TEACHING PORTFOLIO

HIGHER EDUCATION I MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

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STATEMENT OF
TEACHING **PHILOSOPHY**

In the summer of 2022, I left my job as Head of Marketing at an e-commerce company to try something new.

I wanted to see what it would be like to work in a classroom. So, I got my New York State Teaching Assistant Certification, and was hired to work as a TA in a program for students with special needs (ages 15-21). We teach job skills, social skills, as well as math and ELA. I love the job; it doesn't feel like work.

In the months following my career change, I was asked to guest lecture at a couple nearby universities. I spoke to undergraduate students at one college about digital marketing strategy, and I spoke at another university about communications research. I loved those experiences; engaging with students about topics I'm passionate about was truly rewarding. It solidified in my mind my next career move: higher education instructor.

I became an expert in marketing and strategic communications during my 20-year professional career. To supplement my on-the-job learning, I am pursuing a Master's Degree in Strategic Communication at SUNY Oswego which I will complete in August 2024. I also learned valuable teaching skills through a Higher Education Teaching Certification program in 2023, offered by Harvard's Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. Thus, my approach to teaching has been shaped by:
1. Decades of real-world experience in marketing and strategic communications
2. Relevant and recent graduate work in my field
3. Knowledge of exemplar higher education teaching methods

As a higher education instructor, I'll draw from decades of professional experience to make the classes I teach dynamic, relevant, and hands-on. My students will learn the latest in strategic marketing communications creation, measurement, and best practices. The field of digital marketing and communications is constantly evolving, and I am committed to staying current in the field, to keep my courses relevant and cutting-edge.

My goals as a higher education teacher are as follows:
- Prepare students to enter the job market with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in marketing and communications careers
- Support and mentor students so they may excel in my classes and reach their full potential as students of marketing communications

- Create a relaxed, inclusive class atmosphere in which students are comfortable asking questions and contributing to discussions
- Continuously seek formative feedback, to become the best teacher I can be

Specific tools and techniques that I will use to achieve my teaching goals include:
- Group projects and group discussions that emphasize teamwork, mirroring how students will someday collaborate with colleagues in the workplace
- The use of real-life examples and hands-on exercises that promote active learning
- Lessons and syllabi built on the principle of backward design, with clearly-defined learning outcomes
- An emphasis on inclusive teaching to foster a learning environment in which students of all identities and backgrounds can thrive

I truly hope I may challenge and inspire my future students through this approach to active learning.

ACTIVE LEARNING
LESSON PLAN **EXAMPLE**

This lesson would be placed at the beginning of a brand management (marketing) course, to introduce students to basic elements of visual identity. It is meant to be a fun, easy, and engaging teamwork activity. It will allow students to explore something relevant to the course while getting to know each other.

The active learning technique I would use to teach marketing/communications students about brand identity is an in-class, collaborative logo design exercise. This activity will introduce to students how color, shape, and typography communicate (and influence) a brand's identity. No design skills are needed; this exercise simply asks the student groups to explore the connection between basic design principles and brand identity.

Learning Outcomes: students will be able to…
- Understand the role of basic design principles in brand identity
- Manipulate design elements to create a visual identity
- Identify how logo design influences brand perception

This activity will be implemented as follows:

1. Students arrange themselves into small groups, sitting relatively close to one another at tables or desks pushed together. Each student group is assigned a different fictitious

product name and category. For example, one group might be assigned "Lazur – a beauty product" and other group will be given "TredX – an automotive product."

2. I will have paper and colored pencils available, but students may choose any medium with which they are comfortable to design their logos. They can use PowerPoint on their laptops, or any other free design program such as Canva or Adobe Express. (Many marketing students have experience with Powerpoint, Canva, and Adobe Express.)

3. Collaboratively, students determine color(s), shape, and type treatment for their product logo. They can all sketch designs and show them to the other students in their group. After 20 minutes, each group chooses a final logo.

4. Logo designs are shared with the entire class, and students try to guess what product or product category is represented by the logo.

5. A post-activity discussion will reinforce understanding. The teacher will underscore how angular logo shapes and ALL CAPS text convey strength and hardness, while circular shapes and light colors convey qualities of gentleness and softness.

This is an appropriate active learning technique for undergraduate marketing students because it exposes them to key elements of brand design and allows them to manipulate those elements to create an appropriate visual identity for a product. The exercise also allows students to understand through hands-on creation that color, shape, and typography can be used in different ways to influence brand perception. Even though most marketing students will not work as graphic designers, they will work *with* graphic designers in their future roles and need to have this basic knowledge in order to collaborate successfully in the workplace.

REAL WORLD
LESSON ACTIVITY **EXAMPLE**

This is an introductory lesson activity for students in a Digital Marketing Strategy or Digital Analytics course. It is centered on case-based learning, so students can understand how real organizations are able to collect and analyze social media data. It emphasizes active learning and teamwork to keep students engaged and to mirror how business colleagues collaborate in the workplace.

Overview
This learning activity allows marketing students to engage with social media measurement through case-based learning. Many marketing jobs involve creating and measuring social media

content, so this activity allows students to acquire skills and knowledge needed for the workplace.

Different social media goals (exposure, engagement) are measured with different metrics (impressions, shares). My activity will allow groups of students in the classroom to identify social media posts that have high follower engagement and posts that have low follower engagement. Student groups will then attempt to identify some features of posts that receive high engagement, as well as aspects of posts that receive low engagement. Groups will share their findings with the rest of the class.

Learning Outcomes: students will be able to…
- Identify and utilize social media metrics to determine levels of engagement with social media content
- Calculate Average Engagement Rate to identify social media content that has high engagement, and social content that has low engagement

Activity Description
- **Step 1 - Set Up:** Students arrange themselves in groups of 2 or 3 and use their phones to log in to Facebook. I provide links to the Facebook pages of three nonprofit organizations, and each student group selects one of the nonprofit accounts to analyze.
- **Step 2 - Data Collection:** Students scroll through the organization's feed to find 2-3 posts that received high levels of engagement in the form of large numbers of likes, comments, and shares. Students are also asked to find 2-3 posts with low engagement (small numbers of likes, comments, and shares). Finally, students calculate the Average Engagement Rate of the posts, which is the number of likes+comments+shares in proportion to the total number of followers.
- **Step 3 - Analysis and Reporting:** Through small group discussion, students attempt to identify features of the social posts/content that contributed to high engagement, and aspects of the posts that might have contributed to low engagement. (For example, students might find a correlation between video content and high engagement, or between fundraising posts and low engagement.) Finally, a representative is chosen by each student group to report their findings to the rest of the class.

Alignment with Learning Objectives
I believe this activity aligns with the learning objectives as it allows students to practice the skill of calculating Average Engagement Rate, and it allows them to understand and analyze the connection between social media content and engagement.

Alignment with Discipline
This activity is an example of case-based teaching, which is a popular teaching technique in the disciplines of marketing and communications. With case-based teaching, students develop skills in analytical thinking and judgment by reviewing and discussing real-life scenarios. This is a

common type of active learning in marketing and communication classes because working with real-life scenarios lets students see how work gets done in the business world. Teamwork and presentation skills are also needed in most marketing jobs, and this active learning activity provides that experience as well.

EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENT
WITH GRADING **CRITERIA**

This is an introductory assignment for students in a Digital Marketing Strategy or Digital Analytics course. It might be assigned after the first or second lecture. It is meant to make students think critically about why it is important to understand, study, and analyze digital marketing data. It exemplifies my approach to assessing student learning because it is extremely detailed, and clearly shows the student what is required to successfully complete the assignment and earn full points.

Assignment: "Data Is the New Oil" Essay

In this course you will be analyzing digital data to inform marketing decisions. Before we can look at data analytics, however, we need to have an understanding of what big data is, and the value of data to a company.

The phrase "data is the new oil" reflects the consensus that the most valuable asset an organization has is its data. In this assignment, you will write an essay that achieves two **learning outcomes:**
- demonstrate your understanding of big data and the value of data to an organization
- hypothesize about how companies profit from data, drawing upon your own experience

Your essay should be structured as follows:

1. Intro paragraph: Explain what marketers mean by "data is the new oil" and "big data."

2. Second paragraph: Thinking about your own experience shopping online (i.e., on Amazon.com), discuss the type of data collected from you, and why that data is valuable to the retailer. How do they use it to get shoppers to buy again and again?

3. Third paragraph: Thinking about a social media app you use (i.e., TikTok), discuss the data the app has on you, and why that data is valuable. How do they use it to make money? What content do their algorithms show users and why?

4. Fourth paragraph: A conclusion that restates your main point about the value of data and briefly summarizes the major points of paragraphs two and three. Finally, conclude with a "big picture" statement or revelation of a deeper truth. See this resource for writing a strong concluding paragraph.

Note: In class we defined "unstructured data" and "first party data." Your essay must show an understanding of those terms.

This assignment is worth 20 points. Upload your essay (max. 500 words) to the course website by 11:00 PM Sunday. Your submission will be marked according to the following rubric:

	Very poor	*Poor*	*Satisfactory*	*Very good*
Adherence to assignment *Student submits a four-paragraph essay that includes the elements described above.* *Answer falls within the prescribed word count (max. 500 words).*	*No submission.* *OR* *Student fails to address any element of the assignment. (0)*	*Some key essay elements as described above are not included in the submission.* *OR* *Answer does not fall within the prescribed word count. (10)*	*Student has included most of the required essay elements described above.* *AND* *Submission includes a satisfactory introduction and conclusion. (15)*	*Student has included all of the required essay elements described above.* *AND* *Submission includes an engaging and thoughtful introduction and conclusion. (20)*

Justification: The assignment provides a good assessment of two learning outcomes, which are presented as bullet points in the prompt. Utilizing the process of backward design, I was able to first establish the learning outcomes and afterwards, devise an essay assignment that would allow students to demonstrate their comprehension of and ability to meet the objectives. The detailed instructions and grading rubric are effective as they clearly show the student what is required to complete the assignment and earn full points.

MICROLESSON TEACHING EXAMPLE **VIDEO**

In this seven-minute video, I'm teaching undergraduate students about communication research methods. It is a mock microlesson that would be delivered during the last ten minutes of a lecture. It demonstrates that I can:
- *Use storytelling to bring to life a relevant, real-world / business example*
- *Teach a new concept by getting students to actively participate in the lesson*
- *Use the last minutes of a class to "tee up" the next class session/lesson*

Watch video

COURSE SYLLABUS **EXAMPLE**

555: Digital Analytics
College Name | Department of Strategic Communications

Instructor: Jennifer Gilbart
Semester: Spring 2024
Class Time: Mondays, 6:30-8:00 PM ET
Room: Synchronous Remote (Zoom)

Overview

Digital analytics is a set of business and technical activities that create and collect big data and process it for analysis, recommendations, optimizations, and predictions. This course will provide students with a strong knowledge of digital analytics strategies and tactics for owned, earned, and paid media. Students will learn how to obtain data, analyze data, and turn it into insights, and how to visually present and communicate insights to stakeholders. We will review digital analytics case studies and concepts, and gain hands-on experience using a variety of platforms and tools including Google Analytics.

Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have the ability to:
- Define digital analytics metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) for different media channels (website, social media, search, digital advertising, and email)
- Demonstrate an ability to interpret data using analytics tools (e.g. Google Analytics)
- Analyze digital information and generate insights to make actionable recommendations
- Present data in a meaningful way through data visualizations, to clients and executives as intended audiences

Materials

- There is no textbook for this course. The digital landscape evolves rapidly, thus, textbooks can quickly become out-of-date. Class material will be taken from applicable white papers/studies, and websites.
- Students should have access to Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint for data analysis and presentation, as well as basic skills in using those programs.

- Students will be utilizing a free demo Google Analytics account which can be accessed at https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/6367342#access

Evaluation

A maximum of 400 points can be earned in the class. The break-down is as follows:
- **Quizzes**: Two online quizzes worth 50 points each / 100 points total will be administered though our online learning platform. These quizzes will reinforce your knowledge of key terms related to data, analytics, metrics, ad formats, etc.. This means 25% of your final grade will be based on two quizzes.
- **Individual Assignments**: Two individual assignments will allow you to analyze and interpret raw data and explain the results (insights) in written format. The two individual assignments are worth 50 points each / 100 points total. This means 25% of your final grade will be based on these two individual assignments.
- **Active Participation**: Maximum of 100 points. This means 25% of your final grade will be based on active participation during Zoom meetings which include *weekly visualization improvement presentations…*
    - **Weekly visualization improvement presentations (WVIPs)**: Each week, 1-2 students will find examples of poor data visualizations to share with the class via PowerPoint deck. Each presentation should highlight the poor data visualization, explain why the visualization is poor, and describe how the information could be better consumed by the audience. You should also attempt to create a better, revamped visualization with the same data. This weekly activity is labeled WVIP in the course schedule, below.
- **Group Project:** Each group will be responsible for creating a digital analytics presentation (PowerPoint). The PowerPoint deck should mimic a client presentation, with information presented in a client-friendly way with simple data visualizations and impactful insights. All students in the group must participate in delivering the presentation to the class. This is your course "final" and it carries a maximum of 100 points. This means 25% of your final grade will be based on the group project.

Schedule

When	Topic	Details
Week #1	Introduction to Digital Analytics	**In class:** Student/teacher introductions, expectations, syllabus review, and the purpose and importance of digital analytics in business. **Homework**: "Data is the New Gold" short essay and assigned readings, to be discussed in next class.
Week #2	Methodologies, KPIs, and Metrics	**In class:** Discussion of readings. Introduction to data-collecting methods, metrics, and KPIs.

		Homework: Set up access to Google Analytics demo account and complete Google Analytics Skillshop training part 1.
Week #3	Website Analytics / Google Analytics	**In class:** Using analytics in website design. WVIPs begin. **Homework**: Online Quiz #1 on Data, Analytics, KPIs, and Metrics.
Week #4	Google Analytics	**In class:** Advanced Google analytics for website and attribution analysis. WVIPs. **Homework**: Google Analytics Skillshop training part 2, and assigned readings on SEO/SEM to prep for next class.
Week #5	Search Engines and Search Analytics	**In class:** Data and analytics important to search engine optimization and search engine marketing (and WVIPs). **Homework**: Individual Assignment #1: Interpret website and search analytics data and explain the results (written paper).
Week #6	Digital Advertising and Paid Search	**In class:** Explore key metrics and data analysis to prove the effectiveness of paid media, with a focus on search and display ads. WVIPs. **Homework**: Online Quiz #2 (digital search and advertising terminology).
Week #7	Social Media Analytics (Organic)	**In class:** Monitoring and measuring the value of earned media. Which metrics support which social strategies? WVIPs. **Homework**: Assigned readings, to be discussed next class.
Week #8	Social Media Analytics (Paid)	**In class**: An introduction to Meta Ads (Facebook and Instagram). Measuring the ROI of paid social media. WVIPs. **Homework**: Individual Assignment #2: Interpret social media data and explain results (written paper). Readings on email marketing, to prep for next class.
Week #9	Email Marketing Analytics	**In class:** How email subject line impacts performance and data like nothing else! Understand metrics that matter for email measurement. WVIPs. **Homework**: Microsoft Excel practice assignment, and readings for next class.
Week #10	Metrics & Data Visualizations	**In class:** WVIPs. Data visualization overview, tips, and visualization types. Typical client questions and good examples.

		Homework: Microsoft Excel practice assignment, and readings for next class.
Week #11	Data Interpretation and Visualization Part 1	**In class:** WVIPs. Analyzing data and build data visualizations using Excel **Homework**: Work with team members on group project.
Week #12	Data Interpretation and Visualization Part II	**In class:** Best practices creating data visualizations using PowerPoint and other tools. **Homework**: Work with team members on group project.
Week #13	Group Project Presentations	**In class:** Observe group presentations and participate in presentation Q&A. **Homework**: Course evaluation
Week #14	Group Project Presentations	**In class**: Observe group presentations and participate in presentation Q&A.

Here is where university policies would appear.

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