

GUIDELINES FOR FINAL PROJECT

I. Proposal (Due on February 5, 2pm)

In your short proposal (1-2 pages), explain what specific organization you want to study and why it is relevant and important to our discussion of social media in strategic communication. You should address the following questions:

- What is the name of the organization under study?
- What are some of the significant characteristics of the organization?
- Why is social media important for the organization?
- What are problems or opportunities for the organization's use of social media in strategic communication?

II. Final Paper (Due on May 7, 2pm)

Your final paper should be 20-25 pages (double-spaced, 4,000-5,000 words) plus the reference, appendix, and any optional sections, and should include the following sections.

**Note: Your draft of the Organization and Situation Analysis sections is due on March 26, and your Social Media Planning section draft is due on April 23.*

1. Title and author page

The title page should include the title of your final project, author information (name and email), and date of submission.

2. Executive summary (2 pages)

This section is a brief summary of (i) the organization under study, (ii) problems and opportunities with regard to the organization's use of social media in strategic communication, and (iii) your recommendations for improving its social media strategies. This section should organize and present in a clear way essential information regarding your final report. You can use bullet points to present main issues and findings.

3. Organization & purpose (1-2 pages)

In this section, you provide an overview of the organization you study. You should introduce (i) the organization's business objectives or mission statements, (ii) main activities, (iii) key audiences or publics, (iv) any relevant or prominent strategic campaigns, and (v) relevant statistics, media coverage, and academic research available.

You also should discuss why and how a social media plan is relevant and important for the organization.

4. Situation analysis: Problem & opportunity (3-4 pages)

This section is aimed at explaining to the reader the status of the organization's current social media use as well as opportunities for improving the situation. In this section, you should (i) describe and analyze the organization's current use of social media for its strategic communication; (ii) present your evaluation of its current social media-based programs while identifying specific strengths and weaknesses; and (iii) discuss what lessons can be learned and what opportunities are available for the organization. You should also include an analysis of key strategies of the organization's competitor.

5. Social media planning (12-15 pages)

This is the most important section of your paper. You need to combine theoretical and practical aspects of social media planning learned throughout the semester. There are specific subsections that you need to include. They are:

- a. **Goal(s):** What is the central organizational goal that you are dealing with?
- b. **Objectives:** What should the organization focus on in its future social media strategies to achieve their goal(s)?
- c. **Key audiences or publics:** Based on the objectives you suggested, who are the key audiences for the social media strategy? Discuss those audiences' Social Technographics profiles (online behavior) as well as relevant demographics (e.g., age, education, and ethnicity) and psychographics (e.g., attitude, value, and lifestyle).
- d. **Platforms/Channels:** Pick social media platforms that can be most effective and relevant for the organization.
- e. **Digital products/Content/Message:** Discuss what kinds of digital products can be created for each platform you suggest. For example, how and what kinds of content should be created for each platform? What are the effective types of themes or messages for the platforms?
- f. **Engagement strategies:** Discuss strategies to encourage people to visit the platforms and to engage in dialogue on the topic through the platforms.

- g. **Spokesperson or ambassador:** Identify celebrities or other people who might be able to serve as effective spokespersons or ambassadors for the cause. Discuss how they can be part of your social media plan.
- h. **Risk analysis:** It is important for the organization to weigh risks before making a decision. Identify any threats to implementing your recommendations. Threats may be operational, reputational, or political. Then discuss how the organization should be prepared to manage those risks.
- i. **Measurement/Evaluation:** Discuss how the organization should evaluate the success or failure of the strategies. What specific tools and metrics can be used to monitor and assess each phase of the campaign?
- j. **Timeline:** Provide a specific timeline for the implementation of your social media plan.
- k. **Budget:** Propose a budget for implementing your social media plan. Identify major items that cost money and how much the organization should be prepared to invest. Consider both direct and opportunity costs.

6. Conclusion (2-3 pages)

In this section, you need to (i) briefly summarize what you discussed in the previous sections, in particular Situation Analysis and Social Media Planning; (ii) discuss implications of your proposal for the organization and its strategic communication; and (iii) discuss why and how this case matters for our understandings of social media in strategic communication.

7. References

This section should list books or articles cited in your report. Refer to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association – commonly referred to as the APA style (6th edition of *Concise Rules of APA Style*). Always begin the References section on a new page.