

# COMM 100 SOC Seminar: Career Exploration

Spring 2023

Tuesdays *or* Thursdays 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

SOC 010

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## ◆ Course Goals and Objectives

This class is designed as a professional development course, helping you expand your horizons in these areas:

**1) Personal Development and Branding:** You will create or polish a resumé and cover letter; establish or expand your online (LinkedIn) profile; develop and practice an “elevator pitch”; and learn how to prepare for professional interviews. At the end of the semester, you will have an option to begin an online portfolio to highlight your work.

**2) Career Focus:** Through guided assignments, you will have an opportunity to learn more about the specific communication field you are working toward – what’s new in the field, leaders and influencers, jobs and careers. There will be an opportunity to explore whether graduate school is a good option for your career interests.

**3) Building Community:** Through in-class group work, as well as other assignments, you will have the opportunity to meet others in your major and to participate in various activities that represent a wide range of interests within the School of Communication.

## ◆ Course Organization and Grading

This is a graded course worth one credit hour and will meet in person once a week throughout the semester. There are no required textbooks. Other readings will be available via Sakai. There will be a final project in lieu of a final exam.

You will earn points for various assignments, divided into categories based on the course objectives. Grades will be weighted as follows:

- **Personal Development and Branding (25%)**
- **Career Focus (25%)**
- **Career & Community Passport (25%)**
- **Attendance/Participation (15%)**
- **Final Project (10%)**

## **Grading scale**

Assignments will be graded on a point system. At the end of the semester, accumulated points will be converted into a letter grade based on the following scale:

- A\* 94-100%; A- 90-93%;
- B+ 87-89%; B 84-86%; B- 80-83%;
- C+ 77-79%; C 74-76%; C- 70-73%;
- D+ 67-69%; D\* 60-66%

\*Loyola does not recognize grades of A+ or D-.

## **◆ Personal Development and Branding (25%)**

Assignments in this category are designed to help you begin developing your own professional messaging to highlight your interests, qualifications, and attributes. Each student will develop or polish:

- A resumé
- A LinkedIn account
- An “elevator pitch”
- A cover letter

You will also learn how to “scrub” your social media “footprint” so your online presence looks as professional as possible.

Instructions for these assignments will be distributed in class.

## **◆ Career Focus (25%)**

Here is where you will have the opportunity to learn more about the field you are interested in pursuing professionally. What new developments are happening in the field? Who are the industry leaders and influencers? What jobs and careers are available, and what are the qualifications to get them?

Instructions for these assignments will be distributed in class.

## **◆ Career & Community Passport (25%)**

In addition to the core assignments in the two areas above, you will work on your own Career & Community Passport to help you integrate into the school and explore your own professional interests. You will need to earn **5** passport stamps from among the choices listed below.\* Each activity will be worth **up to 15 points**. Two will be due the week before spring break, with the other three due by the end of the semester.

*\*You can choose the order in which you earn the passport stamps. Just make sure to have two completed before spring break.*

--All Passport assignments should be submitted via Sakai. Some will be set up to submit either in the text box or as an attachment. Others will *only* be attachments (Word document or PDF only, please).

Here are the choices for Passport Stamps:

**A. SOC Events/Student Activities (may choose 2 in this category)**

1. Attend a lecture or other event sponsored by the SOC or one of its student organizations. Take a selfie at the event to show you were there. Then write up a synopsis (min. 200 words) of what you got out of the it. Submit the selfie and synopsis to earn the passport stamp.
2. Join a student group at the SOC (e.g.'s: SPJ, PRSSA, Ad Club, Rambler Sports Locker, SOC Ambassadors, Lambda Pi Eta Honor Society, etc.) or the staff of a student media outlet (Loyola Phoenix or WLWU). Write up what you hope to get out of being in this organization (min. 200 words).  
\*\*\*Also, ask someone in charge at the organization to send Professor Hood an email (lhood1@luc.edu) verifying your participation in the group.

**B. Meet the Professor(s) (may choose 2 in this category)**

Meet with Professor Hood or another faculty member to learn more about them (career path, research, etc.) and to get their advice on your own career aspirations. You may do this in person or via Zoom, but plan to meet for at least 30 minutes. (I.e., just exchanging emails will not fulfill this assignment!)

Then write a short report (min. 300 words) with the details of when/where/how the meeting happened (the date and whether you met in person or via Zoom), as well as what you learned about the professor's career and advice for you.

*Please note: If you are meeting with Professor Hood about a problem you may be having in class, this will not count for a passport stamp.*

**C. SOC Career Portal**

*\*\*\*Note: Currently, this option is only available for SOC majors – and your major must show in Locus.*

Sign up for the SOC Career Portal (soccareers.com), where you will find information and connections to internships and career possibilities. Submit the verification you receive, showing you are on the portal, and at least two internship or job opportunities that look interesting to you. (If you are already on the portal, kudos! But choose other activities to earn this passport stamp.)

**D. Senior Connection**

In person or via Zoom, meet with a junior or senior in the SOC to learn more about their experiences in the school – such as why they chose their particular major, their career plans, experience with SOC student organizations, advice

they may have, etc. Then write a summary report (min. 300 words) of what you learned in the meeting, as well as the specifics of when and where you met.

Please note these restrictions for Passport Choice D:

- The person you interview must be an SOC major, either a junior or senior.
- Because we want you to expand your connections, the person you interview cannot be your roommate or your best friend(s).

*If you need help connecting with a junior or senior in the SOC, please ask.*

#### **E. Professional Social Media**

Establish or further develop a *professionally focused* social media account (Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc.). To receive credit, you will need to: 1) Include a professional-looking photo in the profile; 2) Include a short bio on the account; 3) Add at least six appropriate posts\* throughout the semester (only posts dated this semester will count); 4) The account must be public (not locked/private).

*\*Note: These must be your own original posts, not retweets or “shares”!*

To submit: Include a link to your account(s) or your account name in Sakai.

#### **F. Grad School Options**

Research grad school in the field you think you would want to study. Is graduate education considered advisable and/or necessary in that field? What are some of the schools you might consider and why? Your research can be through online or written sources, but also may include an interview with someone who has experience in the area you're interested in. One good starting point is the guide from the Princeton Review: <https://www.princetonreview.com/grad-school-advice/guide-to-graduate-school>

Write a report (minimum 300 words) and include the source(s) you used for your research.

### **◆ Attendance/Participation (15%)**

As an in-person class, with many activities designed for you to interact with your classmates and the professor, **regular attendance and participation** are vital for you to get the most out of the course. As the class is just 50 minutes one day a week, please make every effort to be in class and on time.

You will earn points for:

- Attending class and arriving on time\*;
- Doing in-class activities and small assignments.

*\*Partial credit for arriving late or leaving early.*

*Also note: Partial deductions may be taken for disruptions or distractions (see note below regarding cell phones and computer use)*

Many days will include small in-class activities or assignments. Points for these will *only be available* for those who are in class. They are not assignments you will be able to make up later.

However, knowing that you may occasionally need to miss a session, I will plan to record the instructional portions of the class (not discussions or group activities) and post for you to watch or listen to later for partial attendance credit. *Do not plan to use this option in place of regular attendance.*

### ◆ **Final Project (10%)**

As a one-credit course, the final project is not weighted as heavily as it typically would be in a larger course. The final project will give you an opportunity to further enhance your professional and career development with one of these choices:

- a) An online portfolio, using Loyola's Digation system or another platform, *or*
- b) Researching a specific job in your planned field

Additional instructions and guidelines for the final project will be distributed in class. The final project will be due one week after the last day of class for each section (Tuesday, May 2 for the Tuesday class; Thursday, May 4 for the Thursday class).

### ◆ **Deadlines/Late Submission Policy**

During the semester, assignments will be due by the start of class on the designated day. In communication industries, as in other professions, learning to meet deadlines is an important part of your professional development. At the same time, we recognize that you may have other obligations and priorities at various times during the semester. Therefore, this is the policy for late submissions:

- 5% deduction if submitted later on the due date
- 10% deduction per weekday late after the due date
- Grade turns to a 0 after the 10<sup>th</sup> day late
- End of semester: After the last day of class, deductions double so an assignment will turn to a 0 after the 5<sup>th</sup> weekday late

### ◆ **Other Responsibilities and Resources**

#### **Laptop and Cell Phone Policy**

Electronic devices are ubiquitous and can often be quite distracting. Laptops, cell phones or other electronic devices should be used *only* for class purposes – i.e., note taking or research. You are expected to show discretion and not use them for other purposes, such as texting friends, surfing the web, scrolling on social media, shopping or playing games. The Internet and social media are tremendous resources, but the convenience of using your device(s) in class may be revoked if you abuse the privilege.

## **Academic Integrity**

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Be aware of the following policies:

1. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

### **2. It is dishonest to:**

- Turn in the same work for two classes, whether for this semester or from another semester. This is known as “self-plagiarism”.
- Turn in a paper you have not written yourself.

Please note that I am *required* to submit academic dishonesty cases to the SOC dean's office. You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:

[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml)

## **Managing Life Crises and Finding Support**

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Center for Student Assistance & Advocacy (LUC.edu/csaa) to submit a CARE referral for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – just email me or schedule a meeting with me during office hours. Learn more about the center and its resources at:

<https://www.luc.edu/csaa/forstudents/studentresources/>

## **Special Needs**

If you have a special circumstance that may impact your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so arrangements can be made with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). We will accommodate your needs in the best way possible. Loyola's policy is that it is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates. Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SAC website: <http://www.luc.edu/sac>.

## **◆ Electronic Communication & Information**

**Sakai:** Course information and assignments will be available on Sakai. Please notify me if you have any problems using the class Sakai site.

**Email:** I will answer email within 24 hours on weekdays but will not always access it on weekends. You may not receive a response to a late Friday email until Monday.

## ◆ **About your professor**

This is my 14th year at Loyola, after having taught 9 years at the University of Colorado. In 2018 I was recognized with the national Edward L. Bliss award for distinguished broadcast journalism education. I have 18 years of experience in television news, mostly as a producer. I worked at TV stations in Denver, and before that produced and anchored newscasts in Huntsville, Alabama. My newscasts earned regional Emmy awards for hard news and spot news and a Colorado Broadcasters Association best newscast award. I also have experience in reporting (both news and sports), photography and editing, and worked in radio and newspapers before starting my television career. I hold a PhD in Communication from the University of Colorado. My research interests include journalistic uses of technology; local news and the audience relationship to it; as well as corporate and consolidation influences on local news and local news outsourcing. I have a master's degree from the University of Colorado and a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism from the University of Missouri. I am a member of the Chicago regional board of directors for the National Television Academy (the group that awards the Emmys) and serve in leadership roles at the University and in the School of Communication. I am the faculty sponsor for Beta Rho, the SOC chapter of the Communication Honor Society Lambda Pi Eta.