ENGL 4320.201 (Summer II 2018)
Writing for Social Media
CI 223 MTWR 12:00-1:55 pm

Dr. Christopher Andrews
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Office: Faculty Center (FC) 285
Phone: 361-825-4124
Office hours: 2:00-2:55 pm MTWR (directly after class)

I maintain a consistent web presence and am available via email and in person. I will commonly respond to Blackboard or email requests within 24 hours, and you can expect a response within 3 days.

Catalog Description

ENGL 4320: Professional Writing Workshop is repeatable for credit as the course topic varies.

About the Course

This course examines the rhetorical nature of social media. We will study cultural production and velocity, ethics of networked identities and organizations, and how social media complicate traditional models of audience, delivery, and the rhetorical situation. We’ll read social media policies, think about social media historically, study public and underlife uses of social media, and research how organizations have adopted social media to their purposes and contexts. Most importantly, we will practice strategies for developing focused, accessible, mobile-first web content.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use rhetorical skills relevant to mobile-first digital composing and social media, including:
   • Analyzing audiences and situations
   • Planning, composing, and revising accessible content
   • Selecting appropriate tools for creating content
   • Repurposing content for different delivery media

2. Explain ethical, social, and technological issues relevant to professional and personal uses of social media

3. Point out distinctive rhetorical social media practices in professions, organizations, or communities relevant to their academic interests or career field
Required Materials

- Please bring personal mobile devices to class for use in writing and research projects each class meeting.
- Islander account (including email, network logon, Blackboard, and other University services)

Graded Activities

Complete descriptions, requirements, evaluation criteria, and rubrics are available on Blackboard. I will use the grading scale as described in the University Catalog.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#amwriting: A series of low-stakes writing activities, applying writing lessons from Felder, <em>Writing for the Web</em> to a variety of social media content creation situations. You will submit a cover letter reflecting on this writing at the end of the term. (1)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POTW: Post of the week. Find something on a social networking site/app that you think is particularly interesting or related to the week’s discussions. Post it for the rest of the class to review/write about. (3)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical analysis. Individual project. Analyze the rhetorical situation and kairotic web of a digital social media text of your choice (may start with a POTW). Identify human and nonhuman actors, purposes, contexts, and attributes of delivery, circulation, and reproduction. Present your analysis in an infographic, slideshow, or other shareable visualization. (1, 3)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic social media project: Individual project. Select a research study about social media in an academic journal in your field. Must be published in the last 3 years. Read &amp; summarize the article, and then prepare a series of social media-style posts (platform of your choice) about that study intended to engage with a relevant audience. (1,2)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networked publics project. Group project. Select an activist, nonprofit, or community organization you’re interested in; research and analyze how that org adopts social media for their mission, handling (or failing to handle) the dynamics and affordances of networked publics. Present findings to class via a social media-style deliverable of your choice. (1, 2, 3)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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All projects should respect intellectual property and include medium-appropriate citation conventions.
## Course Schedule

Reading list and #amwriting assignments are tentative and may be changed. Readings marked (Bb) will be PDFs or web links provided via Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Read this week</th>
<th>Due this week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Let’s be obvious: what are social media and social networking sites? What does it mean to “write for” social media? | Standage Intro & 1  
Standage 2  
Audiences & Personas (Bb)  
Felder 1&2  
CDC Guide to Writing for Social Media | #amwriting  
- selfie, selfie, selfie (& analysis)  
- instagrammar self-reflection  
- social networking autobio  
POTW |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Read this week</th>
<th>Due this week</th>
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</table>
| How do social media change how we should think about audience, purpose, and context? | Standage 3  
Standage 4  
Kairotic Web excerpt (Bb)  
Felder 3, 4, 6  
Hootsuite Social Media Copywriting  
Multiplatform Copywriting on Social Media | #amwriting  
- when mom got facebook  
- family tradition  
- gif/meme  
POTW  
Rhetorical analysis infographic due |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Read this week</th>
<th>Due this week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What are networked publics, and how do they work? | Standage 5  
Standage 6  
boyd, Networked publics (Bb)  
Felder 7, 8  
Plain Language guidelines?  
MailChimp Style Guide | #amwriting  
- how-to...  
- to understand our nation...  
- gif/meme  
POTW |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Read this week</th>
<th>Due this week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What do academics study when they study social media? | Standage 7  
Standage 8  
Felder 9, 10  
Academic research study about social media in your field | #amwriting  
- social media in an emergency  
- press release  
- gif/meme  
POTW  
Academic social media project due |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Read this week</th>
<th>Due this week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How do communities and organizations use social media? | Standage 9-10  
Standage 11 & Epilogue  
Social media policies/guidelines: Intel, Kodak, others (Bb) | #amwriting  
- survival tips for_____s  
Networked publics project due |
Course Conduct

In general, class meetings will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, and workshop time or small-group activity. My ultimate goal is praxis, putting our collective knowledge into action, usually in individual and workshop-style activities (inventing, composing, revising, reviewing, or otherwise doing and making) and large- or small-group roundtable discussions. This means that it is vital that you come to class each day prepared to work and prepared to interact with myself and your colleagues in ways that contribute to our learning goals.

I expect a lot out of you—but I also have high expectations for myself. I promise that I will

- Be on time and prepared for discussion.
- Read everything that I’ve asked you to read.
- Do what I can to make the material interesting and class engaging.
- Provide prompt, helpful feedback to your written work.
- Be flexible and willing to make changes as the need arises.

Come to class meetings prepared

Along with writing materials for note-taking and in-class activities, bring textbooks and other required materials to class each day having read and taken notes on all texts assigned on the course schedule. I expect that you will read assigned chapters or articles prior to class; this will ensure your ability to contribute to discussions and other activities.

In discussion, remember to listen as well as speak. Pay attention to whomever is speaking in discussion and refrain from working on material for other classes. Participate when it is your turn to speak; share your opinion, expertise, or question, and respect the opinions and experiences of others.

Understand late work and revision policies

Post assignments on time. I am understanding of occasional late work, but this should not be habitual. It is up to you to prioritize learning activities in this class.

- Habitual late homework (beyond three times) will receive 10% reductions in grade
- Late work for major projects will earn a 10% reduction in grade
- I will not accept major projects more than 3 calendar days late
- The last day to submit late work will be posted in Blackboard

I am on your side, but you are responsible for you: keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher’s responsibility to tell you what you have or haven’t turned in. Grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted for all work.

I accept revisions on major projects, provided that you meet formally with me to discuss feedback on your project, a revision agenda, and a timeline for completion. You can find the complete revise and resubmit policy on Blackboard.
Practice professional communication in email

Email is among the more important professional genres we use today, and I expect you will use your university email account for this course. Professional email includes a meaningful subject line and a complete inquiry, and uses language appropriate for the writer’s context.

- Unprofessional emails will result in non-response.
- I will email announcements and information via blackboard to your islander.tamucc.edu email account. You may set up email forwarding if you wish, but you are responsible for checking email. Missing emails is not an excuse for missed work or announcements.
- I will commonly respond to Blackboard or email requests within 24 hours, but you can expect a response within 3 days. I generally do not answer emails over the weekend.

Learn to use our technology

As you might rightly assume, a course titled "Writing for Social Media” is entirely imbricated with technology: the class is about technology, it meets in a computer lab, and it works because of, as a result of, and in dialogue with technology. This means a handful of things:

- **Tech happens.** Difficulty with your computer or technology is not an acceptable excuse for late work, whether those are reading responses or one of our major projects. Practice agency by backing up your work, ensuring your technology is updated within your means and the expectations of coursework, and saving early & often.

- **You should learn something new about digital technology.** While I do not expect you to become an expert in HTML5 in five weeks, for example, I do expect you to push beyond your current technical knowledge. The days of separating technical knowledge from literacy knowledge are long past. Ultimately, you are responsible for your command of technology as well as course content. I will help you do this and provide resources to support you, but if you are having difficulty it is your responsibility to a) ask for help and b) look for tutorials and supplementary material that work for you.

- **Learn from failure.** A spirit of inquiry and experiment is just as important as particular technical skills in this course. "Showing up" with broken or malfunctioning work is far better than showing up with an excuse, and sometimes we can learn more from your broken webtext than some slick Squarespace module. Your honest effort is more interesting to me than perfect work.

- **Manage your distraction machine.** I do not have a cell phone or laptop policy for managing personal technology in the classroom. As we’ll study extensively in this class, mobile phones are powerful writing devices and can be useful personal research tools—and I will ask you to use them as such. Some students need their mobile device to augment their hearing or note-taking, and other students may have child care or emergency responsibilities that will necessitate discreet use of cell phones. I expect that you will participate and be present in class, but your attention is ultimately your responsibility and your screen is your business. Importantly, be sensitive to how your technology use may distract other students in the room.
Course Policies

Notice to Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

Statement of Civility
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Attendance
The discussions and work we will undertake during class time are critical to your success in the course. I fully expect you to come to class for every class meeting. I also have three young children and realize that life invades school. Things occasionally happen that may keep you from coming. I will excuse absences for illness, for personal emergency, and for University-related business as defined by the current Student Handbook, provided you furnish some documentation. You are responsible for making arrangements for make-up work for excused absences.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.)

In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in:
- first offense = no credit for assignment
- subsequent offenses = failure of class
In general terms, students are expected to "demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs" and to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty." Instances of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi General Academic Policies and Regulations as listed in the current catalog.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 6, 2018, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Grade Appeal Process**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf).

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.
Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.