**CMGT 568: Influencer Strategies**

Fall 2021: Wednesdays, 6:30-9:20 pm, August 25-December 15

Classroom: ASC G34 + Online

Section: 21786

Number of Units: 4

Instructor: Freddy Tran Nager

Contact: fnager@usc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

**I. Course Description**

Influential individuals — from royalty to rebels, reporters to religious leaders — have shaped politics, society, and commerce throughout history. Today, digital platforms provide everyday users, not just authority figures, the opportunity to accrue widespread influence. Consequently, modern influencers include self-anointed experts, social-media stars, even fictitious characters and AI-powered bots.

Corporations and other institutions have noticed. With consumers dispersed across thousands of media outlets, these institutions are implementing influencer campaigns in hopes of reaching niche segments, cutting through the clutter, enhancing their brands, and achieving bottom-line objectives.

The challenges, however, are substantial. Influencer-campaign managers must first distinguish the truly influential — those who can shape beliefs and behavior — from the merely popular, especially since such vanity metrics as followers and likes are easily purchased and inflated. Fraud is rampant, with influencer agencies and even social networks complicit in the deception.

Managers must also identify individuals who might have little online presence but much greater influence than social-media celebrities. (Indeed, social-media creators comprise just one part of this course.) In addition, campaign success hinges on evaluating networks of influence, complying with both platform and government regulations, analyzing data, and adjusting on the fly.

On the flip side, many individuals aspire to increase their personal influence, whether online or simply at work. For most, this requires expressing their expertise with personality, perspective, persuasiveness, and persistence, and expanding their reach beyond immediate circles. Despite these efforts, only a minute fraction of aspirants actually makes a living as influencers.

To help managers and aspirants identify what matters most in influencer marketing — and what will waste time and resources — this course explores the above issues with an emphasis on quantitative and qualitative research, critical analysis, and creative expression.

**II. Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, you will acquire expertise and experience in the following:

* Conducting in-depth qualitative and quantitative research to identify and assess true influencers.
* Analyzing relevant data — not just "vanity metrics" — to gauge campaign effectiveness.
* Applying frameworks (such as the customer journey, influence networks, and the 3B's of Brand, Buzz, Behavior) to determine which influencers work best at which stage.
* Planning influencer campaigns that meet organizational goals beyond "engagement."
* Developing plans to build personal influence based on expertise, expression, and expansion.
* Defining, describing, and debating issues of diversity and inclusion among influencers, in campaigns, and on platforms, including how they impact self-image, perceptions, and income inequality.

**III. About Your Instructor**

Freddy Tran Nager has worked with influencers for over three decades, including celebrities, social-media stars, journalists, and experts. In 1994, he served as Editor of one of the web's first entertainment sites, *AMP: MCA Records Online*. He subsequently joined ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi as a senior creative for interactive media. Freddy then founded and currently runs the consultancy Atomic Tango LLC, which has served a diverse array of clients, from influencers to digital startups. A second-generation Trojan, he received his MBA from USC and his BA from Harvard, and has taught graduate courses at Annenberg since Fall 2012. He welcomes connections on LinkedIn at [FreddyNager.com](http://www.freddynager.com).

**IV. Course Notes**

The course is divided into two parts:

1. Planning Influencer Campaigns
2. Developing Personal Influence

In addition to weekly lectures and in-class exercises, this course is web-enhanced, with readings, assignments, lecture slides, and mandatory discussions on Blackboard. For each unit of in-class contact time, the university expects 2 hours of out-of-class student work per week over a semester, so please allocate at least 8 hours each week to course-related activities such as readings, research, writing, and website development.

**V. Assignments**

The following are brief summaries; complete instructions will be posted on Blackboard.

* **Assignment 1: News-Media Influencer Evaluation (20%):** Analyze a regular columnist from *Wired*, the *Los Angeles Times, New York Times,* or *Wall Street Journal.* Evaluate their history, activities, and at least three of their articles to determine their level of influence on society, culture, and public policy.
* **Assignment 2: Team Project: Influencer Campaign Plan (25%):** Plan and implement a real influencer campaign to promote a local artist, small business, charity, or cause. Select and analyze the target audience, their network of influence, and customer journey. Evaluate and integrate at least 3 influencers (including one journalist) into the journey, and provide guidelines and goals. You will then implement your plan and report the results at the end of the course.
* **Assignment 3: Individual Project: Personal Influence Plan (25%):** Devise a plan to enhance your personal influence. Identify a niche, evaluate competitive influencers, and set guidelines for expertise, expression, and expansion. In addition, you will create two pieces of original content to express your influence: a 1,000-word op-ed piece and a creative sample (video, podcast, photo series, blog, etc.). You will share these original content items on Blackboard.
* **Literature Review (10%):** This entails two requirements on Blackboard.
  + - **Assigned Readings:** You must complete and evaluate all course readings by responding to discussion questions and classmates' posts.
    - **Weekly Article Evaluations:** You must stay atop news related to website strategies or digital marketing. Every week you will evaluate a relevant article from *Wired*, the *L.A. Times*, *New York Times*, or *Wall Street Journal*. In approximately 100-300 words, you will critically evaluate the article. Every week, one student will be selected to present their evaluation during class.
* **Class Participation (10%):** Attendance alone won’t earn participation points. You must contribute to most discussions in class and on Blackboard: speak, ask questions, and debate respectfully. Staying silent is unacceptable, especially in the company of guest speakers, since it conveys disengagement. Preparation is essential: review past lectures, complete assigned readings, research additional materials, and apply theories to personal experiences. Here is how your class participation is evaluated:
* Is it relevant to the discussion and respectful of others?
* Does it address ideas offered by the reading and by classmates?
* Does it increase everyone's understanding or merely repeat facts?
* Does it support views with data, third-party theories, and research?
* Does it test new ideas and challenge assumptions, or just "play it safe"?

In addition, participation points will be deducted for unexcused absences and lateness, using phones or computers in class, and other distractive or disruptive behaviors.

**VI. Grading**

**a. Breakdown**

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade |
| --- | --- | --- |
| News-Media Influencer Evaluation | 20 | 20 |
| Team Influencer Campaign Plan | 25 | 25 |
| Personal Influence Plan | 25 | 25 |
| Literature Review | 20 | 20 |
| Class Participation | 10 | 10 |
| **TOTAL** |  | **100%** |

**b. Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 94% to 100%: A | 80% to 83%: B- | 67% to 69%: D+ |
| 90% to 93%: A- | 77% to 79%: C+ | 64% to 66%: D |
| 87% to 89%: B+ | 74% to 76%: C | 60% to 63%: D- |
| 84% to 86%: B | 70% to 73%: C- | 0% to 59%: F |

**Standards**

* A's and A-minuses must be earned by "going the extra mile" to produce professional-caliber work that could be presented to a client, employer, or investor. A-level work features high production quality with no mistakes, draws on in-depth research of authoritative sources, reflects strong understanding of course/program materials, and demonstrates high-level creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills. Recommendations will be provided on request **only** to students who earn a solid A in the course.
* B's are awarded for graduate-school caliber work featuring in-depth research of authoritative sources, critical thinking, and strong understanding of course/program materials. The ideas and production quality would need to be stronger to succeed in a professional context.
* C's are given to undergraduate-caliber work, reflecting insufficient critical thinking, superficial research, and/or flawed production quality.
* D's and lower are given to amateurish work, marked by insufficient research, many errors, incomplete sections, and/or superficial analysis.
* F's are meted out to work that shows little understanding of course/program materials, little to no research, poor writing, incomplete sections, and/or plagiarism. Note that plagiarism may also be subject to disciplinary measures.

**d. Timeframe and Disputes**

Since this is a communication management course, missing deadlines is out of the question. Without an exceptional circumstance and the instructor's permission, late assignments will not be accepted.

Every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks on Blackboard. If you think a score is missing or inaccurate, you must notify the instructor within one week of the posting.

**e. Rubrics**

Assignments will be graded on the following criteria without a fixed percentage, since unacceptable quality in any one area (writing, research, etc.) can undermine an entire project. Conversely, exceptional quality in one area may contribute to an overall positive impression.

* **Critical Thinking:** In communication there are few right answers: so-called "best practices" for one entity might fail for another — or even for the same entity at another time. Consequently, graduate students should not just answer the questions, they should also question the answers, including any methods and data. (Academic journal articles are not immune from critical analysis.) Assignments are not just reports: they must describe "why" and "how," not just "what," and will be evaluated on the quality of the reasoning.
* **Professional Writing and Presentation:** All work should be treated as submissions to a professional publication or awards show. All errors should be eliminated by proofreading meticulously, using Microsoft editing tools and/or Grammarly.com (strongly recommended). For help with fluency or simply polishing work, contact Annenberg's Graduate Writing Coach: <http://cmgtwriting.uscannenberg.org/>
* **Research and References:** No guessing, generalizations, or stereotypes (including demographic stereotypes such as "Millennials"). Support your work with research from authoritative sources, such as academic journals, major news publications, and credible experts. Please vet your sources. Guidelines:
  + Start with the USC online library and consult the USC librarian.
  + Consult Google Scholar (https://scholar.google.com/) before searching regular Google.
  + Generally avoid corporate blogs (unless they are companies you're researching) or superficial news sites like the 3F's (Forbes, Fortune, and Fast Company are not graduate-level).
  + Go beyond third-party sources. Conduct focus groups, surveys, and interviews, particularly of subject-matter experts.
  + Never cite Wikipedia; rather, refer to the sources listed in the Wikipedia article.
  + The body of papers must include reference notes, either parenthetical, such as (Duffy 2017), or in the form of footnotes.
  + Bibliography entries must include COMPLETE source information, not just a URL. Chicago Manual of Style format is preferred (<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>), since it respects authors, but you may use any format that includes ALL the following: COMPLETE author names (not just the last name and first initial), article/chapter titles, the name of the publication, dates of publication, original URLs (not USC library), and the dates a particular website was accessed.
* **Creativity:** A-level work features distinctive strategies and ideas that stand out from common practices, as well as inspired writing and production design. Recommended design manual: Garr Reynolds, *Presentation Zen*, 3rd Edition, 2019 New Riders (available via USC library).

**VII. Policies and Procedures**

* **Add/Drop Dates** (<https://classes.usc.edu/term-20213/calendar/>)
* September 10: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001
* September 10: Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001
* September 10: Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall
* September 14: Last day to add or drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001
* October 8: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. Mark of “W” will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]
* October 8: Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]
* November 12: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001
* November 13: Last day to change between letter grade or Pass/No pass in a letter graded course for Session 001
* **Synchronous session recording notice**: Live class sessions will be recorded and made available through Blackboard (including transcriptions). Please remember that USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. You are responsible for the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes ([https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/](http://click.comms.usc.edu/?qs=0fbd1ed553faac6309c6c676c4b7fb7169a0e3ad65fcffb1b6b2d167364cd09ac325cca46bb3f3be790f29a94981a857259b347c1291f314)). These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.
* **Attendance:** You should make every effort to attend all classes, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class. Should you need to miss a class, notify the instructor in advance (except, of course, in the case of emergencies). You are responsible for obtaining what you missed from recorded Zoom sessions, classmates, and Blackboard.
  + For students in Los Angeles, you are expected to attend class in person unless alternative arrangements have been made due to illness, medical reasons, or the need to isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19.
  + Should you experience COVID-19 symptoms, **stay home**. Do not come to an in-person class if you are feeling ill. Nothing is worth risking your health, your instructor’s health, or the health or your peers.
* **Masks:** You must wear a mask fully covering your nose and mouth at all times in the classroom. For this reason, no eating is allowed in the classroom. We will take multiple breaks for fresh air, food, and beverages.
* **Zoom etiquette**: Although you are not obligated to turn your camera on, you are encouraged to do so to make yourself an active part of the class and enhance your networking. Wear appropriate clothing and use appropriate backgrounds. Keep your microphone off except for discussion or questions. Also, *be present*: all phones must be turned off and put away in class and team meetings. Try to avoid interactions with housemates during class; if such interactions are unavoidable, step away from your camera (or turn it off) to avoid distracting your instructor and classmates.
* **Electronics:** All Annenberg students must have a computer for accessing classes from home; however, computers and all other electronics may not be used in the classroom without permission of the instructor. Refer to the [**Annenberg Digital Lounge**](http://www.annenbergdl.org/) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](http://itservices.usc.edu/wireless/support/).
* **Respect:** Treat classmates, the instructor, and speakers with courtesy. You may certainly question and criticize ideas — that is encouraged in the learning environment — but never criticize the person. We are a community and each of us deserves respect. For this reason, it is imperative that you remember to respect the opinion of others, regardless of how much you disagree. In addition, respect means not using your phone at any time during class.
* **Appointments:** If you have questions or concerns, whether academic, career, or personal, contact the instructor to arrange a meeting (fnager@usc.edu). In emergencies, see the support systems below.

**Academic Conduct**

* *Plagiarism:* 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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).
* *USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity:* The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

**VIII. Support Systems**

* *Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call* — [studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

* *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call* — [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

* Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call — [studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

* *Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298* — [equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

* *Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298* — [usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

* *The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776* — [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

* *USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710* — [uscsa.usc.edu](https://uscsa.usc.edu/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

* *Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101* — [diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

* *USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call* — [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu/)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

* *USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call* — [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

* *Annenberg Student Success Fund —* [annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources](https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources)

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

* *USC American Language Institute —* [ali.usc.edu](https://ali.usc.edu/)

English language instruction, assessment, and resources to support the academic and professional success of non-native speakers of English pursuing degrees at USC.

**IX. Required Readings and Media**

The course is reading intensive, with approximately 200 pages assigned each week. In addition to the following publications and videos, articles from academic journals and news publications will be assigned and discussed. (See the Lecture Schedule for details.)

* **Wired.com subscription** (student discount: <https://subscribe.wired.com/subscribe/wired/125571>)
* **Brooke Erin Duffy, *(Not) Getting Paid To Do What You Love: Gender, Social Media, And Aspirational Work*, 2017 Yale University Press.** Prof. Duffy explores the controversial side of social media careers — unpaid “aspirational labor” — particularly performed by women.
* **Trish Hall, *Writing To Persuade: How To Bring People Over To Your Side*, 2019 Liveright.** The former editor of the *New York Times* op-ed page, Hall details principles for truly influencing readers.
* **Tom Nichols, *The Death Of Expertise: The Campaign Against Established Knowledge And Why It Matters*, 2018 Oxford University Press (PAPERBACK edition).** Nichols explains why those who should be the most influential — true experts who are educated, experienced, talented, and peer-approved — are increasingly rejected and ignored by the general public.
* **David H.P. Shulman, The Presentation Of Self In Contemporary Social Life, 2016 Sage Publications** (available online through the USC Library). Prof. Shulman adapts Erving Goffman's 1959 book, *The Presentation Of Self In Everyday Life*, and applies it to 21st century media and situations.

**Long-Form Videos**

* *American Meme*, Netflix
* *Fyre: The Greatest Party That Never Happened*, Netflix
* *Fyre Fraud*, Hulu

**X. Lecture Schedule**

This schedule will likely change depending on the progress of the class, world events, and/or guest speaker availability. For final requirements, please refer to the lecture slides, which will be posted to Blackboard the night before each class. Assigned readings should be completed prior to the NEXT class. All articles are on Blackboard unless otherwise indicated.

**Part I: Influencer Campaign Planning**

**Class 1, August 25: Intro — Defining "Influence"**

* A brief history of influence
* Course intro
* Read/watch before next class (September 1):
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Tim Ingham, "The Five Most Powerful People in the Music Industry…" *Rolling Stone*, 25 January 2019, <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/the-five-most-powerful-people-in-the-music-industry-don't-work-in-the-music-industry-783723/>
  + "Time 100: The Most Influential People Of 2020," *Time*, <https://time.com/collection/100-most-influential-people-2020/>
  + Michael Humphrey, "Influencer Marketing: What A Graduate Student's Deep Dive Can Teach You," *Forbes*, 21 September 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelhumphrey/2017/09/21/influencer-marketing-what-a-graduate-students-deep-dive-can-teach-you/>
* **Due before next class: self-intro and syllabus acknowledgement on Blackboard**

**Class 2, September 1: Meet The Press**

* Journalists as influencers
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Trish Hall, *Writing To Persuade*
  + *Copyediting With An Attitude*
  + *The Gobbledygook Manifesto*
* **Assignment 1: News Media Influencer Evaluation — due Friday, September 10**

**Class 3, September 8: Audience First**

* Communities of interest, NOT stereotypes
* Networks of influence
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Ben Shaw, "Puncturing The Paradox: Group Cohesion And The Generational Myth," BBH Labs, 8 May 2020, <http://bbh-labs.com/puncturing-the-paradox-group-cohesion-and-the-generational-myth/>
  + Anthony Crupi, "TV Demos Are A '60s Sales Tactic, Not Science. Let's Move On.", *Advertising Age*, 7 February 2017, <https://adage.com/article/news/tv-demos-a-sales-tactic-science-move/307850>
  + Daniel K. Cortese, et al, "Smoking Selfies: Using Instagram To Explore Young Women’s Smoking Behaviors," *Social Media + Society*, 7 August 2018, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305118790762>
  + Vaccine articles for discussion:
    - Mike Ives, "Celebrities Are Endorsing Covid Vaccines. Does It Help?" *New York Times*, 1 May 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/health/vaccinated-celebrities.html>
    - Jan Hoffman, "Clergy Preach Faith in the Covid Vaccine to Doubters," *New York Times*, 14 March 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/14/health/clergy-covid-vaccine.html>
    - Maya Lau & Laura J. Nelson, "From Taco Vendors To Flyers: The Epic Outreach To Vaccinate California's Most Vulnerable," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 March 2021, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-03-22/how-covid-vaccines-reaching-high-need-california-areas>

**Class 4, September 15: Goals And Nonsense**

* SMART Goals, KPI's, vanity metrics, and the 3B's of Brand, Buzz, Behavior
* Meaning transfer model
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Avinash Kaushik, "Influencer Marketing Rocks!", *Marketing Analytics Intersect*, November 2019, <https://madmimi.com/p/a5348f>
  + Podcast: Derek Thompson, "Are Influencers Frauds Or The Future Of Online Commerce," Crazy/Genius, *The Atlantic*, 6 June 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/06/influencers-frauds-or-the-future-of-online-commerce/591133/>
  + Nicholas Confessore, et al, "The Follower Factory," *New York Times*, 27 January 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/01/27/technology/social-media-bots.html>
  + Michael H. Keller, "The Flourishing Business Of Fake YouTube Views," *New York Times*, 11 August 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/11/technology/youtube-fake-view-sellers.html>
  + Ian Bogost, "All Followers Are Fake Followers," *The Atlantic*, 30 January 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/01/all-followers-are-fake-followers/551789/>
  + Anders Ankarlid, "The $744 M Influencer Marketing Scam," Medium, <https://medium.com/@aa_88162/influencerstudy-agoodcom-4c7ac6c27fae>
  + Suzanne Kapner & Sharon Terlep, "Online Influencers Tell You What to Buy, Advertisers Wonder Who’s Listening," Wall Street Journal, 20 October 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/online-influencers-tell-you-what-to-buy-advertisers-wonder-whos-listening-11571594003>
  + Emma Grey Ellis, "Fighting Instagram's $1.3 Billion Problem—Fake Followers," Wired, 10 September 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/instagram-fake-followers/>
* **Assignment 2: Team Campaign Plan — due Friday, October 1**

**Class 5, September 22: Influencer Evaluation + Selection**

* "Authenticity" and Fraud
* Influencer categories
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Grant McCracken, "Who Is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundations of the Endorsement Process," *Journal of Consumer Research*, December 1989
  + Sophie Bishop, "Influencer Management Tools: Algorithmic Cultures, Brand Safety, and Bias," *Social Media + Society*, 30 March 2021, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/20563051211003066>
  + Gustavo Arrellano, "Woke California Pays Homage This Week To Another American Hero With A Complex Legacy," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 March 2021, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-03-29/cesar-chavez-problematic-miriam-pawel>
  + Amanda Hess, "The Triumph Of The Celebrity Endorsement," *New York Times*, 14 April 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/14/arts/celebrity-endorsements-catherine-zeta-jones.html>
  + Video: Bert Marcus (Director), *The American Meme*, Netflix, <https://www.netflix.com/title/81003741>

**Class 6, September 29: Influencers and the AIDA Purchasing Funnel**

* Integrating influencers along the customer journey
* Guest Speaker: Amanda Meixner
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Itai Himelboim & Guy J. Golan, “A Social Networks Approach to Viral Advertising: The Role of Primary, Contextual, and Low Influencers,” *Social Media + Society*, 21 July 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305119847516>
  + Michael Waters, "Retailers Are Pushing Their Employees To Become TikTok Influencers," *Digiday*, 11 November 2020, <https://digiday.com/marketing/retailers-are-pushing-their-employees-to-become-tiktok-influencers/>

**Class 7, October 6: Dealing with Influencers + Agencies**

* Contracts
* Controversies
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Katherine Rosman, "Girl, Wash Your Timeline," *New York Times*, 29 April 2021 <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/style/rachel-hollis-tiktok-video.html>
  + Sarah Brouillette, "The Talented Ms. Calloway," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 10 December 2020, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-talented-ms-calloway/>
  + Stoldt, et al, "Professionalizing and Profiting: The Rise of Intermediaries in the Social Media Influencer Industry," *Social Media + Society*, 29 March 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305119832587>
  + Anderson, "Influencer Marketing Contracts: 21 Clauses To Always Include," *Casual Fridays*, 1 February 2018, <https://casualfridays.com/influencer-marketing-contracts-21-clauses-that-should-be-in-every-contract/>
  + Paris Martineau, "Inside the Pricey War to Influence Your Instagram Feed," *Wired*, 18 November 2018, <https://www.wired.com/story/pricey-war-influence-your-instagram-feed/>

**Part II: Personal Influence Development**

**Class 8, October 13: Finding Your Niche**

* The problem with "be yourself"
* Nexus of opportunity + passion + expertise
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + David H.P. Shulman, *The Presentation Of Self In Contemporary Social Life*
  + Scott Barry Kauffman, "Authenticity Under Fire," *Scientific American*, 14 June 2019, <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/beautiful-minds/authenticity-under-fire/>
  + Li Jin, “The Creator Economy Needs A Middle Class,” *Harvard Business Review*, 17 December 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/12/the-creator-economy-needs-a-middle-class>
  + Derek Muller, "My Life Story," Veritasium/YouTube, 18 June 2018, <https://youtu.be/S1tFT4smd6E>
  + Katie O'Reilly, "Welcome To The Great Outdoors' Insta-Sphere," *Sierra*, 26 June 2020, <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2020-4-july-august/feature/welcome-great-outdoors-insta-sphere>
  + Orton-Johnson, "Mummy Blogs and Representations of Motherhood: 'Bad Mummies' and Their Readers," *Social Media + Society*, 18 May 2017, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305117707186>
* **Assignment 3: Personal Influence Plan — creative expression due Wednesday, December 1; final paper due Wednesday, December 15**

**Class 9, October 20: Expertise**

* Why aren't more PhD's influencers?
* Education, experience, talent, association
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Tom Nichols, *The Death Of Expertise*
  + Gary Robbins, "Actor Alan Alda And Scripps Research Will Transform Scientists Into Master Storytellers," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 January 2020, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-01-18/actor-alan-alda-and-scripps-research-will-transform-scientists-into-master-storytellers>
  + Vanessa Friedman, "The Biggest Influencers of the Pandemic May Not Be Who You Assume," *New York Times,* 24 March 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/24/fashion/ruth-carter-fashion-influencers.html>
  + Sarah Kessler, "Gary Vee Is Still Preaching The Hustle Gospel In The Middle Of A Pandemic," *Marker/Medium*, 12 August 2020, <https://marker.medium.com/garyvee-is-still-preaching-the-hustle-gospel-in-the-middle-of-a-pandemic-b033b25f0dc>
  + Ephrat Livni, "Elizabeth Holmes And Other Famous Grifters Expose The Myth Of Quick And Easy Success," *Quartz*, 2 August 2018, <https://qz.com/1345502/elizabeth-holmes-and-other-famous-grifters-expose-the-myth-of-quick-and-easy-success/>
  + Bee Wilson, "Why We Fell For Clean Eating," *The Guardian*, 11 August 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/aug/11/why-we-fell-for-clean-eating>

**Class 10, October 27: Expression**

* + Selecting your medium
  + Personality + perspective + persuasion = your voice
  + Integrating emotions and storytelling
* Read/watch before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Video: Dr. Robert Cialdini & Steve Martin, "Science Of Persuasion," Influence At Work/YouTube, <https://youtu.be/cFdCzN7Rybw>
  + Steven Pinker, "Why Academics' Writing Stinks." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 26 September 2014
  + Dr. Andrew Schrock, "Why Your Writing Voice Is Important," *Indelible Voice*, 28 September 2020, <http://indeliblevoice.com/why-your-writing-voice-is-important/>
  + Karen Nelson-Field, et al, “The Emotions That Drive Viral Video,” *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 27 August 2013
  + Video: Jonah Berger, "Contagious: Why Things Catch On," Talks at Google/YouTube, 27 March 2013, <https://youtu.be/FN4eDk1pq6U>
  + *Crafting Contagious Workbook*
  + Tom Dreisbach, "How Extremists Weaponize Irony To Spread Hate," All Things Considered, NPR, 26 April 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/26/990274685/how-extremists-weaponize-irony-to-spread-hate>

**Class 11, November 3: Expansion**

* Amplification
* LinkedInfluence
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + start Brooke Erin Duffy, *(Not) Getting Paid To Do What You Love*
  + Victoria O’Meara, “Weapons of the Chic: Instagram Influencer Engagement Pods as Practices of Resistance to Instagram Platform Labor,” *Social Media + Society*, October 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305119879671>
  + Jacob Sweet, “Can Disinformation Be Stopped? Scholars’ Perspectives On A Pervasive New Threat,” Harvard Magazine, July-August 2021, <https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2021/07/features-disinformation>
  + Maxim Sytch, "How to Figure Out How Much Influence You Have at Work," *Harvard Business Review*, 18 February 2019, <https://hbr.org/2019/02/how-to-figure-out-how-much-influence-you-have-at-work>

**Class 12, November 10: Ambition, Ethics, And Exploitation**

* Pink collar jobs
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + complete Brooke Erin Duffy, *(Not) Getting Paid To Do What You Love*
  + Simon Owens, "Is It Time to Regulate Social Media Influencers?" New York Magazine, 17 January 2019, <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/01/is-it-time-to-regulate-social-media-influencers.html>
  + Rachel Monroe, "Ultra-Fast Fashion Is Eating The World," *The Atlantic*, March 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/03/ultra-fast-fashion-is-eating-the-world/617794/>
  + Fyre Festival documentaries:
    - *Fyre: The Greatest Party That Never Happened*, Netflix
    - *Fyre Fraud*, Hulu

**Class 13, November 17: Future of Influence**

* Virtual influencers
* Read before next class:
  + Weekly Article Evaluation
  + Jared Council, "AI Can Almost Write Like a Human—and More Advances Are Coming," *Wall Street Journal*, 11 August 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ai-can-almost-write-like-a-humanand-more-advances-are-coming-11597150800>
  + Aww Virtual Human Agency: <https://aww.tokyo/>

**November 24: Thanksgiving Break — No Class**

**Class 14, December 1: Personal Plan Presentations**

* Meet on Blackboard to share and discuss creative expressions

**Exam Week, December 15: Final Project Submissions — No Class Meeting**

* Influencer campaign results due
* Personal Plans due