
Description

How do you go about becoming that person whose every word is listened to? How do you build trust so that you become an influencer? Due to the fast proliferation of new platforms, and the breakneck speed of digital change - influencer marketing is becoming more of a mainstay as the industry continues to evolve.

This course builds on the fundamentals covered in ITP 476 by taking a strategic and hands-on approach covering three primary areas: 1) Understanding the foundations of social media, influencer marketing & analytics. 2) Understanding the ways brands look to appeal to an audience on social media using earned and influencer marketing strategies. 3) How to organically build your own personal brand on social media - i.e. developing a voice, developing an audience/following, engaging with people, and ultimately increasing your impact on social media.

Students will first learn about the influencer marketing industry, beginning with history & principles, then looking at the different types of influencers, the ways to identify and analyze them, rules of onboarding and activating them, as well as the key performance indicators to monitor, while measuring their output.

Next, students will specifically learn how to create a voice for themselves online, how to build and engage with their audience, how to use tools and tactics to continue to grow, and how to ultimately become a personal brand themselves.

The hands-on exercises, coupled with the in-class discussions/presentations from real-life social media influencers will teach all the skills to become the ultimate online influencer and how to leverage those skills into a career in social media marketing, digital advertising, and brand partnerships. Students will be hands on with research tools, audience identification and analysis software.

Objective	Course readings, discussions, lectures, projects, & exams are designed to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understanding the foundations of social media and analytics.2. Learn about the influencer marketing industry; how it works and how to conduct a campaign.3. Explore organic ways to reach and appeal to an audience.4. How to build a personal brand online and on social media.5. How to market yourself, grow online, and become a digital influencer6. How to use these skills to turn this into an entrepreneurship opportunity.
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Prerequisites ITP 476

Instructor P.J. Leimgruber
Digital Marketing | Information Technology Program
Viterbi School of Engineering | University of Southern California

Website <https://backboard.usc.edu>

Contact Any questions related to the course and materials should be posted on Blackboard.

For non-course questions or prospective students:
Email: TBD

Office Hours See black board

Graders/TAs TBD

Lecture Wednesdays, 5-8:50pm at LVL 17

Open Lab Hours ITP offers Open Lab use for all students enrolled in ITP classes. These open labs are held beginning the second week of classes through the last week of classes. Hours are listed at: <http://itp.usc.edu/labs/>.

Virtual Lab	In addition to open lab hours, students will get access to a virtual lab that they can use from their own computer. The virtual lab has all the software needed for the course. Instructions are posted on Blackboard.																								
Required Textbook(s)	Required books and readings will be assigned in class and posted on blackboard.																								
Software/Services	Required software and accounts will be assigned in class and posted on blackboard.																								
Grading	<p>The course is graded with the following weights:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Participation</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Homework</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MIDTERM</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Influencer Marketing Group Project</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>Digital Influencer Personal Project</u></td> <td><u>25%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL POSSIBLE</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Influencer Marketing Group Project will be graded based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Marketing Strategy • Digital Media Channels Leveraged • Prospecting and selecting influencers • Measuring the effectiveness of influencer marketing • Creating an influencer marketing campaign • Finding a real brand to pitch the strategy to: <p>Digital Influencer Personal Project will be graded based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a plan-of-action for building a personal brand online • Which digital/social channels are leveraged • Which growth tactics were used • Results of your effort <p>There is no curving. Students will receive the grades that they earn.</p>	Participation	5%	Homework	20%	MIDTERM	25%	Influencer Marketing Group Project	25%	<u>Digital Influencer Personal Project</u>	<u>25%</u>	TOTAL POSSIBLE	100%												
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Grading Scale	<p>Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:</p> <table> <tr> <td>93%+</td> <td>A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>90-92%</td> <td>A-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>87-89%</td> <td>B+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>83-86%</td> <td>B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80-82%</td> <td>B-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>77-79%</td> <td>C+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>73-76%</td> <td>C</td> </tr> <tr> <td>70-72%</td> <td>C-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>69</td> <td>D+</td> </tr> <tr> <td>67-68</td> <td>D</td> </tr> <tr> <td>66</td> <td>D-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65 and below</td> <td>F</td> </tr> </table> <p>Half percentage points will be rounded up to the next whole percentage. So for instance, 89.5% is an A-, but 89.4% is a B+.</p>	93%+	A	90-92%	A-	87-89%	B+	83-86%	B	80-82%	B-	77-79%	C+	73-76%	C	70-72%	C-	69	D+	67-68	D	66	D-	65 and below	F
93%+	A																								
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67-68	D																								
66	D-																								
65 and below	F																								
Homework	<p>To get help on homework, follow these simple steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the homework instructions carefully • Review the “Discussion Board” section of the Blackboard forum for other student questions and comments or post a question yourself to begin the forum. • If you cannot find an answer above, email the TA and me <p>All assignments must be submitted to Blackboard.</p>																								
Policies	<p><i>Make-up policy for exams:</i> No make-up exams (except for medical or family emergencies) will be offered nor will there be any changes made to the Final Exam schedule.</p> <p><i>Late Assignments:</i> Assignments turned in after the deadline will automatically have 10 points per day deducted.</p>																								

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Before logging off a computer, students must ensure that they have saved their work (on their personal email accounts or flash drives) created during class. Any work saved to the computer will be erased after restarting the computer. ITP is not responsible for any work lost.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc.usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Week	Activities	Homework / Reading Due	Reading/Homework Assignment
1 8/23	<p>Course Overview:</p> <p>Introduction and overview of ITP 499</p>		
2 8/30	<p>Lecture: <i>Social Media Introduction & Overview</i></p> <p>This lecture will explore the foundations of social media - we will explore Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube Pinterest, and LinkedIn. As well as some up-and-coming social media networks such as Snapchat, YouNow & more.</p> <p>The purpose of the lecture is to gain an understanding of the social media landscape; the differences and nuances between each network, and how/what these networks communicate.</p>		<p>Required Reading: Moz - Beginners Guide To Social Media</p>
3 9/06	<p>Lecture: <i>Social Media For Business</i></p> <p>This lecture will explore the business side of social media - particularly how they are used by brands as a source of advertising, customer engagement, and building a brand voice. We will look at the ad platforms within the social networks, as well as other business initiatives driven on social.</p>		<p>HW1: Understanding social media and advertising analytics.</p> <p>Details & Due dates in Blackboard.</p>
4 9/13	<p>Lecture: <i>Earned & Owned: Organic Promotions, Virality, and Creating a Brand Voice</i></p> <p>What is the difference between 'earned', 'owned' and 'paid' media and how do these elements fit into a digital strategy?</p> <p>In this lecture, we will discuss how brands can create a brand voice, go viral, earn exposure, and use free promotional methods to gain a natural following.</p>		
5	<p>Lecture: <i>Intro to Influencer Marketing & What</i></p>		<p>HW#2: Good/Bad Influencer Analysis:</p>

<p>9/20</p>	<p>Makes An Influencer Great</p> <p>Influencer marketing involves marketing products and services to those who have a sway over the things other people buy. This market influence typically stems from an individual's expertise, popularity, or reputation. Marketing to an audience of influencers is similar to word of mouth marketing, but it doesn't rely strictly on explicit recommendations.</p> <p>This lecture will introduce you to the field of influencer marketing. You will also learn about the different types of influencers: celebrities, macro influencers, micro influencers, brand advocates, unhappy customers and more.</p>		<p>Find an influencer or brand on social media and analyze the sponsored integration/post. Find 2 examples of good integrations and 1 example of a bad integration. Based on the concepts in lecture.. Screenshot the posts and add the live URLs into a document or slide deck. For each influencer integration, identify why it is good or bad and explain your reasoning.</p> <p>Check blackboard for due dates</p>
<p>6 9/27</p>	<p>Lecture: Methods to Run Influencer Marketing Campaign Part 1 - Selecting Influencers</p> <p>In this lecture, you will learn how to select the right influencer for a brand. We will use tools that look at audience identification and other important metrics.</p> <p>The purpose is to align a brand with the right influencer. We will look at user behaviors, explore buyer personas, and understand what makes some influencers and social networks a great fit - and others not so much.</p> <p>Hands On: Buzzsumo, Peg.co, NeoReach</p>		<p>Begin Project 1: Influencer Marketing Brand Plan - Students will need to create a start-to-finish influencer marketing campaign for a brand.</p> <p>Teams of 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select a brand/company to work with. ● Create a plan of action (which social networks, what is the activation strategy, what is the goal, how success will be measured) ● Prospect a roster for the campaign. Which influencers did you pick and why. ● Pitch & Present your Influencer Marketing Campaign in class, and to the brand. ● Note - execution of the campaign is not required; however is encouraged.
<p>7 10/04</p>	<p>Lecture: Methods to Run an Influencer Marketing Campaign Part 2 - Activating Influencers</p> <p>In this lecture, you will learn how to outreach and contact influencers. We will cover the principles of communication, best strategies for reaching out, building their interest, and activating them for a campaign.</p>		
<p>8 10/11</p>	<p>Lecture: Analyze & Reporting on Influencer Marketing</p> <p>If you cannot measure something, you cannot understand it & cannot improve it. In this lecture you will learn what to analyze in your</p>		<p>Reading TDB</p>

	<p>influencer marketing campaigns, how to define the primary goal, and how to report your findings.</p> <p>We will explore clicks, conversions, likes, shares, and more. Understanding the value of impressions, conversion, brand lift, brand awareness and more.</p>		
9 10/18	MIDTERM EXAM		
10 10/25	<p>Lecture: Intro - <i>Becoming An Influencer</i></p> <p>The lecture covers the basics on how to become a digital influencer. We will reexamine all of the different types of digital influencers, and we will explore different options and paths for success.</p> <p>Project Presentations</p>	Project 1 Due	<p>Begin Project 2: Becoming A Digital Influencer</p> <p>Individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a plan-of-action for becoming a digital influencer. ● Pick one or more social networks to target. ● Pick the type of content/media you are going to create/share. ● Devise a strategy for personal growth. ● Create a real account with real growth by the end of the project.
11 11/01	<p>Influencer Guest Speaker - TDB</p> <p>We will bring in an a top tier social media influencer to tell their story about how they got started, grew their audience, and ultimately became an online/social celebrity.</p>		
12 11/08	<p>Lecture: <i>Creating A Personal Brand & Growing Your Audience Part 1</i></p> <p>In order to become an influencer, you need to have an audience of some sort. A high follower count is great, but the quality of your influence is even more important. Do your followers trust you? Do they read your posts? Do they value your opinions? This lecture will cover what you need to know to grow authentically, how to network with others, and continue to create/share interesting content.</p>		<p>Required Reading: Source TDB</p>
13	Lecture: <i>Creating A Personal Brand & Growing</i>		HW #3: Influencer Marketing HW

<p>11/15</p>	<p><i>Your Audience Part 2</i></p> <p>Influencers need to do more than just build their own little online empire. They need to continually reach outside their current sphere of influence to build new connections. This will mean reading and commenting on other people's blog posts, reaching out via social media, and being interested in and participating wherever possible both online and offline.</p> <p>This lecture will cover both online and offline networking strategies like how to participate in local networking events, offer to speak at industry conferences and regularly meet up with other influencers in your field.</p>		<p>(Assignment TBD)</p>
<p>14 No Class</p>	<p>Lecture: Becoming An Online Entrepreneur</p> <p>While it should never be the goal to become a digital influencer for the sole purpose of making money - as we have discussed in this class; influencers are still integral to brands and their overall advertising/marketing strategy.</p> <p>This lecture will cover how to create a media kit for yourself, how to negotiate with advertisers and/or sponsors. Contracts, disclosures, FTC guidelines and more.</p>		
<p>15 11/29</p>	<p>Reflection and Course Wrap-Up</p>	<p>Project 2 Due</p>	
<p>16 TBD</p>			