

## 4812-7812 Online Audience Development – Spring 2017

You're already using social media every day – but are you using it in the most effective way possible? In Online Audience Development students will explore, envision and evaluate the possibilities of social media integration in news production workflows. We'll experiment with emerging social platforms to see how they might fit in a newsroom's social media playbook.

You will also exercise, develop and improve on all the journalism skills practiced in previous classes: researching, reporting, editing, producing, proofreading, photo editing and design. The big difference? This time you'll be reporting *on* our newsrooms in order to help create deeper connections with the audience.

### Prerequisites

Convergence Reporting (J-4804/7804)  
or Broadcast News II (J-4306/7306)  
or News Reporting (J-4450/J-7450)

### Class Schedule

*This course is three credit hours.*

Course meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. in 45 Walter Williams Hall.

### Course Faculty

Amy Simons, Associate Professor  
001-E Reynolds Journalism Institute  
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*Editors who can assist you with ideas on behalf of your assigned newsroom:*

Matt Dulin, Community Outreach Director, Missourian, 882-8182, [dulinm@missouri.edu](mailto:dulinm@missouri.edu)  
Jeanne Abbott, Managing Editor, Missourian, 882-5741, [abbottjm@missouri.edu](mailto:abbottjm@missouri.edu)  
Ryan Famuliner, News Director, KBIA-FM, 882-3431, [FamulinerR@missouri.edu](mailto:FamulinerR@missouri.edu)  
Nathan Lawrence, Digital Director, KBIA-FM, 882-3441, [lawrencen@missouri.edu](mailto:lawrencen@missouri.edu)  
Heather Lamb, Editorial Director, Vox, 882-9761, [lambh@missouri.edu](mailto:lambh@missouri.edu)

*Editors who can assist you with ideas\writing\video\audio\graphics in the Futures Lab:*

Rachel Wise – Rm. 001A RJI, video editor, [wiser@missouri.edu](mailto:wiser@missouri.edu)

## Required Software

You will have access to production equipment through the Convergence checkout room (11 Walter Williams). This includes the Nikon D-7000/7100, Zoom H4N, tripods, wireless microphones, etc. You will also have access to the Futures Lab computers to edit on the Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro X, Photoshop, Audition, Illustrator and InDesign. In order to be successful in this class, you will also need accounts on:

**Facebook**

**Twitter**

**Instagram**

**Snapchat** (optional, though preferred)

**WeChat** (optional)

**Banjo:** Banjo is a social listening tool we will be using in class. You will receive an email to your MU email address with login credentials during Week 2 of the semester. Banjo requires that you have an Instagram account.

**Slack:** Slack should be used for questions about class, assignments, content you're producing on behalf of your newsroom team or anything, really, that you feel the entire class could benefit from. In addition to subject-specific chatrooms, you have the ability to use the private instant message function to communicate with your classmates and me. While Slack doesn't replace the need for face-to-face or email communication, it is best for quick questions or to discuss issues that might also benefit others. You will receive an invite from your professor to join our Slack group. Please check your Mizzou email to find that invite. You can access Slack using a web browser, desktop app and/or mobile app. All app downloads are free of charge.

## Required Texts

- AP Stylebook: <http://bit.ly/soapstylebook>
- *Engaged Journalism: Connecting with Digitally Empowered News Audiences* by Jake Batsell (ISBN: 978-0-231-16835-9)
- Check the course schedule often. Links to occasional online readings will appear there.

## Recommended Texts

- *Jab, Jab, Jab, Right Hook: How to Tell a Story in a Noisy Social World* by Gary Vaynerchuk (ISBN: 978-0-06-227306-2); likely found in most public libraries

You are expected to keep up with news from the print, online and on-air services of the Missourian, KOMU, KBIA and their local competitors. Class discussions will sometimes focus on that coverage.

## **Grading & Course Policies**

You are expected to keep up with news from the print, online and on-air services of the Missouriian, KOMU, KBIA and their local competitors. Class discussions will sometimes focus on that coverage.

Graduate students and undergraduate students in this class are subject to plus/minus grading.

Your grade will reflect these percentages:

### **Class participation and Attendance – 10%**

Class participation and attendance are vital and can rarely be made up. Classes are designed to supplement your hands-on learning, introduce new ideas and bring up big picture topics that may or may not be relevant to your weekly shifts.

I will take attendance during every class. You may miss **four** classes for any reason without penalty. (I will not judge absences as excused or unexcused.)

Please check with a classmate to find out what happened in class when you were gone. If you still have questions about the material, check in with an instructor.

After four absences, an additional absence will result in a C for attendance. A sixth absence or chronic tardiness will result in an F for attendance. If you have an ongoing illness or unforeseen circumstances that cause you to miss class for more than two weeks, please meet with a faculty member.

### **Social Media Producing – 40%**

You will be working in teams to provide social media content for either KBIA-FM or the Columbia Missouriian. Your teams will help our newsrooms connect with their audiences by telling *their* story. This may be done using video, photos, information graphics in social media posts. You and your teammates will meet with your newsroom clients and determine what the story is they're trying to tell. You'll figure out a plan on how to help the reporters and editors in that newsroom *connect* with its audience — and then execute that plan.

The exact number of “stories” each student is responsible for will vary depending on class size. This will be determined during a team meeting with your instructor following your first meeting with your client. A contract will be drawn up with mutual expectations and projected deadlines.

In many cases, you'll be working with your client and me to determine what your work will look like, when it will be due, and when it will be published. Deadlines may be fluid than in daily news production — but a failure to deliver content as promised will result in a 20% grade deduction for each day the content for your post is delayed.

### **Market Analysis Reports – 35%**

Every two weeks, you will be required to choose a television or radio station, newspaper or online-only outlet and do an analysis of their social media presence. What does that outlet do that

you like? What don't you like? What do you think they could do better — and how? What insights can you gather into the organization's audience and how employees interact with that audience?

Papers should be 200-300 words, double spaced and **uploaded to Canvas by 2 p.m. on Monday afternoons in the assigned weeks**. These will be graded based on evidence of critical thought and effort. A paper turned in on time with a clear effort put forth will receive an A (100%). A paper with a minimal effort will receive a C (75%). A paper not turned in will receive a zero. **LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Beginning in Week 2, students will give presentations based on what they've written in their paper. I will read the papers on Mondays and decide who will present for the next four class sessions. There will be 1-2 presentations made during each class session and presenters will be named on the spot. Come to class each day prepared to talk about the organization you chose to analyze that week. Your presentation can be informal — giving us a tour of your chosen organization's social platforms and pointing out highlights/lowlights, then lead a short discussion on how our newsroom teams might be able to implement (or avoid!) some of the techniques you've shown.

### **Reading Quizzes – 10%**

There will be five reading quizzes during the semester, administered through the University's Canvas site. The quizzes will be 10 questions and you will have 15 minutes to complete them. Because they are to be taken on your own time, they will be open book. But, they will not be announced on the syllabus. You will receive a notification through Canvas that a quiz has opened. You will then have 48 hours to take the quiz before it closes.

If you have a problem accessing a style quiz or a computer issue, you must contact an instructor immediately or the quiz score will stand as incomplete.

There will be other online training modules that you will need to complete, such as Twitter Flight School, during the course of the semester. Completion of those training modules will be graded — and factor into your composite quiz score. When you complete one of those assignments, you'll select the option to print or email yourself a completion certificate. PDF that certificate and upload it to the proper assignment in Canvas.

### **Portfolio – 5%**

Students will create and publish an online portfolio showcasing their professional work. This might include work done in the various Missouri School of Journalism newsrooms, in off-campus internships or fellowships, personal blogs, etc. A successful portfolio will demonstrate a student's skills, professional interests and career aspirations. Potential employers should be able to visit the site and know right away what the student could add to their workplace — within the field of journalism or not.

## Graduate Student/Honors by Contract Requirement

Graduate students will complete an additional assignment. Click [here](#) for the full details of the graduate assignment, due dates and instructions for submission.

Completion of this assignment is required for graduate students to pass this course.

Work will be graded on the following plus/minus A-F scale. Failure to complete the assignment will result in a failing grade for the course. The graduate component grade will be counted as the majority of your attendance/participation grade for the class.

**Letter grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number and assigned based on the following percentages:**

Undergraduate Students		Graduate Students	
A+	97-100	A+	97-100
A	93-96	A	93-96
A-	90-92	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B+	87-89
B	83-86	B	83-86
B-	80-82	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C+	77-79
C	73-76	C	73-76
C-	70-72	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	F	69 and below
D	63-66		
D-	60-62		
F	59 and below		

### Professional Values and Competencies:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;

- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

### **Code of Ethics**

The role of a journalist is to tell the truth, act independently and minimize harm. As such, journalism students are expected to read and comply with with the highest ethical standards. Though various codes have slight differences – you will find they are all based in the same values. Please review the codes for the following news organizations: Society of Professional Journalists, Radio, Television, Digital News Association and National Press Photographers Association.

As a convergence student, you are held to a strict standard of being able to adapt to different newsroom environments and learning the policies of that work environment.

If you ever have a question about an ethical standard, get in touch with your faculty editor as soon as possible.

[SPJ Code of Ethics](#)

[RTDNA Code of Ethics](#)

[NPPA Code of Ethics](#)

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

Use of materials from another author without citation or attribution.

Use of verbatim materials from another author without citation or attribution.

Extensive use of materials from past assignments without permission of your instructor.  
Extensive use of materials from assignments in other classes without permission of your instructor.

Fabricating information in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not.

Fabricating sources in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not.

Fabricating quotes in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not.

Lack of full disclosure or permission from editors when controversial reportorial techniques, such as going undercover to get news, are used.

### **Classroom Misconduct**

When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult with your instructor. For closed-book exams and exercises, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor. For open-book exams and exercises, academic misconduct includes copying or reading someone else's work.

Classroom misconduct includes forgery of class attendance; obstruction or disruption of teaching, including late arrival or early departure; failure to turn off cellular telephones leading to disruption of teaching; playing games or surfing the Internet on laptop computers unless instructed to do so; physical abuse or safety threats; theft; property damage; disruptive, lewd or obscene conduct; abuse of computer time; repeated failure to attend class when attendance is required; and repeated failure to participate or respond in class when class participation is required.

*IMPORTANT: Entering a classroom late or leaving a classroom before the end of the period can be extremely disruptive behavior.*

Students are asked to arrive for class on time and to avoid early departures. This is particularly true of large lectures, where late arrivals and early departures can be most disruptive. Instructors have the right to deny students access to the classroom if they arrive late and have the right to dismiss a student from the class for early departures that result in disruptions.

Under MU policy, your instructor has the right to ask for your removal from the course for misconduct, disruptive behavior or excessive absences. The instructor then has the right to issue a grade of withdraw, withdraw failing or F. The instructor alone is responsible for assigning the grade in such circumstances.

### **A Special Note about Web Access in Class**

The above language regarding classroom misconduct stems from discussions between MU Faculty Council and the Provost's Office. While Convergence Journalism faculty endorse the intent expressed above, we also tolerate (and actively encourage in many instances) personal web access during class time. Attention to and mastery of content discussed during class is your responsibility. We will alert you if there are specific times during a lecture, training session or class discussion when we intend to limit or prohibit webs access.

### **Dishonesty and Misconduct Reporting Procedures**

MU faculty are required to report all instances of academic or classroom misconduct to the appropriate campus officials. Allegations of classroom misconduct will be forwarded immediately to MU's Vice Chancellor for Student Services. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to MU's Office of the Provost. In cases of academic misconduct, the student will receive at least a zero for the assignment in question.

### **Professional Standards and Ethics**

The School of Journalism is committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics and expects its students to adhere to those standards. Students should be familiar with the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists and adhere to its restrictions. Students are expected to observe strict honesty in academic programs and as representatives of school-related media.

Should any student be guilty of plagiarism, falsification, misrepresentation or other forms of dishonesty in any assigned work, that student may be subject to a failing grade from the instructor and such disciplinary action as may be necessary under University regulations.

### **Audio and Video Recordings of Classes**

Students may make audio or video recordings of course activity for personal use and review unless specifically prohibited by the faculty member in charge of the class. However, to foster a safe learning environment in which various viewpoints are respected, the redistribution of audio or video recordings or transcripts thereof is prohibited without the written permission of the faculty member in charge of the class and the permission of all students who are recorded. (Collected Rules and Regulations, University of Missouri, Sect. 200.015, Academic Inquiry, Course Discussion and Privacy)

### **University of Missouri Notice of Notifications**

The University of Missouri does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability or status as a protected veteran.

### **Office for Civil Rights & Title IX Information:**

University of Missouri policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, genetic information, disability and protected veteran status. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. Learn more about your rights and options at [civilrights.missouri.edu](http://civilrights.missouri.edu) or call 573-882-3880. You also may make an anonymous report online.

Students may also contact the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center, a confidential resource, for advocacy and other support related to rape or power-based personal violence at [rsvp@missouri.edu](mailto:rsvp@missouri.edu) or 573-882-6638, or go to [rsvp.missouri.edu](http://rsvp.missouri.edu).

Both the [Office for Civil Rights & Title IX](#) and the [RSVP Center](#) can provide assistance to students who need help with academics, housing, or other issues.

*Required Referral:* Mizzou employees are required to refer all incidents of sex discrimination to the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. The Office connects students with resources and helps them decide whether they wish to file a complaint of discrimination. To learn more, contact [title9@missouri.edu](mailto:title9@missouri.edu) or 573-882-3880, or go to [civilrights.missouri.edu](http://civilrights.missouri.edu).

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need assistance, please notify us immediately. The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate your special needs. Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please let me know in advance if you have a conflict.

### **ADA Compliance**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need assistance, please notify the MU Disability Center, S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696, or the course instructor immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

### **Religious Holidays**

Students are automatically excused for recognized religious holidays. Let your instructor know in advance if you have a conflict. A list of recognized holidays can be found [here](#).

### **Intellectual Pluralism**

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions concerning the quality of instruction in this class may address concerns to either the Departmental Chair or Divisional leader or Director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities (<http://osrr.missouri.edu/>). All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1**

**Tuesday, January 17**

**Topic/Subject:** Course intro and overview

Welcome to the Online Audience Development course. We'll go over course objectives, get to know one another, what we'll be doing — and why. We'll examine the concept of trust — and how we can use that to build an online audience for our newsrooms.

### **Readings (always complete before class begins)**

[Trust us, you'll want to read to read this series on trust](#)

[Earning trust: Tell your story](#)

[Earning trust: Engage authentically](#)

[Earning trust: Deploy your fans](#)

**Assignment:** Complete the Marketing Leadership “flight path” on [Twitter Flight School](#) before the start of class on Tuesday, January 24. Upload your completion certificate, screen shot of your completion and/or screenshot of the Tweet it sent on your behalf to Canvas by 2 p.m. on the due date. This will count as a reading quiz grade.

**Convergence Media Credentials:** If you don’t already have a “Convergence” media credential issued in 4804 and 4806, come by the Futures Lab between 10:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. to have your photo taken for a media credential.

**Thursday, January 19**

**Topic/Subject:** Our Newsrooms, their pillars

Our clients — KBIA, the Missourian, Vox — have very different audiences, very different ideas of what news is, and how to deliver it. We’ll compare and contrast them and begin to brainstorm potential ways to help develop trust among their audiences.

**Readings:**

Batesell Introduction (pp. 1-16)

**Week 2**

**Tuesday, January 24**

**Topic/Subject:** Our platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat

How will we use each of these platforms? It depends on the needs of your client. We’ll go over the strengths and weaknesses of each for connecting with an audience.

**Assignment:** Set up a time to meet with your client contact — Matt Dulin at the Missourian, Nathan Lawrence at KBIA or Heather Lamb at Vox. It’s possible your entire team might not be able to make it. Make sure as many people as possible are there. You’re on a fact-finding mission. Go to the “Files” section in Canvas for a list of questions to which you might want to seek out answers. You will use this information to begin developing your audience growth plan. Your meeting must be complete by the beginning of class Tuesday, January 31.

**Assignment:** Twitter Flight School “Video” due by 2 p.m. on Tuesday, January 31. Upload your completion certificate, screen shot of your completion and/or screenshot of the Tweet it sent on your behalf to Canvas by 2 p.m. This will count as a reading quiz grade.

**Readings**

[Five steps to master Facebook video](#)

[A scientific guide to posting tweets, facebook posts, etc.](#)

[BuzzFeed media trends: “homepage out, social and video in”](#)

**Thursday, January 26**

**Topic/Subject:** SEO Version 2.0: The Influence of Social on Search

The days of chasing an algorithm on search are over. Now the key to driving traffic to your website comes from creating sharable content. Today we'll look at how to identify top content on social and optimize it, how to tune into real-time conversations, and how to integrate social experiences with website experiences to enhance branded search.

**Out-of-Class Readings**

[How much do journalists need to know about SEO?](#)

[How journalists research and what that means for SEO](#)

**Week 3**

**Tuesday, January 31**

**Topic/Subject:** Brainstorm session!

Get your newsroom team together and let's start brainstorming. What did you learn during your meeting with your client? Let's start a strategy session. What is your client newsroom's *story*? How can you *tell* it? Each student should bring at least 5 ideas for social posts designed to meet the goals established during your meeting with your client. Ideally, your team will plan for a minimum of two multimedia-focused branding posts *per week* through the rest of the semester.

**Due before the end of the class period:** A *tentative* editorial calendar for the next 10 weeks created via Google Sheets file and shared within your team's Slack Channel. Include fields for intended platform, multimedia type, producer, editor, production start date, production completion date, publication date.

**Thursday, February 2**

**Topic/Subject:** Social listening

One of our primary goals is to make our journalism a *conversation*. Well, conversations only happen when you listen as much as you talk. Today we'll look at different ways you can effectively listen to your audience — when it comes to breaking news situations *and* brand management... and how doing that can lead to a stronger overall product.

**Out-of-Class Readings**

[ONA Social Newsgathering Ethics Code](#)

[What is social listening? And why is it important?](#)

[What's the difference between social listening, analytics and intelligence?](#)

**Week 4**

**Tuesday, February 7**

**Topic/Subject:** Social Verification

Today we will look at several free tools you can use to verify Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts.

### **Out-of-Class Readings**

[Back to basics with social media verification](#)

[Markham Nolan: How to separate fact and fiction online](#)

[Storyful's validation process](#)

[How do you tell if something is true?](#)

[How to verify images like a pro with Google Earth](#)

### **Optional Reading (could be good for bookmarking for future research purposes):**

[Verifying social media content: The best links, case studies & discussion](#)

[First Draft News Resources](#)

### **In-Class Exercises**

[Test your verification skills with our observation challenge](#)

[Test your verification skills with our geolocation challenge](#)

### **Thursday, February 9**

**Topic/Subject:** Getting your hands dirty with social verification

We will do an in-class exercise today that will count as one of your reading quizzes.

**Topic/Subject II:** Team check in time

You'll use the remainder of today's class time to check in with your teams and to provide me with a face-to-face status update on where you are with your production, talk about any roadblocks, etc.

### **Week 5**

### **Tuesday, February 14**

**Topic/Subject:** We'll do it LIVE!!!

Anyone can "go live" now, thanks to apps like Periscope and Facebook Live. We'll look at the strengths and weaknesses of this tool, some best practices... and consider some ways it might come in handy for our newsroom clients.

### **Out-of-Class Readings**

[How four news organizations are using Facebook Live to reach broader audiences](#)

[So, you want to try Facebook Live? Here are 10 tips for using the livestreaming app](#)

[10 questions journalists should ask themselves before going live on Facebook](#)

[NPR's guide to Facebook Live](#)

[Two months in: Four things NPR has learned using Facebook live](#)

[Facebook Live is turning journalists into 'Jackass' copycats](#)

**Thursday, February 16**

**Topic/Subject:** Web Analytics

You've had a basic exposure to web analytics in previous classes. We're going to dig deeper than page views and time on sight to really learn about who our audience is — and how we can serve it better.

**Out-of-Class Readings**

[The Journalists' Guide to Analytics](#)

[Q&A with Parse.ly CEO Sachin Kamdar: Choosing the right metrics](#)

**Week 6**

**Tuesday, February 21**

**Topic/Subject:** Social Analytics

**Out-of-Class Readings**

Batesell Chapter 5 (pp 127-144)

[The difference between social analytics and web analytics](#)

[Facebook page insights](#)

[Use Twitter Analytics to increase your audience engagement](#)

[Are social shares a good metric to judge journalism?](#)

[Journalists must use social media to promote their work](#)

[The 6 things that make stories go viral will amaze, and maybe infuriate, you](#)

**Thursday, February 23**

**Topic/Subject:** Making Analytics Meaningful to the Newsroom

You have an understanding of what the audience metrics mean, but how do you communicate that to your other newsroom colleagues? What can this data teach them about what your audience wants — and what your audience needs — and how you can better serve it?

**Out-of-Class Readings**

Batesell Chapter 5 (pp 126-144)

[How newsrooms can use social analytics to guide editorial strategy](#)

[What kind of local stories drive engagement? Results of an NPR Facebook experiment](#)

[5 tips for using analytics in the newsroom](#)

**Week 7**

**Tuesday, February 28**

**Topic/Subject:** In-class work period

Use today's class period to work with your newsroom teams, meet with your clients to provide status updates, etc.

**Thursday, March 2**

**Topic/Subject:** Newsletters

**Out-of-Class Readings**

[How The Skimm's passionate readership helped its newsletter grow to 1.5 million subscribers](#)

[Newsletter editors are the new important person in newsrooms](#)

[Fusion's newsletter strategy trades automated feeds for human curation and reporter's voices](#)

[Publishers are treating email newsletters as a platform of their own](#)

[Want to start a newsletter? Read this first.](#)

**Week 8**

**Tuesday, March 7**

**Topic/Subject:** Contests & Promotions

Given that we're working as a brand management arm of our newsrooms — what are the opportunities for contests, giveaways, etc. How do you work with sales and marketing to create a true collaborative effort?

**Readings**

[Facebook Pages terms](#)

[17 tips for successful Facebook contests](#)

[Is Your Facebook contest legal?](#)

**Thursday, March 9**

**Topic/Subject:** Social Media & Living Well

What does it mean to connect on Facebook with someone? How does authenticity factor into our social media relationships — with people *and* with brands?

**Out-of-Class Readings**

Beasley & Haney, Chapters 4-5 (on eRes, find under the "Library Resources" section on Canvas)

**Week 9**

**Tuesday, March 14**

**Topic/Subject:** Going behind the curtain: Messaging Apps

Think about your own social media habits... where do you spend more time? Facebook or Snapchat? Weibo or WeChat? Slack or... well, today we'll going to talk about how news organizations are using messaging apps to reach audiences who want to be social — but not as publicly as they once were.

**Out-of-Class Readings**

[Guide to chat apps](#)

[The '90s are back: The return of the private social network](#)  
[4 ways to get a happier Snapchat audience](#)  
[Why advertisers are forking over big bucks for custom Snapchat lenses](#)  
[A new role in journalism: the digital fixer](#)

## **Thursday, March 16**

### **Topic/Subject: Going Global**

We're all familiar with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat... but what about WeChat? Weibo? QQ?

### **Out-of-Class Readings**

[WeChat's world](#)  
[Life in the People's Republic of WeChat](#)  
[Why Facebook is jealous of Chinese messaging app WeChat](#)  
[I've seen the future of media, and it's in China](#)  
[Technology, transparency and traditional media](#)  
[What are WeChat official accounts?](#)

Beasley & Haney Chapter 9 (on eRes; find under "Library Resources" on Canvas)

## **Week 10**

### **Tuesday, March 21**

Topic/Subject: Putting together your professional portfolio

They're subjective... What I like, you might not. What you like, I might not. But, there are some elements that you must have in an effective online portfolio. What are they? How can you put your best foot (face?) forward? We'll look at some techniques you may want to employ, and go over the formal assignment you'll be expected to complete.

### **Out-of-class readings**

[Professional Portfolio Assignment Rubric](#)

### **Thursday, March 23**

Topic/Subject: Team Check-Ins

This will be a chance for you to get with your full teams and with me to determine where you are, how you're moving toward your semester-long goals, and to focus on what needs to happen in the six weeks to meet them.

## **Week 11**

Spring Break — No Classes

## **Week 12**

**Tuesday, April 4**

**Topic/Subject: Is it worth the effort?**

Platforms come and go. How can you get ahead of the curve — without spinning your wheels?

### **Out-of-Class Readings**

[Is Peach a viable social network or a passing fad?](#)

[The Peach app is dead, but it taught us something about social media](#)

**Thursday, April 6**

**Topic/Subject: Failing Up**

We talked about taking calculated risks in Tuesday's class session. What happens when an experiment doesn't go as well as you like?

### **Out-of-Class Readings**

[Why the freedom to experiment and fail is important for every innovator](#)

[The virtue of being a failure](#)

## **Week 13**

**Tuesday, April 11**

**Topic/Subject: Putting your skills to work**

**Guest Speaker:** Abbie Schmid

Abbie Schmid is a Social Channel Manager at VML, based in Kansas City. As a 2011 Convergence grad, Ms. Schmid routinely uses research, analytics and real-world case studies, to build an understanding of how media properties and businesses can reach communities and grow brand awareness. How does she do it every day? What does she look for in her team members? How can you demonstrate that you have those skills, too?

**Thursday, April 13**

**Topic/Subject: In-Class Work Day**

Work with your teams, check in with your newsroom liaisons, etc. This is an opportunity to tie up loose ends heading into the Thanksgiving break.

## **Week 14**

**Tuesday, April 18**

**Topic/Subject: Portfolio Reviews**

Portfolio Assignment due today. Submit your URL to Canvas by 2 p.m. You will be spending time in class doing peer evaluations of classmates' portfolios. You'll incorporate their feedback and make revisions, due before class on Tuesday, May 2.

**Tuesday, April 20**

**Topic/Subject: It's OK to unplug**

We all need time to recharge our batteries. It's okay to unplug. Really, it is. Let's just keep telling ourselves that.

### **Out-of-Class Reading**

[The Cohort: I'm with \[redacted\]](#) (scroll to the end for the relevant portion)

[The plan to ban work email out of hours](#)

[After divisive election, overwhelmed social media users unfriend, cut back](#)

### **Week 15**

**Tuesday, April 25**

**Topic/Subject: Odds & Ends**

We will use today's class session to do remaining in-class presentations and to give you time to work on final social elements, continuity plans, etc.

**Thursday, April 27**

**Topic/Subject: Continuity Planning**

You're about to enter the final week on your newsroom team. What needs to be done to prepare for another team of students to take over next semester? What did you finish, what can you still finish, what needs to be picked up again in January? What worked, what didn't? Which goals were met, which weren't? What advice would you offer to the next group?

**Due before the end of the class period:** A draft of a document that you could turn in to me and/or members of the next team that could get them started. I would like to see this draft as part of your team's Google Sheet. A completed and cleaned up Word Doc should be uploaded to your Team Slack channel by the end of class on December 8. **Each member of the team will lose two full letter grades for their fourth production grade if this document is not in Slack by 3:15 p.m. on May 4.**

### **Week 16**

**Tuesday, May 2**

**Topic/Subject: Odds & Ends**

We will use today's class session to do remaining in-class presentations and to give you time to work on final social elements, continuity plans, etc.

[Graduate student assignment](#) due by 5 p.m. via Canvas.

**Final portfolio edits are due by 2 p.m. today.** You may email Amy earlier if you're done with your revisions earlier in order to expedite the grading/feedback process.

**Readings**

**Thursday, May 4**

**Topic/Subject:** Course wrap-up, evaluations