



**COM 442 – NonProfit Communications – Spring 2024**

Attributes: GEP Writing Course, 3 credits

Mondays & Wednesdays 12:20 pm - 1:35 pm 174 Merion Hall

Office hours: Wednesdays 2:00 - 4:00 via Zoom

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Not-for-profit and community-based organizations rely on strategic digital communication to create positive social change. Students will gain in-depth knowledge of communication theories and practices while conducting research projects with local organizations through the Beautiful Social Research Collaborative. Those who complete this course will know how to apply a variety of social media theories and practices to help organizations achieve their communication goals. Students in the course will actively participate as a member of a project team to complete projects with partners in the Greater Philadelphia area and, from time to time, beyond. Local travel is required.

**Course objectives**

*Community-Centric Digital Communication:* Students will apply communication theories and practices to strategically utilize digital communication for positive social change strategically, prioritizing the community's vision and equity-focused collaboration.

*Collaborative Research Skills:* Through active participation in the Beautiful Social Research Collaborative, students will develop research projects with local organizations, demonstrating the ability to engage in collaborative partnerships that prioritize community assets and strengths.

*Equity-Focused Media Expertise:* Students will gain in-depth knowledge of writing and media studies theories and practices, with a focus on community-building approaches that pursue social justice, emphasizing asset mapping, amplifying voices, and fostering internal agency within communities.

*Engaged Project Team Membership:* Students will actively contribute as members of project teams, emphasizing a community-building process that values community co-creation, internal agency, and capacity-building, with a commitment to mutual benefit for both the university and the community.

### **Required readings (in Canvas):**

Constanza-Chock, Sasha. *Design Justice: Community-led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need*. 2020.

*Equity-Centered Community Design Field Guide*. By Creative Reaction Lab

Handley, Ann. *Everybody Writes: Your Go-to Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content*. Wiley, 2014.

Kanter, Beth, and Allison H. Fine. *The Networked Nonprofit: Connecting with Social Media to Drive Change*. 1st ed, Jossey-Bass, 2010.

Knight, Aimée. *Community is the Way: Engaged Writing and Designing for Transformative Change*. University Press of Colorado. 2022.

Lambert, Joe, and H. Brooke Hessler. *Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community*. Fifth edition, Revised and updated, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018. PDF in Canvas

Okun, Tema. "White Supremacy Culture." 1999.

Sinek, Simon. *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide to Discovering Purpose for You or Your Team*. Portfolio/Penguin, an imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC, 2017.

	<b>What we are up to</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
<b>Week 1</b>  Introduction to Community Engaged Writing	We begin this course with learning about community engaged research projects and starting to build a learning community in the classroom. We will lay the foundation for this semester-with an introduction to B:Social and how design can be a tool to amplify, support, and extend communities.	1/15  MLK Day	1/17  Introduction to the course; fellow presentations and survey
<b>Week 2</b>  Getting Started; Power Dynamics in Community Engaged research	The week we will begin to discuss positionality, power, and privilege and ways it affects our work with community partners	1/22  Reading: Chapter 1 + “Roles on Teams” and Social Media Analysis; group meeting; Reading response due	1/24  Team meeting; roles on teams
<b>Week 3</b>  The Community Partner Project; The Design Question	This week we begin to understand the issue or opportunity at hand and put it into question format with group members. We then meet our community partners and engage them in conversations about their needs, gaining valuable insight into all facets of our projects.	1/29  Chapter 2 and “Meeting with Partners”. Reading response due.	1/31  Team meeting
<b>Week 4</b>  Comparative Media Analysis	A comparative media analysis allows groups to better identify with our community partners by locating “mentor accounts” or kindred spirits. A mentor account helps groups to explore potential strategies and possibilities for our community partners.	2/5 Reading Chapter 3 and 4; Reading response due	2/7 Meet @ Bronstein; Team meeting; Comparative Media Analysis; team meeting; project time

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<b>Week 5</b>  Ideation and Prototyping	We will discuss Equity-Centered Community Design. We will focus on ideation and prototyping - including activities for creative design solutions.	2/12 Reading: Equity-Centered Community Design Field Guide; Prototyping activity	2/14  Team meeting; project time
<b>Week 6</b>  Golden Circle Analysis	The Golden Circle serves as an introduction to what our partners are trying to accomplish in the world and how their mission as a nonprofit or community organization translates to their social platforms.	2/19  Reading: Chapter 4 - Golden Circle	2/21  Golden Circle Analysis; project time
<b>Week 7</b>  Storytelling Strategies	This week we focus on how to support individuals and organizations in using storytelling and participatory media for reflection, education, and social change.	2/26 Reading: Chapter 4 - Organizational Storytelling Arc; Video: Organizational Storytelling	2/28 Team meeting; storytelling arc activity/project time
<b>Week 8</b>  Spring Break		3/4  Spring Break	3/6  Spring Break
<b>Week 9</b>	This week we will use class time to work on your partner projects	3/11  Individual and group midway reflections	3/13  Team meeting; project time

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<b>Week 10</b>  Media report	<p>The purpose of this report is to share with the community partner some of our more academic conversations around social media and storytelling.</p> <p>In this report, you will discuss some of the theories we have read and discussed in class, citing the authors throughout.</p>	<p>3/18</p> <p>Discussion: How to Be a Better Writer; Media report discussion</p>	<p>3/20</p> <p>Team meeting; report writing; report due on 3/22</p>
<b>Week 11</b>  Peer editing session	<p>Peer editing; this week we learn strategies for how to be a good peer reviewer. We will learn how to comment on a peer's work so that your feedback is effective.</p>	<p>3/25</p> <p>Peer editing of reports</p>	<p>3/27</p> <p>Team meeting; revisions due 3/27</p>
<b>Week 12</b> Media report (revision and design)	<p>This week we will design our reports and continue with our community partner projects.</p>	<p>4/1</p> <p>Easter Break</p>	<p>4/3</p> <p>Reading response due Design report; team meeting</p>
<b>Week 13</b>  Community partner project & media report	<p>This week we will have time to work on our case studies and community partner projects. No reading response or media activity due this week.</p>	<p>4/8</p> <p>Team meeting to write first draft of case study</p>	<p>4/10</p> <p>COM Career Day via Zoom *mandatory</p>
<b>Week 14</b> Case Studies	<p>By creating a case study when we finish a project, we get the chance to showcase that project and record its process. Case studies are a snapshot of our work with a partner and have a variety of purposes</p>	<p>4/15</p> <p>Team meeting (online); co write case study</p>	<p>4/17</p> <p>Team meeting to edit case study and publish to <a href="#">website</a></p>

<b>Week 15</b> Presentation practice and final community partner meeting	Groups present their research deliverable and case study	4/22	4/24
		Practice presentations; Evaluations, share research findings	Group meeting; archive all media assets in drive
<b>Week 16</b>		4/29	
Wrapping up; final reflection		COM Week B:Social Event	Reflection due at final exam time: TBD

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Assignments	Due Date	Evaluation
Citizenship and Participation	Weeks 1 - 16	15%
Reading and Writing Responses	Weeks 1 - 14	25%
Media Activities (Group)	Week 1 - 13	25%
Community Partner Project (Group)	Weeks 2 - 15	25%
Final Exam, Reflections, Participation	Week 16	10%

## Assignments

*Citizenship and Participation 15%* Individual evaluation. This class requires engaged listening and engaged speaking. Each member of our learning community needs to be active in the learning process. Each student is here to contribute to the exchange of ideas. Ask questions. Be curious. As a student in this course, you will create your own communal context for learning by engaging in conversations with others. As such, being prepared to participate in discussions and activities is paramount. This entails having read, annotated, and thought about the required materials carefully before class starts.

Tips for class discussion:

- Do the readings ahead of time
- Have the readings accessible during discussion
- Come prepared with your printed Reading Response (often we have discussion with closed laptops)
- Highlight passages that you believe are worthy of discussion
- Think of the major points or problems in the text
- What questions do you have about the readings? Bring them.
- Use relevant examples/cases in the text to illustrate your points
- Make a list of questions you think would be interesting discussion prompts

In this class, we help one another understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in a text through a group discussion format. Students are responsible for taking the lead in facilitating group discussion around the ideas in the text. Through discussion, students practice how to listen to one another, make meaning, and find common ground while participating in a conversation. During discussions, each student aims for two to three substantive comments or questions for every five-ten minutes of discussion.

Citizenship and participation can also be displayed through **collaboration**. Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from working groups, to team-based assignments and co-writing, to cooperative projects and research. Assessment of citizenship and participation will be ongoing and discussed with students in both group settings and in one-on-one meetings with the instructor.

**Reading responses, writing activities, social media takeovers 25%** *Individual*

*evaluation.* Reading responses are pre-class writing activities that demonstrate your engagement with the ideas in the assigned weekly course material. An effective response demonstrates that you have thoroughly read and understood the material (or that you ask and attempt to answer compelling questions that reveal careful reading). The responses will develop connections between the material and the themes of the course and demonstrate that you have considered the implications of the materials. Although these are not formal academic papers, they should be carefully written and *cited* nevertheless. Include direct quotes from the readings that support your integration of the material. Be specific about the works you're discussing, give details to back up any assertions you may make, include references, page numbers, when appropriate. Finally, pay attention to grammar and mechanics. Reading responses are short answers (typically between 200-300 words). These are due *before* class. Late work is deducted 20% per day.

**Media activities, group-work, worksheets, group takeovers, peer reviews 25%** *Group* evaluation. To promote the integration of theory and practice, we will engage in various writing activities, some private, some public. Use vocabulary, concepts, and ideas from the reading material and any additional course material to link theory with practice. Make it a habit to thoroughly relate your work with the readings. Assessment of writing activities is ongoing throughout the semester. Late work is deducted 20% per day.

**Community partner project 25%** *Group and individual* evaluation. Throughout the semester, groups will work on a collaborative research project with a community partner. Mentoring by both fellows and professor will lead each group through a series of revisions, resulting in a completed project which is acceptable to all. During the last weeks of the semester fellows and the instructor will review each group's portfolio of work from this course. Each group will create a Case Study to be posted online on the B:Social archive on the website. During the last weeks of class, groups will also present their final case study and research outcomes to their community partners and to the class.

**Final reflection 10%** *Individual* evaluation. This final assignment asks you to record a 400-500 word piece that tells a story about your growth and development this semester, whether that be professionally, ethically, civically, morally, academically, psychologically, internally, intellectually, emotionally, or spiritually. Some prompts will be provided.

**Weekly agenda**

- By Mondays: Have reading responses submitted to Canvas before class
- On Mondays: Meet in Merion Hall 174 for class discussion; media activity
- On Wednesdays: Meet in Bronstein Hall for group work
- By Friday: Submit group media activities; upload assignments



- It is possible to use Common Hour to meet with your group or for meetings with community partners (Common Hour is Fridays 12:20 - 1:30). Groups can schedule meetings in the Annex, Bronstein, and/or Merion 174 or Zoom at this time to meet with community partners.

### **Land Acknowledgment**

We recognize and acknowledge that Saint Joseph's University stands on the Indigenous territory known as "Lenapehoking," the traditional homelands of the Lenape, also called Lenni-Lenape or Delaware Indians. Their descendants today include the Delaware Tribe and Delaware Nation of Oklahoma; the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, Ramapough Lenape, and Powhatan Renape of New Jersey; and the Munsee Delaware of Ontario.

### **Community Agreements**

- Stay flexible and patient around any changes, cancellations or schedule shifts as we navigate the semester.
- Ask questions before assuming. The best way to understand the choices, actions, or intentions of one another is by asking.
- When offering critical feedback, do so with the belief that people can change; when receiving critical feedback, listen to others with a willingness to change.
- Learn about ableist and other harmful language
- This is an anonymous feedback link that goes to the professor and cannot be traced back to you.

### **Expectations**

Come to class fully prepared to engage in the exchange of ideas. It is your responsibility to be ready to discuss the materials each week. It is expected that you check and respond to messages in Canvas and email at least once every 24 hours Monday-Friday for communication purposes with your instructor and peers.

### **Illness**

If you are unable to attend class due to illness, communicate directly with me through email. A doctor's note will be required if you would like this absence excused. If your absence is due to isolation or quarantine, it is your responsibility to contact me within 48 hours outlining both the date of your expected return to class and a plan to stay on pace with readings and assignments and group obligations during your physical absence.

### **Grading Scheme**

Please note that the exact grade in Canvas will be the grade you receive for the course. I do not "round up," as it can be a subjective practice. There are extra credit or revision opportunities in class, if you want to make sure you have done everything you can to improve your course grade. automatically. If you are ill, please let me know.

### **Late Work**

Late work is deducted 20% for each late day. If an assignment or project is posted

after a deadline (even if it is on the same day as the deadline), it will be deducted 20% automatically. If you are ill, please let me know.

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### **Office Hours and After Hours**

My door is open. I hope you will take advantage of my office hours. I am available to offer extended feedback on your projects (beyond the written feedback you formally receive). You don’t need to have a problem to schedule a visit, but if you do find yourself having some difficulty or questions (in class or even outside of class) then I certainly want to see you sooner rather than later. If you cannot make scheduled office hours, arrange to see me at another time.

### **The Writing Center**

The Saint Joseph’s University Writing Center is free to all members of the SJU community. The undergraduate and graduate student writers who make up the staff can assist you in any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to organizing and developing your ideas, to citing sources to proofreading. They work with students from across the university on a variety of assignments and projects: lab reports, business policy papers, poems, essays, research papers, dissertations, resumes, and personal statements for graduate school applications, among many others. You name it; they’ve helped writers write it. Both appointments and drop-in sessions are available. The main Writing Center is located in 162 Merion Hall. The Center also has a satellite location in the Post Learning Commons (room 128). For more information, including hours of operation and instructions on how to make an appointment, please visit the SJU Writing Center website at [sju.edu/writingcenter](http://sju.edu/writingcenter).

### **Rules regarding the use of information in this course**

All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and/or unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else’s work, is plagiarism. Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI- generated content such as ChatGTP) without proper attribution or authorization is another serious form of plagiarism. If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, please reach out to me to discuss.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Reasonable academic accommodations may be provided to students who submit appropriate documentation of their disability. If students have need of assistance or questions with this issue, they are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) at [sds@sju.edu](mailto:sds@sju.edu) or by phone at 610.660.1774. The Office of SDS also provides an appeal/grievance procedure for complaints regarding requested or offered reasonable accommodations. More information can be found at: [www.sju.edu/sds](http://www.sju.edu/sds).

## **Health and Wellness**

Saint Joseph's University recognizes that physical and mental health strongly impact one's ability to do well in school and in life. As a result, there are many helpful campus resources designed to help students to care for their physical, mental, and spiritual health. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol, drugs, identities, finances, etc. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle and challenges. If you are experiencing concerns, seeking assistance sooner rather than later is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you.

## **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

CAPS provides free confidential mental health counseling for all Saint Joseph's University students. Currently, CAPS therapists are conducting tele-mental health counseling for students via a secure version of Zoom. In addition, counselors are available after office hours and over weekends to attend to urgent mental health concerns. To access 24/7 mental health counseling, students can call the CAPS office at 610-660-1090.

<https://sites.sju.edu/counseling/> .

## **Additional Resources:**

- Student Success: <https://sites.sju.edu/thesuccesscenter/student-success/>
- Fitness & Recreation: <https://www.sju.edu/health-well-being/fitness-recreation>
- Center for Inclusion and Diversity: <https://sites.sju.edu/oid/>
- Campus Ministry: <https://sites.sju.edu/campusministry/>

## **Bias, discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct/assault**

Saint Joseph's is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment, as well as other benefits, programs, and activities, that are free from acts of bias, discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. We encourage anyone who has experienced this type of harm to seek help from the University by filing a report through the incident reporting form, or by calling 610-660-1145.

For information about the University's response to reports bias, harassment, and discrimination, including policies, incident definitions, and the role of the University's Bias Activity Review Group, please visit <https://www.sju.edu/offices/titleix-equity/equity> or contact [bias@sju.edu](mailto:bias@sju.edu). For more information about the University's response to reports of sexual misconduct, including incident definitions, information for confidential reporting options both on- and off-campus, and resources for support, please visit <https://www.sju.edu/offices/titleix> or contact [titleix@sju.edu](mailto:titleix@sju.edu). While I want you to feel comfortable coming to me for support, please know that I have some reporting requirements that are part of my job responsibilities at Saint Joseph's University. For example, if you inform me of an issue of sexual harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct (Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation,

Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking) I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of the institution's Director Office of Title IX, Equity & Compliance.