

FALL 2024 SYLLABUS

Updated 08/15/2024

Course:	DIGM 2357: Content Strategy and Development
Instructor:	Prof. Monika Alters
Email:	malters@uh.edu
Phone:	713-743-4077
Website:	http://uh.edu/tech/digitalmedia/
LinkedIn:	https://www.linkedin.com/in/monikajalters/
Office:	Brazos Hall, Room 347
Office Hours:	MON: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM WED: 8:30-11:00 AM – in-person or via MS Teams THU: 2:00-3:00 PM – in-person or via Teams FRI: by appointment only (not all Fridays available due to work meetings)
Lab Manager:	Can Le
Email:	chle3@central.uh.edu
Lecture:	ONLINE (via Canvas) – sec 15443
Labs:	Only attend the lab for which you registered! TUE: 8:30 AM-11:30 PM (face-to-face, AMG 206, UHSL) – sec 15445 TUE: 11:30 AM-2:30 PM (face-to-face, AMG 206, UHSL) – sec 15447 WED: 11:00 AM-2:00 PM (face-to-face, AMG 320, UHSL) – sec 15446
Prerequisites:	A grade of C or higher in DIGM 1350 and 1376.
Course Description:	Developing a content strategy from a brand perspective. Digital workflows for multi-touch, multichannel campaigns using personalized communications software.
Course Objectives:	After completion of this course, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• differentiate between content strategy and content marketing;• define and implement 1to1 marketing;• conduct target audience research;• construct marketing and content plans;• analyze customer data;• set up measurable objectives;• define key performance indicators;• develop personas for audience development;• write a client brief for the project;• plan a personalized content strategy;• develop a 1to1 marketing workflow for a multichannel campaign;• create a targeted social media campaign; and• provide ways to track and analyze social media content.
Recommended Textbooks:	The Content Promotion Manifesto: Getting the Most Out of Your Content Marketing.by Chad Pollitt (Free PDF): https://bit.ly/2DeXqn7
Required Readings:	1.) The SEOs Guide to Content Marketing: https://bit.ly/2XakfzB 2.) Beginners Guide to Social Media: https://bit.ly/33b8TPq 3.) No Words Wasted: A Guide to Creating Focused Content https://bit.ly/39O7csl

- Required Software:**
- Adobe Creative Cloud subscription
 - Microsoft Office
 - Microsoft Teams
- Required Tools:**
- Laptop
- Syllabus Changes:** Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through Blackboard announcements and cougarnet email.
- Resources for online learning:** The University of Houston is committed to student success and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Canvas; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.
- Important Information:** As a student at the University of Houston, information available at <http://www.uh.edu/provost/students/> will be critical to you in insuring that your academic pursuits meet with success and that you encounter the fewest financial and academic difficulties possible. Please take a few moments to review each of the areas, and become familiar with the resources detailed on the website regarding: The UH Academic Honesty Policy; the UH Academic Calendar; Students with Disabilities; Religious Holy Day FAQs; Other Information.
- UH Email:** Email communications related to this course will be sent to your **Cougarnet email account** which each University of Houston student receives. The Exchange mail server can be accessed via Outlook, which provides a single location for organizing and managing day-to-day information, from email and calendars to contacts and task lists. Exchange email accounts can be accessed by logging into Office 365 with your Cougarnet credentials or through Access UH. They can also be configured on IOS and Android mobile devices. Additional info can be found at the [Get Help](#).
- Communication With Professor:** According to the UH Policy, **only** emails sent from your cougarnet account will be checked. You can also **use MS Teams** to send a message to Professor Alters to get a **faster response**.
- If you email or message Professor Alters, please include the course number, the lab time, and your name in the Subject Line or the message itself (e.g., “**DIGM 2357 Tue 8:30AM-2:30PM, Your Name, Subject**”). Due to a large number of students, **emails and messages that do not include the correct subject line may not be answered.**
- Professor Alters genuinely wants to speak with you, to assist you, to help you succeed. However, there are parameters as to what you can expect. Most emails and messages will be answered within 24 hours or sooner, except on the weekends. **Communications of any kind (e-mail, voice mails, or messages) sent to your professor outside of business hours may not be answered until the next business day. Emails/Messages sent on the weekend or during holidays will not be answered.**
- Course Credit** This course is divided into lecture/lab and is governed by the University of Houston policy as well as policies of the accrediting bodies. Lectures are taught online via Canvas and lab meetings are taught face-to-face at the UH Sugar Land campus. Students should understand that each hour of class credit requires three hours per week: one hour in lecture and two hours personal study/homework. Thus, during a regular semester, a three-hour course requires a minimum of nine hours per week: three in class and six on your own. Those hours are doubled during the summer semester.
- Lecture:** Lectures, course assignments, exams, and grades will be posted on Canvas. **Students must be familiar with a given lecture prior to the lab to participate in discussions.** The online lecture materials will be crucial in completing your lab work effectively and efficiently. Lectures for the given week will be posted by **FRIDAY, 10 AM**, prior to the lab meeting.

Lab: The lab will meet in-person at the UHSL. **Attendance in the lab is mandatory.**

Grading:

Discussions	20%
Assignments	20%
Project 1: Personas	30%
Project 2: Content Marketing.....	30%

Letter Grades:

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 64-66	D- 60-63	F: 59 and below

Project Grading Criteria:

A| Work exceeds expectations. It goes above and beyond the general requirements. The student has provided in-depth research on the audience, the client, competitors, and marketing channels (Project 1). The marketing plan/workflow and campaign are well-executed, providing exemplary solutions to target the audience (Project 2). The students exhibit a deep understanding of content strategy, principles of design, typographic rules, and color harmonies. There are no grammatical or spelling errors (Project 1 and 2). Peer evaluations are superb.

B| Work follows all the requirements. The student has done adequate research on the audience, the client, and the proposed marketing channels (Project 1). The marketing plan/workflow and campaign are well-executed, providing quality solutions to target the audience (Project 2). The student exhibits a good understanding of content strategy, marketing, and design rules. There is little or no grammatical or spelling errors (Project 1 and 2). Peer evaluations are good.

C| Work meets expectations. The student has conducted basic (not-in-depth) research on the audience and the client (Project 1). The marketing plan/workflow and campaign are executed satisfactorily to target the audience (Project 2). Project planning, design, and development are satisfactory. The student has a basic grasp of content strategy, marketing, and design rules. Minor grammatical or spelling errors (Project 1 and 2). Peer evaluations are satisfactory.

D| Work has flaws. The student has conducted mediocre research on the audience and the client (Project 1). The marketing plan/workflow does not target the audience well (Project 2). Project planning, design, and development are weak. The student has a poor understanding of content strategy. Design rules are not followed well. Many grammatical or spelling errors (Project 1 and 2). Peer evaluations are poor.

F| Work has not been submitted or has missing parts. The student has conducted very little research on the audience, the client, or competitors (Project 1). The student lacks an understanding of content strategy and various marketing channels. Principles of design, typographic rules, and color harmonies are followed poorly. Many grammatical or spelling errors (Project 1 and 2). Peer evaluations are extremely poor.

Discussion: You not only need to attend the lab, but also you will be expected to participate in a discussion during each lab meeting. Many discussion questions will be given in advance to allow students to prepare their responses. Most discussions will take place in a group at the beginning of each lab. Missed discussions cannot be made up and they cannot be done from home. If you are absent and you submit your discussion from home, you will receive a "0" grade.

Lab Assignments: There will be a few group assignments given to students in the lab to complete and submit each week. The assignments will be designed to familiarize students with the content covered that specific week. You will need to use the required books and online lectures to complete your assignments. You will also need to follow the instructor's demo when applicable. All weekly assignments will be due by **Sunday, 11:59 PM** after the assigned date. **Do not email your assignments.**

Projects: There will be two group projects assigned during the semester to further assess students' skill level and knowledge of the discussed topics.

Project 1: Personas

Conduct research on the target audience (which may include surveys, interviews, and marketing sampling) to develop a persona for a specific company. Details of the project will be given at a later date.

Project 2: Content Marketing Strategy for Social Media

Develop a strategy and social media marketing that targets personas from Project 1. Students will create an extensive workflow for a 1to1 Marketing campaign for the personas. Students will produce a marketing campaign that is specific to the personas and communicates the client's brand story. Details of the project will be given at a later date.

Projects deadlines are listed in the schedule.

Teams:

Teams will be selected during the first week of classes. Each team will need to choose a leader, who will oversee the group and communicate with the professor. There should be four members to a team, unless otherwise decided and approved by the professor.

Work Submission:

Work will be **submitted via Canvas**, unless otherwise specified. **Files must not exceed 10MG**. It is your responsibility to double-check if your work was submitted correctly.

Artificial Intelligence (AI):

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor).

Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant UH policies.

Grading Policy:

The Information Science Technology Department strives to create the proper academic conditions for student success. Course content, technical skill development, professional practice in education, and program accreditation by professional organizations support using minimum grade or GPA requirements to enforce a program prerequisite structure. This practice, in turn, supports student success. Thus, Course prerequisites are strictly enforced in all IST courses.

Late Assignments:

Late work is "yesterday's news." In keeping with this idea, assignments must be turned in as scheduled. **No late assignments will be accepted! If your work is not submitted within the 10 minutes of the due date and time, it will be considered late and it will not be graded! Projects can be submitted 48 hrs. after the due date with a 10 points deduction for each 24 late hours.**

Missed Classes:

If you are absent on the due date, the assignment will still be late and will not be accepted. You must make arrangements to accommodate your absence whether excused or unexcused. **Do not email your work! Emailed work will be automatically deleted and not graded.**

Attendance Policy:

Attendance in all class sessions is expected. You not only need to attend, but also participate when needed.

Three absences, unless excused, will reduce the student's final course grade by one letter. **Five or more unexcused absences** will result in course failure. Be on time for class sessions. **Tardies of more than 10 minutes count as 1/2 an absence.**

Three (10-30 minutes) late arrivals will be one absence. Late arrivals of 30 minutes and beyond will result in an absence. If a student arrives late, they are responsible for notifying the professor at the end of that class. Otherwise, they will be marked absent.

Excused Absence Policy:

Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of

Houston [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) and Graduate Excused Absence Policy for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Additional policies address absences related to [military service, religious holy days, pregnancy and related conditions](#), and [disability](#).

Recording of Class:

Students **may not** record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Center for Students with DisABILITIES](#). If you have accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. The instructor may record classes. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Etiquette:

Student Code of Conduct is in place be courteous and respectful and be mindful of any misconduct. Disturbing the peace and good order of the University by, among other things; fighting, quarreling, excessive noise, behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either an instructor's ability to teach or student learning, or any behavior that causes or threatens to cause a material disruption to the residential, business or academic functions of the University, including but not limited to, a material disruption by the use of all types of cameras, electronic tablets, cell phones, and/or communication devices. Adherence to this policy extends to any setting where the student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities <https://tinyurl.com/2m5jry7j>

Disrupting Behavior:

The UH Student Handbook defines disruption as obstructing or interfering with university functions or any university activity. Moreover, disruption includes any behavior that interferes with students, faculty, or staff and their access to an appropriate educational or work environment.

Examples of Disruptive Behavior

- Refusal to comply with faculty or staff direction.
- Loud and/or erratic behavior
- Behavior that distracts the class
- Persistent and unreasonable demands for attention
- Actions that intimidate others
- Overt inattentiveness
- Threats of physical assault
- Romantic or obsessive behavior

Additional information can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/rvpnv9sz>

Class Problems:

Occasionally, there are problems or concerns that arise about the course you are taking. The IST Department expects you to communicate with the course instructor about problems and concerns, first.

If problems or concerns cannot be resolved with the instructor, the next appropriate course of action is to contact the program coordinator, Dr. Tony Liao. If the situation is still not resolved, contact the IST Department Chair to communicate your problems or concerns.

Course Policies:

The use of the Digital Media Laboratory is a privilege afforded to those who pay Incidental Fees to maintain the lab and respect it and its contents. Please adhere to the following rules:

- No talking on the phone or texting.
- No disruptive behavior, such as unreasonable demands for attention or not complying with the instructor's direction (Detailed information can be found at: <https://www.uh.edu/dos/behavior-conduct/disruptive-students/>).

- No profanity, obscenity, and vulgarity.
- No talking unless the instructor asks a question.

Expectations: Students in this course are expected to be capable and motivated professionals. No such student should be content with a grade less than “B.”

Please provide the attention, motivation, and effort necessary to reach this grade expectation.

Student Code of Conduct: The Student Code of Conduct sets forth those acts that constitute unacceptable conduct for students at the University. All alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct may result in referral to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action. Detailed information is provided at. <https://www.uh.edu/dos/behavior-conduct/student-code-of-conduct/>

Technical Difficulties: In general, some cloud or virtual interaction software takes up a lot of capacity in your computer. Close all other applications and browser tabs that are not required for participating in class to reduce lag or other technical difficulties. Make sure your device can handle the virtual meetings and programs you will be using in the lab simultaneously.

Honors Code Statement: Students may be asked to sign an honor code statement as part of their submission of any graded work including but not limited to projects, quizzes, and exams: “I understand and agree to abide by the provisions in the (select: [University of Houston Undergraduate Academic Honesty Policy](#), [University of Houston Graduate Academic Honesty Policy](#)). I understand that academic honesty is taken very seriously, and, in the cases of violations, penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the University of Houston.”

Academic Honesty: Cheating, plagiarism, and any other dishonest conduct will not be tolerated, and appropriate action will be taken. Please refer to the student handbook for more information. Please see the UH website for more information: <http://www.uh.edu/provost/policies-resources/honesty/>

Adds/Drops: Please refer to the University’s Undergraduate Catalog and the Schedule of Classes for the appropriate add/drop dates and procedures.

Incompletes: An “incomplete” grade will only be issued if the student is maintaining an acceptable level of achievement and cannot, due to some factor beyond his/her control, complete one or more major assignment. If a student wishes an “incomplete,” he/she must explain the situation to the instructor in advance and make specific arrangements to complete the missing work no later than one year from the date the grade is given.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids: The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible to its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment, or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure the timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

The [Student Health Center](#) offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The [A.D. Bruce Religion Center](#) offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

The [Center for Student Advocacy and Community \(CSAC\)](#) is where you can go if you need help but don’t know where to start. CSAC is a “home away from home” and serves as a [resource hub](#) to help you get the resources needed to support academic and personal success. Through our [Cougar Cupboard](#), all students can get up to 30 lbs. of FREE groceries a week. Additionally, we provide 1:1

appointments to get you connected to on- and off-campus resources related to essential needs, safety and advocacy, and more. The [Cougar Closet](#) is a registered student organization advised by our office and offers free clothes to students so that all Coogs can feel good in their fit.

We also host a series of cultural and community-based events that fosters social connection and helps the cougar community come closer together. Visit the CSAC homepage or follow us on Instagram.

Mental Health & Wellness:

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including [CoogsCARE](#) and the [UH Go App](#). UH [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a [Let's Talk](#) location in-person or virtually. [Let's Talk](#) are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

Need Support Now?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text [988](#), or chat 988lifeline.org.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct:

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non- consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://www.uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/>

Security Escorts:

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. Our Security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk you for your safety, please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Resources for Online:

The University of Houston is committed to student success and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On website](#). Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

Helpful Links:

- Coogs Care: <https://www.uh.edu/dsaes/coogscare/>
- Student Health Center: <https://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/>