

**Online Engagement Strategy –
Leveraging the Web and Social Media for Good**
NMG5020, CRN 1887
Summer 2014

The New School for Public Engagement
Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy
Mondays, 6:00pm-9:50pm, June 2-July 21 (no class on June 16)
6 East 16th Street, Room 1102

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Course Description

Nonprofit organizations use online communications strategies to engage audiences, increase visibility, shift attitudes, raise money, and create social change. This course examines how organizations use social media, websites, email, and mobile technology to build relationships with its community. We will also look at the internal resources organizations need to succeed, such as staffing, social media guidelines, training, and internal communications tools. Through case studies and examples from local, national, and international organizations, students gain a broad understanding of online communications, fundraising, advocacy, and social networking in the nonprofit sector. Each student conducts an in-depth analysis of a nonprofit organization's use of online engagement to support its mission.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand how websites, email, social media, and mobile communications support the mission, outreach, visibility, advocacy, and fundraising efforts of nonprofit organizations.
2. Determine how an organization's behavior, processes, and culture can impact its success with online communications.
3. Apply demographics, trends, and new frameworks for decision-making on building relationships within its community.
4. Select a primary goal and recognize how the community's needs influence an organization's online engagement strategy.
5. Analyze the effectiveness of an organization's online engagement activities.
6. Produce recommendations for strategies and tactics that organizations should use for online engagement.

Course Requirements/Graded Activities

This course is highly participatory. You are expected to attend class, complete assigned readings before each class, and participate in discussions. Each student will evaluate or develop an online engagement strategy for a specific organization or cause. Students will select an organization or cause early in the course, to be approved by the professor.

- Proposal: You will submit a proposal or outline for your project by June 14.
- Presentation: You will present your research¹ and strategic suggestions for the organization on July 21. Presentations will be approximately 5 minutes long with time for questions and feedback after each one.
- Paper: You will submit a final paper² by 6pm on July 23. The paper should include an executive summary that describes the project goals and recommendations in terms that a key decision-maker could understand.

Your presentation and paper, for example, might follow this structure:

- Overview: What is the organization you are studying (mission, current practice, etc.) and what is the purpose of your project?
- Approach: What research did you conduct to diagnose the needs of the organization?
- Main points: What are the highlights of your research or findings?
- Summary: What strategic direction should the organization focus on?
- Priorities: What actions should your organization take immediately and what might be longer term?

Final Grade Calculation

Class participation (includes use of technology):	30%
Project proposal:	15%
Presentation:	20%
Project paper:	35%

Participation

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, and coming to class regularly and on time.

I have as much to learn from you as you do from me – and from each other. During each class we will discuss the readings as well as any current topics that emerge while we meet. You are required to read the materials and show up to class with your own thoughts, questions, and ideas for how to apply it in real-world situations. As we discuss topics, I will set the stage and facilitate our conversations as you offer your

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
² A draft of your paper is not required. If you are struggling with the content and would like feedback or advice, you may submit a draft for feedback by July 5.

thoughts and respond to your colleagues. When we have guest speakers, please come prepared and listen carefully and actively participate. You are expected to complete all assignments before we meet so that you can share your analysis and/or respond to your colleagues. I also look forward to moments of debate and ask that you welcome and respect everyone's opinion. Your active participation will make the classroom experience much richer; it is also a significant factor in how I'll evaluate your performance in the course.

Course Readings and Materials

Required books:

The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting with Social Media to Drive Change 2010

ISBN 978-0470547977

By Beth Kanter and Allison Fine

Available eReader online:

<http://site.ebrary.com.libproxy.newschool.edu/lib/newschool/docDetail.action?docID=10419423>

Humanize: How People-Centric Organizations Succeed in a Social 2011

ISBN 978-0789741127

By Jamie Notter and Maddie Grant

Available for purchase and ordered for reserves.

Social Change Anytime Everywhere: How to Implement Online Multichannel Strategies to Spark Advocacy, Raise Money, and Engage your Community 2013

ISBN 978-1118288337

By Allyson Kapin and Amy Sample Ward

Available eReader online:

<http://site.ebrary.com.libproxy.newschool.edu/lib/newschool/docDetail.action?docID=10662587>

Measuring the Networked Nonprofit: Using Data to Change the World 2012

ISBN 978-1118137604

By Beth Kanter and KD Paine

Available eReader online:

<http://site.ebrary.com.libproxy.newschool.edu/lib/newschool/docDetail.action?docID=10612543>

Other required reading:

For certain classes, I've selected articles to supplement the readings from textbooks. I may also post current articles, videos, or podcasts to Canvas before our class meeting.

Blogs and weekly discussion

The content we cover in this course is ever changing. While we will use textbooks and supplemental readings to establish a foundation for the course, I'd like you to also commit to reading several blogs throughout the class to keep up with new trends, tools, tactics, and campaigns. I've gathered some of the best blogs that cover topics related to this course on a public dashboard at: <http://www.netvibes.com/farratrompeter>. You are welcome to select three blogs to subscribe to personally or just check this dashboard several times each week. We'll start every class with a discussion of what's new this week and you'll each be asked to share something you read about and any insights for how it might apply to nonprofits or social enterprises.

Online Communications Basics and Tactics

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.

- *Email 101 for Nonprofits*
<http://www.fundraising123.org/email-101>
- *The Nonprofit Website Project Handbook* 2012
http://www.nonprofitmaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/nonprofit_website_project_handbook.pdf
- *The Online Fundraising Scorecard* 2014
<http://www.dunhamandcompany.com/onlinefundraisingscorecard/>
- *The Nonprofit Social Media Decision Guide* 2013
<http://idealware.org/reports/nonprofit-social-media-decision-guide>
- *The Art of Listening: Social Media Toolkit for Nonprofits* 2013
<http://greenlining.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/The-Art-of-Listening-Social-Media-Toolkit-for-Nonprofits.pdf>
- *Social Media for Social Good* 2012
<http://www.nptechforgood.com/books/> (requested for reserves)
- *Into Focus: Benchmarks for Best Practices for Nonprofits and Video* 2013
<http://www.see3.com/intofocus>
- *What Every Nonprofit Should Know About Mobile: Lessons from Global Development Nonprofits* 2012
<http://idealware.org/reports/mobile-global-development>

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- ❖ The University (and associated) Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>
- ❖ The University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>

- ❖ University Disabilities Services: <http://www.newschool.edu/student-services/student-disability-services>. In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at <http://www.newschool.edu/leadership/provost/policies/>

Intellectual Property Rights

<http://www.newschool.edu/leadership/provost/policies/>

Attendance

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in all classes throughout the summer semester. In order to pass, students may not miss more than one session.

Course Policies

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late papers, failure to complete the readings assigned for class discussion, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions and presentations will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Canvas

We may use Canvas as a supplement to our in-class discussions. Please check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

Delays

In rare instances, I may be delayed arriving to class. If I have not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, you must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for my arrival. In the event that I will miss class entirely, a sign will be posted at the classroom indicating your assignment for the next class meeting.

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: #NMGM5020. I also suggest you follow conversations and share resources using #npotech and #sm4np. A feed with these hashtags is embedded in the dashboard at <http://www.netvibes.com/farratrompeter>.

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

<https://support.twitter.com/articles/215585-getting-started-with-twitter>
<http://www.techlicious.com/guide/twitter-101-understanding-the-basics/>
<http://www.momthisishowtwitterworks.com/>

You are also invited to join a closed group on Facebook that is for members of this class, and includes the graduates of previous sessions. You can request access and then post to this group at: <http://on.fb.me/1jyEsFK>. Please use this group to ask questions, share ideas, and get to know each other.

Food

We will take a 30-minute break for dinner from 7:45-8:15pm. Please plan to eat then—and not in class. It is okay to bring drinks to class.

Student Course Ratings

During the last two weeks of the semester, students are asked to provide feedback for each of their courses through an online survey and cannot view grades until providing feedback or officially declining to do so. Instructors rely on course rating surveys for feedback on the course and teaching methods, so they can understand what aspects of the class are most successful in teaching students, and what aspects might be improved or changed in future. Without this information, it can be difficult for an instructor to reflect upon and improve teaching methods and course design. In addition, program/department chairs and other administrators review course surveys.

Course Outline

Session	Theme	Topics	Assignment/Text
WEEK 1 06/02	Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Review of syllabus and assignments • Discuss class format, use of technology, and your expectations • Explore basic concepts of online engagement and a brief history of communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up accounts on Facebook and Twitter if you don't have one. - <i>Networked Nonprofit</i>, 1-2 - <i>Humanize</i>, 2 - Mansfield: "A Short, Recent History of Nonprofit Website Design and Online Fundraising"
WEEK 2 06/09	Internal Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a networked nonprofit? • How can culture inform communications, and vice versa? • Should an organization's Executive Director or CEO be social? • How can you use social media guidelines? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Networked Nonprofit</i>, 3-4 - <i>Humanize</i>, 4-5, 10 - Askanase: "Bringing Social Inside: Social Media Staffing, Culture And Policies" - Hrywna: "10 Characters Who Use 140 Characters" - Sept: "Why your nonprofit needs a social media policy" <p>Due: Proposal (6/15)</p>
WEEK 3 06/23	Audiences and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some frameworks you can use to guide your org's online engagement? • How can you guide your community to get more deeply involved? • How can you find out what your community wants? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Social Change</i>, 1-2 - <i>Networked Nonprofit</i>, 5 - Pew Research: Social Media Update 2013 - Rosen: "The People Formerly Known as the Audience" - The POST Method
WEEK 4 06/30	Advocacy and Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you use online channels to tell your story and connect with your community? • Is clicktivism/slacktivism worth it? • How can you foster deeper relationships with your donors? • Can social media create social change or is it just technology used to support social change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Social Change</i>, 3-5 - <i>Networked Nonprofit</i>, 10 - Nonprofit Donor Engagement Benchmark Study - Livingston: "How to Turn Slacktivists into Activists with Social Media" - Stepanova: "The Role of Information Communication Technologies in the 'Arab Spring'" - Dixon & Keyes: "The Permanent Disruption of Social Media" - Barry: "15 Techniques Used by Top Nonprofits to Boost Donor Acquisition and Online Fundraising Results"

Session	Theme	Topics	Assignment/Text
WEEK 5 07/07	Putting it all Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are multi-channel campaigns? • What are the elements of a successful campaign? • Is hashtag activism real? • Which staff should be managing each aspect of online engagement? • How can you keep staff informed of your campaigns and activities? • How can you empower staff to represent your organization and further your outreach/impact? • What are some of the newer tactics nonprofits are using to communicate, create change, and raise funds? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Social Change</i>, 6-8 - Kurtz: "Online: A Case Study of Advocacy Nonprofit Communications in the United States" - Hrabik: "The Top 4 Nonprofit Social Media Campaigns of 2013 (And What You Can Learn)" - O'Brien: "Kony 2012 campaign tests impact of online activism" - Scott: "In Defense of #BringBackOurGirls and Hashtag Activism" - Beauchamp: "Why #BringBackOurGirls is actually making a difference for Nigeria" - Schmidt: "This Is NPR Recruiting: An Employment Branding Case Study" - Miller: "Empower Employees as Brand Champions in Social Media"
WEEK 6 07/14	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can your organization get started with measurement? • How do you know if what you are doing is working? • When do you try new approaches and cut back existing ones? • How do you know when to try emerging platforms and when to wait? <p><i>Fill out online course ratings survey in-class</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Measuring the Networked Nonprofit</i>, 3-5 - Kanter: "Becoming a Networked Nonprofit" - 2014 M+R Benchmarks Study - Tuttle: "Measuring What Matters" - Richardson: "Measuring Community Engagement: A Case Study from Chicago Public Media"
WEEK 7 07/21	Sharing Your Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project presentations • Ideas for staying in touch – with each other and the content • Course feedback and suggestions for course development 	<p>Due: Presentations (in-class) Due: Paper (7/23, 6:00 p.m.)</p>