



MARKETING 579:
Influencer Marketing: The Business of Social Media
Professor Justin Blaney, D.M.
Course Syllabus

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Office Hours:	Text me at 206-708-4080 to arrange an appointment. I can be available up to one hour before or after class.
Course Materials:	Provided Textbook Will Post For Profit: How Influencers And Brands Are Cashing In On Social Media Marketing Recommended additional reading The Art of Social Media: Power Tips for Power Users ISBN-13: 978-1591848073 Influencer: Building Your Personal Brand in the Age of Social Media ISBN-13: 978-0806538853
Canvas:	Lecture slides, descriptions of all the assignments and guides for the cases are provided on canvas. The lecture slides posted prior to class are stripped down versions of the actual lectures. Electronic copies of the full lectures with all examples and annotations from our discussions will be posted after each class period.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Billions of dollars in revenue is being generated each year through the power of social media influence. This course will examine what it means to be an influencer, how to become one, and how to use the influence of others to build a powerful and profitable brand. In this course, we reverse standard educational practices by doing homework in class and classwork at home. During class hours, students will form groups and rotate through 4 different organization types over the 10 week term. As a class, we will work together to complete an entire influencer marketing plan for each of the 4 organizations. Additionally, students will work as teams outside of class to create, share and discuss video/slide content related to the weekly learning objectives. The course book is a manuscript pending publishing that will be provided as a PDF to all students.

Learning objectives:

- Understand what an influencer is.
- Conduct a social media marketing campaign through the use of social media influencers, including how to pick the right influencer to reach your target market.
- Explore organic and paid methods for building your own social media influence.
- Learn how to analyze the effectiveness of influencer marketing.
- Discuss strategies for negotiating an appropriate contract with an influencer at various stages of reach including micro influencers and nationally famous personalities.
- Understand how to contact and build relationships with influencers.
- Examine methods for accurately measuring the influence of your own brand and individuals you may wish to partner with to forward your brand.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Building brands through social media influence is a marketing elective that is designed to add to a student's previous marketing courses to create a wide-ranging knowledge across marketing tactics and disciplines. Influencer marketing is made up of two primary angles, one from the point of view of an influencer who is attempting to build her audience and generate income from her influence, and the other from a brand's perspective that is focused on gaining the most profitable exposure by partnering with the right influencers to reach new consumers and cement their brand in the minds of current users.

This course will be organized in relation to this dual angle approach. Not only will we focus on executing effective influencer marketing plans for brands, but we will also consider how a brand must build their own social media following and become an influencer in their own right. The primary project will be to create a marketing plan for six different types of organizations, from non-profit to large brand to B2B. These plans will focus on many aspects of influencer marketing from how a brand would approach influencers in order to accomplish their business objectives to tracking key performance indicators to creating engaging campaigns to negotiating effective contracts. The students will learn weekly what is needed to accomplish one section of the marketing plan and will then complete that section for the organization they are working on that week in class.

This course is designed to be highly engaging, interactive and discussion based. Students can expect to hear from and engage with respected weekly guest speakers including both sides of the influencer relationship, brands and individuals. A take home final exam will wrap up the course and ensure retention of key concepts. As bonus content, we will have a brief weekly discussion on topics of interest such as career selection, landing the perfect internship, and other tips for life success and happiness.

SCHEDULE

Week 1- Introduction to influencer marketing
April 2

Week 2 - Authenticity/defining your brand
April 9

Week 3 - Growing your audience
April 16

Week 4 - Engaging and keeping your audience
April 23

Week 5 - Best practices for brands/influencer sourcing and relationship building
April 30

Week 6 - Contracts, negotiating, pricing
May 7

Week 7 - Campaign design
May 14

Week 8 - Using Analytics to improve results
May 21

Week 9 - Ethics/compliance
May 28

Week 10 - Presentation judging
June 4

Finals
Week of June 1st

ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDED IN THE GROUP MARKETING PLAN

1. Large retail - Starbucks (or similar)
2. Small retail - Sugar and Spoon (or similar)
3. B2B - Outreach CRM (or similar)
4. Large consumer product - Microsoft (or similar)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

This course include a combination of individual and team assignments. Individual assignments include the final and participation. he team assignment will be the in class marketing plans and group video content creation.

	Points:	Percentage of final grade:
Group project: Learning content creation	300	30%
Online and in-class Participation	300	30%
Take home final	200	30%
Marketing plan presentations	200	10%
Total	1000	100%

GRADING SCALE

95% and above	4.0
94%	3.9
93%	3.8
92%	3.7
91%	3.6
90%	3.5
<i>And so on...</i>	

ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS

Class and online participation (30%)

Like those working with influencers in a real world environment, you will largely be working in teams to accomplish course objectives. This involves actively providing your own ideas and critiquing the ideas of others. To simulate the real-world environment for the purposes of rich learning, this course is built around your active participation. As such, 30% of your grade will be based on your online and in-class activity.

Class participation is critical to your learning process. Lively discussion makes class more interesting, fun and rewarding. It can be difficult to speak up in a class full of people, either for fear of being wrong, or the worry of coming across as a know-it-all. That is why we will make every effort to keep our classroom safe for participation without judgement or criticism. In our class, there truly are no bad questions or answers.

For those who are not comfortable talking in front of a large group, your participation in small groups will count as much as in the full class discussions. However, I can't encourage you strongly enough to raise your voice as often as possible. You will be expected to speak in front of larger groups, companies meetings, etc, when you enter the real world, so why not get some practice in this safe environment?

The following is a description of the components of participation that students will be evaluated against for this component of your grade. One who could be described according to the following would earn full points, where one who does not meet any of these descriptions would receive a minimum grade for class participation.

An outstanding in-class contributor would be described as follows:

Regular participation in most or all class conversations that includes insightful and thoughtful answers. Arguments are substantive and well thought out. This person never makes anyone else in the class feel bad about their answers, but instead encourages their peers to participate. When this person is absent, it creates a noticeable downgrade in the discussion quality. In a group work setting this student makes valuable contributions to the quality of the team's deliverables. They are supportive of their peers, making an effort to draw ideas out of others. They are positive and work toward solutions. They accelerate the project toward success. Finally, their peers would say that the project would not have been as quality if this student wasn't part of the team.

Online contribution expectations

To receive full credit, students are expected to participate in online discussions weekly in addition to their in-class participation. Each week, one team will post a video related to that week's learning objectives. Each student, including those who post the video, will be expected to post two discussion topics or responses that total 100 words or more per post.

Final exam (20%)

The final will consist of 70-80 questions, written by the student groups as they complete the weekly content videos. The test will be taken online and completed at the pace of your choosing. This will be due at 11:59pm on the last day of finals week. Students do not need to be on campus to participate.

Group Content Creation (30%)

Students will, in groups create two 10 minute videos containing learning content related to one week's objectives (one video per learning objective, but each group will be responsible for two learning objectives and two videos). These videos can be talking head style as if one is giving a presentation or a slide deck with audio voice over. Additionally, students will write 10 quiz questions with 3 incorrect and 1 correct answer for each of their two learning objectives.

Marketing plan presentations (20%)

During week 10 of this course, each group will present one of the 4 marketing plans. Presentations will be about 20 minutes with 10 minutes for discussion. All group members must be present and participate to earn credit.

Team Formation and Projects

Four teams have been formed. You can find your group in canvas. Each team will be responsible for completing two sections of each of the 4 organizational marketing plans. In addition, each team will create two videos that cover content related to the two topic of the week they are assigned. This video will be posted online and discussed by the class prior to each week's in-class activities.

Policy on late assignment submissions

In the event that you cannot meet an assignment deadline, you will be docked 5% of the total grade for each 24 hour period you are late, up to one week late. After one week, submissions will no longer be accepted. Notifying the professor ahead of time will not change this reduction in grade, unless warranted by proof of a serious illness, family tragedy or similar situation.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Justin Blaney D.M. pioneered research on influencers as a doctoral student, and has been working with influencers for more than a decade. He is the #1 bestselling author of 15 books. As an entrepreneur, he founded and sold multiple companies to become a millionaire by the age of 25, and currently runs a venture-capital funded agency that generates sales leads for Fortune 500 companies. He is followed by more than 1 million people online @justinblaney