

Loyola University Chicago  
Spring 2015  
COMM 200: Communication and New Media  
M, W, F 9:20am-10:10am



(Photo credit: <http://blog.lookuppage.com>)

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Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course number on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails. Please limit your email inquiries to 7a.m. – 6p.m. CST.

**Office:** SOC 204 - Second Floor

**Office Hours:** M, F 11AM-1PM; W, Noon-1PM

(All appointments must be scheduled via the class Sakai page under the sign up tab. The Instructor will not see students without an appointment.)

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Digital communication is constantly redefining how we view each other and ourselves. During the semester, students will learn about various new media platforms and technologies and take a critical yet practical look at the role technology plays in communication.

As producers of new media, students will leave this course having gained a new perspective of how the genre impacts communication. Through a collaborative environment, students will develop and maintain a high-quality digital product and acquire skills in working with others. Students will engage in the following exercises:

- Brainstorm creative digital content for a target audience
- Analyze effective and ineffective digital content, its usability and visual appeal
- Consider brand messaging components that will appeal to the target audience
- Engage in effective group collaboration and communication
- Present a complex digital project in a persuasive, concise, timely way

### **IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
- Developing creative capabilities
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing

### **TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING:**

*The Huffington Post Guide to Blogging, by the editors of the Huffington Post, December 2, 2008.*

In addition to the required text, students are responsible for reading additional materials assigned during the course.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

This course will often feature guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions.

## **WRITING/PROOFREADING SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENTS**

It's important that all submitted assignments are typed in a double- spaced format, stapled and proofread for clarity and organization of ideas. Submitted assignments cannot contain typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. Work that has not been properly proofread will be subject to a lower grade.

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Unless specified by the instructor, assignments are due at the beginning of class (9:20AM) via the class Sakai website. Assignments must be submitted online and will not be accepted after 9:20AM. **UNLESS INSTRUCTED, DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS.**

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Due to the nature of the class (a group based project) it's imperative that students attend every class. If a student is consistently absent, his/her grade as well as their respective group's grade is in serious jeopardy. If a student can't attend class, he/she must let the instructor know via email prior to their absence. Failure to do so could result in a lower class/group grade.

## **IDEAS LAB (ILab)**

Inspired by the 1871 innovation lab and Harvard University's CS 50 course, students from various courses will meet to seek additional guidance and to brainstorm/trade ideas. The purpose of the ideas lab is to encourage students to seek answers collaboratively in a high-energy environment. Ideas lab will meet once a month from 4pm-6pm (location/dates TBA) . Students who are not registered for the class will not be able to attend. Blog groups are strongly encouraged to attend ILab.

## WEEKLY UPDATES AVAILABLE VIA SAKAI

*Sakai* will serve as the course hub. You are expected to check on Sakai before each scheduled class. The syllabus and updated class assignments are available via Sakai. Students are encouraged to check the class page daily.

## GRADING

A  
B  
C  
D  
F

### Grades will be based on:

In class and outside assignments 25%  
Blog project /presentation 45%  
Final exam 30%

## BLOG PROJECT

Working in your respective group, you will create an engaging and informative blog. The main objective of each blog is to learn how to create a well-written, effective post, engage your target audience and enable you to start thinking as a content creator not just a content consumer.

## GROUP COMMUNICATION

A significant amount of class time is dedicated to your blog project. It's imperative that your group communicates goals and objectives to team members daily and use class time in a productive manner. If you have a concern about group performance, please alert the instructor as soon as possible so we can address any issues that might impact team performance.

## BLOG RUBRIC

Grade	Description
<b>A range</b>	Group meets weekly deadlines. Blog content is highly organized and engaging. All content is written for the target audience and central to the blog theme. Blog contains professional and appropriate use of language. Minimal typos, misspellings, punctuation or grammatical glitches; no errors of fact. All the necessary details, documentation, quotes, citations, and specifics are there. Group immediately applies suggested content revisions. The blog's social networking sites are active throughout the semester and consistently push the blog's content. The call to action is consistent and the blog has considerable comments and responses.
<b>B</b>	Group meets weekly deadlines. Very good attempt to create highly engaging content but

<b>range</b>	more effort is needed. Some improvement needed in blog theme content, clarity, and organization. Occasional typos or other glitches say more about the lack of close proofreading than failure to master the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage. More details, quotes, citations, or examples are needed. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, source, or date, etc.) show inattention to detail/accuracy although content is above average. Group applies suggested content revisions but with some delay. The blog's social networking sites are active throughout the semester but occasionally push the blog's content. The blog's call to action is consistent but has moderate comments and responses.
<b>C range</b>	Group has missed more than two deadlines. Blog content lacks clear connections to blog theme and target audience. Average, acceptable writing and research that meets basic expectations. Needs much work on content, clarity and blog organization. Errors indicate need for improvement in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage; material was not proofread carefully. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, wrong source, date, or page number, etc.) show inattention to detail and accuracy. Group applies suggested content revisions but with significant delay. The blog's social networking sites are rarely monitored throughout the semester but occasionally push the blog's content. The blog's call to action is not consistent and lacks comments and responses.
<b>D/F range</b>	Group has missed more than five deadlines. Blog organization and engagement is below average and content does not connect to the blog theme or the target audience. Posts include numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Group occasionally applies suggested content revisions but with significant delay. The blog's social networking sites are rarely monitored throughout the semester. The blog's call to action is not consistent and lacks considerable comments and responses.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Specifically for the SOC:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by

- the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naive is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

You are expected to be familiar with and abide by Loyola's code of academic integrity. You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:

[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml)

## **BLOG PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

All content created for the blog must be original. Groups are not allowed to borrow images or video from an outside source.

The first content outline is due Monday, February 23, 2015.

Every Monday at the beginning of class (9:20AM), groups will submit a content outline (includes research and logistics plan) for their respective blog. Outlines must be proofread, typed and stapled. List your group name and each member at the top of the first page. Groups are expected to be prepared for weekly consultations. Each group will meet with the instructor to review their content outline and the instructor will give detailed feedback. Each group is expected to take detailed notes and apply revisions immediately.

## **GROUP PRESENTATIONS/CRITIQUE DISCUSSIONS**

Group presentations will begin Monday, April 13, 2015. At the conclusion of the semester, each group will give a final presentation to the class outlining editorial decisions and in some cases, defending their judgment. This twenty-minute presentation will also include be a rigorous question and answer session with your peers. **Business attire is required.**

Following blog presentations, students will write a detailed, balanced critique of each blog. Students are required to study each blog prior to writing their critique. If you see something on the blog that could use improvement, please note your

criticism in a constructive and respectful manner. Students will evaluate their colleagues according to the evaluation guidelines set by the instructor. Blog critiques are due Monday, April 20, 2015.

## **BLOG ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Although students are collectively responsible for their blog, each team member will have specific roles and responsibilities. Each group will decide which members will assume their respective roles. Consider each role carefully when deciding who is the proper fit for your blog's success:

- **Story Editor** – Each group will have two story editors. Story editors are responsible for proofreading content and making sure each post adheres to the group's editorial standards. Group members are responsible for their own content (blog post, title, and tracking comments and responses), However, story editors will offer suggestions on how a post can build on the group's theme and speak to the target audience.
- **Visual Editor** - Each group will have one visual editor. Visual editors are responsible for updating the blog's YouTube channel and making sure all visual elements are appealing to the group's target audience.
- **Audience Engagement Coordinator** – Each group will have one audience engagement coordinator. The audience engagement coordinator will be responsible for building blog momentum. AEC's will push the blog's content to the target audience via two social networking sites that align with the blog's mission. AEC's are also expected to tweet content daily to the official class twitter page, @200comm.
- **Researcher** – Each group will have one researcher. The researcher is responsible for fact checking each post and keeping the group honest on their blog's mission. The researcher will also be responsible for keeping the group informed and updated on recent trends, events, or anything that impacts the target audience. Researchers will work closely with the ideas coordinator to contribute a significant amount of enterprising ideas to the group.
- **Ideas Coordinator** - Each group will have one ideas coordinator. The ideas coordinator is responsible for organizing all blog story suggestions and will help keep the group honest on story overlap. The ideas coordinator will not be solely accountable for coming up with ideas but will act as the group's creative compass. The ideas coordinator will work closely with the group's



researcher to make sure there are plenty of innovative ideas from week to week and to encourage the group to think out of the box.

## **TECH SUPPORT**

\*\*No technical expertise is assumed and no prerequisites are required. However, you are expected to seek out information needed to fulfill the course requirements on your own. Please check the class sakai webpage under the resources tab for a detailed wordpress/blog tutorial. Another helpful resource is Loyola's Atomic Learning site. The tech support tool is an online, on demand site that offers over 50,000 tutorial videos on over 250 technology applications, including Microsoft and Adobe. <https://www.atomiclearning.com/login/luc>

## **SOC EQUIPMENT**

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact apacheco@luc.edu; phone 312-915-8830).

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students are urged to contact the instructor should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

## **THE COURSE (Subject to change)**

### ***Week 1: Introductions/New Media defined/Blog Project Assignments***

***Jan 12:*** Welcome/Introductions/Syllabus Review

**Assignment:** Read the syllabus

***Jan.14:*** Complete Blog Survey/New media defined

***Jan.16:*** How is new media redefining how we communicate?

**Assignment:** Read pages 1-56 from text

***Week 2: Writing for the Web – Creating Highly Shareable Content***

***Jan. 19: Class does not meet***

***Jan. 21:*** Blog Project assignments and blog project overview

Chapter review – Please be prepared

***Jan. 23:*** Group communication class exercise

**Assignment:** Read pages, 185-186, 79-91 from text

***Week 3: Writing for the Web – Finding your voice***

***Jan 26:*** Chapter review/How to write a good blog post

**Assignment:** Write two blog posts based upon a theme you are considering. Posts are due January 28, 2015 at 9:20am. Please submit posts via the class Sakai webpage and bring a copy to class.

Read the following link: <https://medium.com/@jeffgoins/the-truth-about-going-viral-2fc205db6c97>

***Jan. 28:*** Blog post review

**Assignment:** Write a two-page review of a blog from Fall 2014. Evaluate blogs according to the criteria outlined in class.

***Jan. 30:*** Fall 2014 review discussion

**Assignment:** Write two blog posts based upon a theme you are considering. Posts are due February 2, 2015 at 10am. Please submit posts via the class Sakai webpage.

***Week 4: Blog theme proposal and presentation prep***

***Feb. 2:*** Blog theme proposal and presentation prep

***Feb. 4:*** Blog theme proposal and presentation prep

***Feb. 6:*** Blog theme proposal and presentation prep

***Week 5: Getting to Know Your Target Audience***

***Feb. 9:*** Blog theme proposals and presentations due– Each group will give a five-minute presentation to the class. **Casual business attire is required.**

**Assignment:** Read pages 95-112.

***Feb. 11:*** Chapter review/Create target audience profile project

***Feb. 13:*** Screen and review target audience profile project

***Week 6: The Power of Images in New Media***

***Feb. 16:*** Create a YouTube account for your blog.

**Assignment:** Write, shoot and edit a behind the scenes look at the creation of your blog. Post to your YouTube account by February 20, 2015.

***Feb. 18: Production Day – Groups can use class time to finalize BTS project***

***Feb. 20:*** Screen and discuss YouTube projects

***Week 7: First outlines due/Blogs launch***

***Feb. 23:*** First outlines due/Blogs launch

***Feb. 25:*** Group meetings

***Feb. 27:*** Group meetings

***Week 8: Spring Break – Class does not meet***

**Mar. 2 - Mar. 6, 2015**

***Week 9: Social Media - Building and Sustaining Audience Engagement***

***Mar. 9:*** Using social media to promote audience engagement

***Mar. 11:*** Using comments and responses to build readership

***Mar. 13:*** Guest speaker

***Week 10: Ideas Week***

***Mar. 16:*** Ideas class exercise

***Mar. 18:*** Ideas class exercise

***Mar. 20: Idea presentations –groups will have five minutes to highlight their best blog idea***

***Week 11: Blog Buddy Week***

***Mar. 23:*** Blog buddy feedback and discussion

***Mar. 25:*** Blog buddy feedback and discussion

***Mar. 27:*** Blog buddy feedback and discussion

***Week 12: Blog reflection – group feedback and discussion***

***Mar. 30:*** Blog reflection

***Apr. 1:*** Blog reflection

***Apr. 3:*** Easter Break – Class does not meet

***Week 13: Blog Pitch Presentations Prep***

***Apr. 6:*** Easter Break – Class does not meet

***Apr. 8:*** Blog pitch presentation prep

***Apr.10:*** Blog pitch presentation prep

***Week 14: Blog Pitch Presentations***

***Apr. 13:*** Groups one and two present to the class

***Apr. 15:*** Groups three and four present to the class

***Apr. 17:*** Groups five and six present to the class

***Week 15: Group Critiques Due/Course Review/Final exam handout***

***Apr. 20:*** Group critiques due

***Apr. 22:*** Course Review/Final exam handout

***Apr. 24:*** Class does not meet

***Week 16: Final Exam Due***

Final exam due/blog grades available