBucketChallenge in the Rear View, Where Does Fundraising Go from Here?”

Guest Speaker – to be announced

Session 4: Saturday June 27, 10am-1pm
Putting it all together

Read before class:
• Social Change, 6-8
• Burns: “It’s all just organizing: How small organizations can punch above their weight in a digital world”
http://www.mobilisationlab.org/its-all-just-organizing/
• Kanter: “Becoming a Networked Nonprofit” http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/becoming_a_networked_nonprofit
• Askanase: “50 Shades Of Social Media: Navigating Policies, Laws & Ethics”
• Shirky: “The Key to Successful Tech Management: Learning to Metabolize Failure”
http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/140743/clay-shirky/the-key-to-successful-tech-management

Group presentations

Submit your final paper by 9am on Saturday July 11

Developed on May 25, 2015