



West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District Digital Communication

Digital Communication	
Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS	
Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12	
Course Summary and Rationale	
<p>Today digital, mobile, and social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter are integral to the communication strategies of businesses, nonprofit organizations and government agencies. This course develops student’s abilities to create, curate, and communicate to specific authentic audiences through visual and verbal media channels to educate, inform, entertain and/or invite participation. The “workshop/production” style class is designed to provide a “hands-on,” experiential course that is equally self-directed and collaborative, and that affords an opportunity for students to connect course content to their own lives, now and in the future, through incorporation of authentic learning experiences. While the focus is digital communication, especially content creation and strategy for business, nonprofit organizations and government agencies for the use of digital, mobile and social media, the course will necessarily include digital citizenship, digital and media literacy, and career skill building.</p>	
Recommended Pacing	
135 Days	
New Jersey Student Learning Standard for: 21st-Century Life and Careers Skills	
Creativity and Innovation	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition
Critical Thinking and Problem-solving	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.
9.4.12.CT.3:	Collaborate with individuals to analyze a variety of potential solutions to climate change effects and determine why solutions may work better than others (e.g., political, economic, cultural)
9.4.12.CT.4	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).
9.4.12.CT.5	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.
Digital Citizenship	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content. •
9.4.12.DC.2	Compare and contrast international differences in copyright laws and ethics.
9.4.12.DC.3	Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy in the context of safety, law, or ethics.
9.4.12.DC.4	Explain the privacy concerns related to the collection of data (e.g. cookies) and generation of data through automated processes that may not be evident to users
9.4.12.DC.5	Debate laws and regulations that impact the development and use of software
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.

9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
9.4.12.DC.8	Explain how increased network connectivity and computing capabilities of everyday objects allow for innovative technological approaches to climate protection.
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specified task
9.4.12.TL.2	Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
9.4.12.TL.4	Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem.
Global and Cultural Awareness	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.GC1	Collaborate with individuals analyze a variety of potential solutions to climate change effects and determine why solutions may work better than others (e.g., political, economic, cultural).
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML1	Compare search browsers and recognize features that allow for filtering of information.
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions.
9.4.12.IML4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience.
9.4.12.IML5	Evaluate, synthesize and apply information on climate change from various sources appropriately.
9.4.12.IML6	Use various types of media to produce and store information on climate change for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender and age diversity.
9.4.12.IML7	Develop an argument to support a claim regarding a current workplace or societal/ethical issue such as climate change.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media

Unit 0: Life Skills/Digital Communication

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

The West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District recognizes the importance of the study of 21st Century Life and Careers standards. Additionally, it is also believed this learning should not be taught in isolation, and cross curricular and career ready practices are embedded in every unit of study. Unit 0 is incorporated into each unit of study of this curricular document.

Recommended Pacing

ELA Companion Standards and Career Ready Practices will be integrated throughout all units of study.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Grades 6-8

Progress Indicators Reading Science and Technical Subjects

Key Ideas and Details

RST.6-8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

RST.6-8.2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RST.6-8.3. Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

Craft and Structure

RST.6-8.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to *grades 6-8 texts and topics*.

RST.6-8.5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic.

RST.6-8.6. Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RST.6-8.7. Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

RST.6-8.8. Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.

RST.6-8.9. Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RST.6-8.10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Grades 9-10

Progress Indicators Reading Science and Technical Subjects

Key Ideas and Details

RST.9-10.1. Accurately cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to precise details for explanations or descriptions.

RST.9-10.2. Determine the central ideas, themes, or conclusions of a text; trace the text's explanation or depiction of a complex process, phenomenon, or concept; provide an accurate summary of the text.

RST.9-10.3. Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks, attending to special cases or exceptions defined in the text.

Craft and Structure

RST.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to *grades 9-10 texts and topics*.

RST.9-10.5. Analyze the relationships among concepts in a text, including relationships among key terms (e.g., *force, friction, reaction force, energy*).

RST.9-10.6. Determine the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text, defining the question the author seeks to address.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RST.9-10.7. Translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically (e.g., in an equation) into words.

RST.9-10.8. Determine if the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claim or a recommendation for solving a scientific or technical problem.

RST.9-10.9. Compare and contrast findings presented in a text to those from other sources (including their own experiments), noting when the findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

RST.9-10.10. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend science/technical texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Career Ready Practices

CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

CRP2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.

CRP3. Attend to personal health and financial well-being.

CRP4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.

CRP5. Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.

CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CRP7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.

CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.

CRP10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.

CRP11. Use technology to enhance productivity.

CRP12. Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Unit 1: Mastering the Basics: Digital Communication Theory and Fundamentals

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

In the Digital Communication classes, just as in any “workshop and production style,” collaborative, interactive setting, it is important that norms, policies and procedures are developed and adopted, that a group process is set up, that objectives and expectations are clear and at least partially developed by the group, etc. It is equally important that students become familiar with “the fundamentals” of digital, mobile and social media that will be used in class; obviously in this day and age, students will bring different levels of expertise, so it becomes imperative that such expertise is identified and shared to help somewhat equalize “start of course” skill-levels to create a foundation for collaboration which will be fully utilized as the course evolves. Digital communication, like any field, has its own jargon which needs to be learned and adopted to aid interaction and effectiveness within the collaborative process.

The unit will begin with an extensive introduction that will serve to set up class expectations and procedures, establishing the course as one that focuses on process in order to produce successful content/ products. The class will also go through a series of bonding and communication exercises to begin the evolution of the class as collaborative team members and effective communicators.

Since the focus of the course is communication, the introduction will include some basic communication theory and practice. Students will also have an opportunity to research and share how communication theory applies and holds up in a digital world, what communication looks like online, and how digital communication is utilized and strategized, and for what purposes, for digital, mobile and social media, thus beginning to lay the foundation upon which the entire “hands-on,” interactive, collaborative course will be built.

An additional year-long important focus of the course will be digital citizenship and digital and media literacy. Unit one sets up a process for exploration of the concept of “digital citizenship” in terms of personal responsibility, legal requirements, ethical responsibilities, safety, etc. Of course, school and class rules will be incorporated, although the objective will be less about just rules, and more about “choices,” best practices, personal responsibility, and “taking the high road” in all actions, content and decisions. A daily media literacy process will be set up for mini-lessons, with possible exploration of: current events, fact vs. fiction, credible sources, source bias, fake news, etc.

Recommended Pacing

10 days

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition

Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.

Digital Citizenship	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content.
9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specified task
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is a universal need, and today’s preponderance of digital communication is merely a reiteration of this basic human need, and consequently in many ways can be analyzed through the lens of traditional communication theory. • While there is obviously some overlap, there are crucial differences in the approach, methodology, uses, objectives and responsibilities of professional digital communication compared to personal/recreational digital communication. • Digital, mobile and social technologies have become central to the communication strategies of businesses, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies, and digital communication for each is similar in many ways, but also has important distinctions. • More and more, digital, mobile and social media marketing is becoming crucial for businesses, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, politicians, etc., so there is tremendous value for professionals and consumers in understanding the “how’ and the “why” and the “psychology” of digital marketing. • At the root of digital, mobile and social media marketing are the basics of successful marketing campaigns, including the 4 P’s and/or the 4 Cs. • Whether for professional or personal use, it is important to learn to protect and only positively represent yourself, your reputation, your brand and your employer/organization by always practicing good digital citizenship. • It is important to respect all legal, ethical and privacy issues when using digital, mobile and social media. • An important component of digital citizenship is digital literacy, including such concepts as skill and practice in identifying fact vs, fiction, recognizing fake news, deciphering source credibility and source bias, etc. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the common fundamentals, techniques, terms and tools associated with digital communication? • What are some of the similarities and differences in digital communication techniques and strategies of business (for profit) vs. not for profit organizations, government agencies, etc.? • How are the dominant digital, mobile and social media platforms used in professional settings, and what are the current trends and current dominant media? • How are marketing techniques applied to digital communication, including social media? • How do you protect and only positively represent yourself, your reputation, your brand, your employer/ 	

organization, etc.?

- How do you critically assess digital content to identify fact vs. fiction, source credibility, bias, fake news, etc.?

Objectives

Students will know:

- digital communication domain-specific terminology, theory and techniques.
- similarities and differences in the digital communication approach, strategies and techniques of businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies.
- current digital, mobile and social media platforms that are dominant in professional digital communication, and other less dominant social media platforms that are also utilized for various professional objectives and strategies.
- the 4 Ps: production, price, promotion, place (or sometimes referred to as 5 Ps, adding the 5th component: people) of marketing and how they apply to social media marketing, and also know and compare it to the 4 Cs of marketing (Consumer, cost, communication, convenience).
- safe, legal and ethical online approaches and processes, including how to protect themselves, their reputations, their brand, their employer/company (or school, organization, etc.)
- how to identify fact vs. fiction, assess source credibility, recognize fake news, bias, etc.

Students will be able to:

- self-assess (individually) and assess (as a class) their own digital communication knowledge base, experience level, strengths and weaknesses, and be able to reflect on personal and class needs by formulating independent and collaborative strategies for sharing, researching and developing advanced and professional digital communication knowledge, skills and experiences.
- effectively communicate (digitally and interpersonally) individually by correctly integrating the learned domain specific materials into their self-directed and collaborative processes.
- assess how professionals communicate, brand and market online, and be able to create more effective online content of their own by formulating strategies for a variety of communication tasks, activities & objectives.
- evaluate how various social media, especially coordinated within a campaign or unified strategy, can be used to increase digital communication content effectiveness.
- appraise the powerful role social media plays in today's society by choosing effective digital and social media techniques to build and enhance their own brand, and to successfully create a variety of digital communication content (ongoing objective).
- reflect upon the major role strategizing, planning, writing, visualizing, etc. play in the success of digital communication content, and be able to apply strategizing, writing, visualizing, organization and other pre-planning techniques to increase the effectiveness of their digital communication content by participating in a variety of self-directed and collaborative digital activities (ongoing objective).
- develop safe, ethical, legal and reputation-protecting online behaviors, habits and communications, and develop skills to protect themselves online by integrating learned and researched approaches to digital communication and online behavior.
- develop, choose and embrace digital and media literacy, and be able to evaluate digital communication by appraising content for concepts like: source credibility, bias, fact vs. fiction, agenda setting, gatekeeping, fake news, etc.

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 1 Assessment: Fundamentals of Digital Communication

Competencies for 21st Century Learners			
x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner
Resources			
Core Text and suggested resources:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts and online course materials • Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources. • Materials linked to The Social Media Marketing Workbook by Jason McDonald • Online newspapers and other online news sources • Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites • Social media sites • Guest speakers, when available 			

Unit 2: Digital Media Literacy: News and Information

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

While the need for students to emerge as globally aware, active responsible citizens has been an important core concept in education for a long time, the task has become increasingly more challenging through the years as the digital world has become increasingly more sophisticated, pervasive and deceptive. The 2016 American presidential election placed a spotlight on the prevalence of “fake news,” and on the dangerous proliferation and manipulation of “pseudo information” generated by individuals, organizations, governments, nations and bots. The obvious need for news literacy was indeed brought to the forefront of our collective consciousness. And yet, the challenges to becoming a well-informed, accurately-informed responsible citizen go beyond obvious fake news, to more subtle concepts such as media bias, source reliability, agenda setting, gatekeeping, information overload, personal bias, etc.

A program developed by Stoneybrook University <https://digitalresource.center/why-news-literacy-matters> summarizes the digital news and information challenges as:

1. New technologies to create and share information make it easy to create content that only appears authoritative and then to spread it virally.
2. The conflict between speed and accuracy has been exacerbated by Digital Age demands for delivering information as fast as possible, but accelerating that process increases the chance it will be wrong.
3. Humans prefer information that supports our beliefs, and the Internet and social media make it much easier for us to select only the information that supports our ideas, reinforcing rather than challenging them.
4. Humans prefer information that supports our beliefs, and the Internet and social media make it much easier for us to select only the information that supports our ideas, reinforcing rather than challenging them.

This unit is designed to teach students to be proactive in their use of digital and social media as it pertains to their consumption of news and information, to use critical thinking skills to analyze and evaluate the reliability, accuracy and fairness of news and information, to differentiate between facts, opinions and assertions, to recognize source and personal bias, to choose reliable, credible sources, to multi-source, to “fact and bias check,” to decipher “context,” to recognize inference and rhetoric, to understand the difference between journalism and news, and to crave being consumers, creators and distributors of accurate and reliable news and information in their roles as responsible globally aware and active digital citizens.

While news and information literacy can be taught as a stand-alone unit, it is highly recommended that, for increased motivation, investment and effectiveness, it instead be introduced early in the year and then taught as “mini-lessons” spread throughout the entire course, with the hope that the cumulative effect will provide more enduring results.

Recommended Pacing

5 days (and then will be integrated throughout all units of study.)

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Technology Literacy

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specified task

Global and Cultural Awareness

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.GC1	Collaborate with individuals to analyze a variety of potential solutions to social issues, like climate change effects and determine why solutions may work better than others (e.g., political, economic, cultural).

Information and Media Literacy

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML1	Compare search browsers and recognize features that allow for filtering of information.
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML5	Evaluate, synthesize and apply information on social issues, like climate change from various sources appropriately.
9.4.12.IML6	Use various types of media to produce and store information on social issues, like climate change for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender and age diversity.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media

Instructional Focus

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Content producers for digital, mobile and social media are becoming increasingly more sophisticated, and in many cases, increasingly more devious, manipulative, deceptive and destructive, and with the increasing use of algorithms, bots and other technological advances adding to the sophistication and complexity, it is imperative that everyone become more knowledgeable, skilled, proactive, aware and safe through advanced digital literacy.
- Since free expression is the foundation of a democracy, strong news and information literacy skills are mandatory, and perhaps obligatory, for keeping our democracy strong.
- Effective consuming, processing, creating and distributing of news and information requires synthesis of multiple credible sources, verification of facts, discernment of fact vs. fiction, recognition of bias (source and personal) and awareness of a variety of other factors including inflammatory language and images, persuasive techniques, documentation, multiple view representation, agenda setting, gatekeeping, etc.
- Recognizing and resisting mere assertions and instead placing value on hard, verifiable evidence is a mindset that can result in a more effective and globally aware and active citizen.
- In the words of President Obama, “...If we choose to actively seek out information that challenges our assumptions and our beliefs, perhaps we can begin to understand where people who disagree with us are coming from....”

Unit Essential Questions

- How do you recognize bias and “agenda” in digital communication, and how does purpose factor into crafting content for digital communication?

- How can we increase our digital and media literacy, including our recognition and critiquing of such elements as source credibility, bias, fact vs. fiction, point of view, “loaded” language and images, agenda setting, gatekeeping, fake news, etc.?
- Why does it matter that we consume, process, distribute and create accurate and reliable news and information, and how does that concept tie into our First Amendment rights and responsibilities, and why is it central to American Democracy?
- How can students navigate through the proliferation of online and social media sources of news and information, and filter the endless influx of online news and information to know what to believe, and how can students better understand and counteract algorithms that control the flow of information to each consumer?
- How do digital and social media present both challenges and opportunities for “truth-seeking” and information consumption, distribution and creation?

Objectives

Students will know:

- credible and reliable sources of news and information.
- how to recognize bias in news and information, in sources, in images, etc.
- how to recognize their own personal biases when consuming, processing, creating and distributing news and information.
- fact checking and bias-checking techniques and resources.
- techniques for verifying facts and for seeking alternative points of view.
- Important distinctions like: news vs. propaganda, news vs. opinion, bias vs. fairness, assertion vs. verification, evidence vs. inference, etc.
- how algorithms and other technological advances filter and personalize the flow of information.

Students will be able to:

- analyze the reliability of news and information, and be able to draw accurate conclusions about news, information and sources, by applying key factor tests (like weight of evidence, source credibility, context, bias-tests, word and image choice, etc.)
- identify bias in news, information, sources and images, and be able to recognize the techniques and effects of the bias by analyzing and dissecting a variety of sources of news and information.
- distinguish between news and opinion by analyzing the language, technique and logic used by journalists and the language, technique and logic used in opinion pieces.
- assess the difference between media bias and audience bias, and be able to recognize their own bias, by analyzing and exposing themselves to a variety of sources and views, and by staying open, including in class discussions to beliefs and facts that challenge their own beliefs and assertions.
- understand the core components of a reliable source of news or information, and be able to recognize indicators of unreliable information, by researching and analyzing digital and social media sources.
- apply effective “questioning techniques,” and develop effective research skills for multiple source verification, by using critical thinking skills to process and verify information, and to counteract the work of algorithms and other technological advances..
- consume and process news and information, and be able to demonstrate critical thinking and civic engagement, by collaborating with peers in news discussions and in other related activities.
- ascertain the value and limitations of using professional fact-checking and bias checking online resources, and be able to apply them effectively when consuming, processing, creating and distributing news and information across digital and social media platforms.
- identify and define the components of news and information literacy, by reviewing and critiquing a variety of online sources, professional communication content, as well as the content of their peers and themselves in various contexts and media.

- assess the role that “purpose” and “agenda” play in message development, and be able to identify purpose, agenda and/or bias by critiquing a variety of communication samples and contexts.
- develop, choose and embrace digital and media literacy, and be able to evaluate digital communication by appraising content for concepts like: source credibility, bias, fact vs. fiction, agenda setting, gatekeeping, fake news, etc. (ongoing objective)

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 2 Assessment: News Literacy

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts and online course materials
- Online newspapers and other online news sources
- Social media sites
- Online resources, which will have to be updated regularly. Current examples include:
 - <https://guides.csbsju.edu/c.php?g=621995>
 - <https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news>
 - <https://guides.library.umass.edu/fakenews/factcheck>
 - <https://libguides.volstate.edu/evaluate/news>
 - <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>
 - <https://disinformation-nation.org/>
 - <https://newslit.org/>
 - <https://www.factcheck.org/>
 - <https://www.snopes.com/>
 - <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/29/774541010/fake-news-is-scary-heres-how-to-spot-misinformation>
 - <https://www.politifact.com/>
 - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/>
 - <https://rhs.ridgewood.libguides.com/c.php?g=743907&p=5325986>
 - <https://ijnet.org/en/story/tools-teaching-media-literacy>
 - <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Introductory-News-Literacy-curriculum.pdf>
 - <https://cooltoolsforschool.net/news-literacy/>
 - <http://graphics.wsj.com/blue-feed-red-feed/>
 - <https://libguides.wccnet.edu/c.php?g=612270&p=4251286>
 - <http://iue.libguides.com/c.php?g=595482&p=4129693>
 - <https://newseumed.org/>
 - <https://checkology.org/resources>
 - <https://www.common sense.org/education/articles/news-literacy-resources-for-classrooms>

Unit 3: Digital Media Literacy: Digital Citizenship

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

At this point of time, technology and society are fully interdependent and interconnected. The current generation of young people, and all future generations, are born into an increasingly and rapidly changing digital world, and at a very young age are playing, learning, researching, exploring, connecting, creating, communicating and developing relationships online and through digital and social media. The result is expanded opportunities and experiences, with consequences, intended or not, that can be both positive or negative. There is great power in mastering the digital and social media landscape, and yet, as the saying goes, “With power comes responsibility.” Students, with the help of parents and educators, need to develop into responsible and impactful citizens that not only protect and enrich themselves, but that also productively contribute to their communities and society in safe, responsible, influential and ethical ways. Digital citizenship incorporates a vast array of responsibilities, including (but not limited to) understanding and practicing safety and security online, understanding and managing privacy and footprints, understanding and applying responsible, ethical and legal practices, behaving respectfully towards others, positively engaging with those with differing viewpoints and backgrounds, consuming, processing creating and distributing information responsibly, collaborating and taking on leadership roles online for the betterment of society including community activism, and so much more. In many ways, many of the enduring core values and norms for responsible participation in society taught by parents and schools remain, but our increasingly technological world means those core values and norms are now intertwined with digital citizenship and literacy.

While digital citizenship and literacy can be taught as a stand-alone unit, it is highly recommended that, for increased motivation, investment and effectiveness, it instead be introduced early in the year and then taught as “mini-lessons” spread throughout the entire course, with the hope that the cumulative effect will provide more enduring results.

Recommended Pacing

5 days (and then will be integrated throughout all units of study.)

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Digital Citizenship

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content.
9.4.12.DC.2	Compare and contrast international differences in copyright laws and ethics.
9.4.12.DC.3	Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy in the context of safety, law, or ethics.
9.4.12.DC.4	Explain the privacy concerns related to the collection of data (e.g. cookies) and generation of data through automated processes that may not be evident to users
9.4.12.DC.5	Debate laws and regulations that impact the development and use of software
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.

9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specified task
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML1	Compare search browsers and recognize features that allow for filtering of information.
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today’s society has a symbiotic relationship with technology, with nearly all facets intertwined and interconnected with the world of digital and social media. • The online world, specifically digital, mobile and social media, is becoming increasingly more sophisticated, pervasive and in many cases, increasingly more devious, manipulative, deceptive and destructive, and with the increasing use of algorithms, bots and other technological advances adding to the sophistication and complexity, it is imperative that everyone become more knowledgeable, skilled, proactive, aware and safe through advanced digital literacy. • An important component of citizenship for our democracy, as well as for society in general, is ethical, safe, responsible and active digital literacy and citizenship. • The power of technology, including digital and social media, offers young people important opportunities and experiences, and yet carries with it equally important responsibilities. • The digital revolution, along with all of its positive contributions and attributes, has also created unprecedented safety, privacy and security concerns, as well as concerns about digital reputation, footprints, fairness, equity and fairness. • Digital literacy and citizenship education can help young people emerge into more secure, safe, ethical, proactive, productive, responsible, open-minded, collaborative, informed, globally aware and active citizens, who can emerge as participants and leaders of societal functions, change and idealism. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is digital citizenship and literacy such a critical skill for the development of productive and ethical members of society? • What are the components of good digital citizenship and how do they affect our online lives? • Why are the rights and responsibilities that are central to digital citizenship? • Why and how can the way we conduct ourselves online have the potential for both positive and/or negative consequences for society and for ourselves? • Why is it important to know, understand and apply safe, ethical and responsible practices while using digital information, media and technology? • Why is it important to understand the direct and indirect effects of our online behavior, choices, decisions and language on others, on our communities, on our society, as well as on ourselves? • How can the digital world be used to positively affect and influence society when it comes to citizen actions, ideals and beliefs, especially when it pertains to race, gender issues, fairness, equity, and other 	

major issues in our communities and our overall global society?

- Why is it important for digital users to understand, appreciate and respect the ethical and legal aspects of using intellectual property found online, including that which is distributed through digital and social media, and therefore why is it important to have a firm understanding of copyright law, fair use rules, creative commons licenses, public domain, etc.?
- What factors should be considered, both creatively and ethically, when digitally manipulating messages, photos, videos, graphics and other digital content?
- Why is it important to constantly consider, assess, monitor and safeguard our safety, security, privacy, identity and reputation when using digital and social media, including being proactive with such concerns as: the collection, retention and usage of personal data, digital footprints, degrees of online sharing, personal vs. private information, personal vs. school / work communication, predatory online behavior, sophisticated use of algorithms that affect our online experiences, etc.?
- Why and how is managing your online reputation and footprint likely to have an impact on your current and future opportunities, including college, employment and personal life?
- How can we protect our mental and physical health by proactively managing our use of technology and consumption of digital and social media?

Objectives

Students will know:

- what digital citizenship is, and why it is important.
- the rights and responsibilities of digital citizenship.
- potential negative and positive consequences of online behavior, decisions and language.
- safe, ethical and legal practices for usage of digital information, media and technology.
- how to use digital communication to positively affect and influence their community and our global society.
- How to monitor, assess and safeguard their digital safety, security, privacy, reputation, footprint, etc. for the present and also to safeguard their future opportunities.
- intellectual property rules, laws, policies and ethics, including copyright laws, fair use, creative commons licenses, public domain, etc.

Students will be able to:

- identify the rights, responsibilities and characteristics of digital citizenship, and be able to appraise the efficiency and virtue of their own online practices by assessing and adapting through a variety of digital communication and digital literacy activities.
- review the legal, ethical and moral responsibilities involved with using the intellectual property of others, and be able to justify their own use of intellectual property in a variety of digital communication scenarios, by applying and abiding by, where appropriate, copyright laws, fair use, creative common licenses, public domain rules, social media site policies, etc.
- investigate the many online risks to safety, security, privacy and reputation, and be able to manage and minimize the risks by evaluating their online behavior and decision-making, and then by developing strategies to revise their online practices, as needed.
- analyze the concepts of sharing, oversharing, self-disclosure, personal vs. private, etc., and be able to consider the risks and benefits of different degrees of self-disclosure by formulating their own theory and strategy for such online behavior.
- Investigate the concepts of digital footprints and online reputations, and be able to manage their own digital footprints and online reputations now and for the future, by appraising how what they are doing online now or will do in the future may help our hurt their future opportunities, for college, career and personal life.

- assess the role digital communication and digital and social media plays in their lives and in society, and be able to appraise the positive and negative consequences of the digital world, by evaluating different forms of digital communication in terms of impact and consequences.
- review theory about the links between digital/social media use and health (mental and physical) and be able to integrate it to their own health by analyzing and strategizing for their own online consumption.
- appraise the elements of positive digital collaboration and its effects on society and social change, and be able to recognize and value positive online communities by choosing to apply the concepts to positively influence their peers, their community and/or other areas and issues of society.
- analyze the reliability of news and information, and be able to draw accurate conclusions about news, information and sources, by applying key factor tests (like weight of evidence, source credibility, context, bias-tests, word and image choice, etc.)

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 3 Assessment: Digital Citizenship

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts, online course materials, online sources and searches, social media sites
- Online resources, which will have to be updated regularly. Current examples include:

<https://www.ace.edu/blog/post/2019/01/08/digital-citizenship-what-it-means-how-to-teach-it-and-the-resources-you-need>

<https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship>

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/digitalliteracy/home>

https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/en_us/

<https://www.edweek.org/media/k-12-digital-citizenship-curriculum.pdf>

<https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/teach-digital-literacy-skills>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/digital-citizenship-resources>

<https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/teach-digital-literacy-skills>

<https://www.commonsense.org/education/video/digital-citizenship>

<https://teachinctrl.org/building-digital-citizenship-lesson-plans-for-high-school-students/>

Unit 4: Digital Boot Camp: Content Creation Genres and Tools

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

More than anything else, Digital Communication is a course focused on purposeful digital content creation, including matching the most appropriate genres and tools to the creator’s purpose, authentic target audience and intended message. In an era when students are born into an ever evolving technological world, it would be easy to assume that students enter the course with a common core set of basic digital skills and experiences, but that premise is actually a false assumption that could easily lead to failure and frustration for some students, and perhaps for the class as a whole. Those who take the course vary in age (grades 9 through 12), in backgrounds, in interests, in learning styles and in learning experiences. Given the constantly changing community demographics, including the influx of students who do not grow up in WW-P or in similar types of school districts, it is a reality that some of our students have had life-long access and experiences with digital technologies, and some have not, or at least have not had equitable access. To combat this challenge, before embarking on the more complex levels of digital communication, it is imperative to include a unit that “levels the playing field” and serves as somewhat of an “equalizer” for building the necessary basic foundation for success. With that as the objective, this unit sets up a “boot camp” type of interactive workshop, with rotating short tasks designed to allow students to experience and master the basics of a variety of tools and genres of digital communication content creation. Ideally, students with little to no knowledge of a tool or genre will be grouped with those who already have some skill and experience, creating peer mentoring situations that not only involve sharing knowledge and “know-how,” but that also help to build the learning environment, mindset and style that is essential to the eventual success of the year-long, interactive, collaborative, student-centered workshop that is at the core of the design of the Digital Communication course. The unit will result in skill-building and critical thinking that is not only central to this particular course, but is also transferrable to other areas of learning and living.

Recommended Pacing

20 days

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition

Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.
9.4.12.CT.5	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based or other projects, and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.

Technology Literacy

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specified task
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In a constantly evolving and rapidly changing digital world, students need to develop the hands-on technical skills, the strategic mindset, the adaptability and the critical thinking skills necessary to be effective creators, curators and distributors of digital communication. ● Students who are well versed in all facets of digital communication and digital media become more creative content creators and also evolve into more critical consumers of digital and social media. ● Learning to effectively utilize a variety of digital communication technologies, genres and techniques help develop skills that are transferable to many other learning, career and life experiences. ● Effective digital communication often incorporates multiple digital genres, tools, strategies and techniques. ● Purpose and target audience are key considerations in digital communication decision-making, including message creation, genre, tool and technology choice, etc. ● The most engaging, and increasingly preeminent online content is visual communication, or in some way incorporates visual elements, so there is great value, especially professionally, to developing more advanced skills and knowledge about visual content creation. ● Now that digital, mobile and social media is such a pervasive part of society, including in the business world, it is extremely advantageous to develop strong content creation skills, and equally important for consumers of digital communication to increase awareness and skill at deciphering the intent and effect of content. ● Peer mentoring and team tasks help develop transferable 21st Century skills in collaboration, self-direction, leadership and problem-solving. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do you develop the skill set necessary to create a variety of digital communication content? ● Why are some digital genres more dominant and effective in the digital world? ● What digital genres and tools are most effective for your specific purpose and target audience, and how can a mix of genres and tools increase effectiveness? ● What are the techniques, strategies and tools used for digital communication creation? ● How does understanding your target audience and analyzing audience demographics increase the potential for effective communication? ● Why are visual elements, especially video, memes and photos, so dominant and engaging online, and what techniques can be used to increase engagement-level and effectiveness of visual elements? ● What techniques strategies and concepts do professionals use to enhance the effectiveness and appeal of various digital communication content? 	
Objectives	
<p>Students will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● techniques, tools and basic strategies for creating digital graphics, animation, audio, video, photography, websites, etc. ● how to plan, film and edit a video (strategy, technique, tools, etc.) ● how to plan, produce and edit a podcast. (strategy, technique, tools, etc.) ● how to plan, shoot and edit photo sessions and photo galleries. (strategy, technique, tools, etc.) ● how to create royalty-free digital music for stand-alone projects and for use with other media tasks. ● meme creation ● blog and vlog creation (strategy, technique, tools, online writing basics, etc.) ● how to create a website (strategy, technique, tools, etc.) ● strategies, tools and techniques of other genres and digital tasks, as necessary for class purposes. 	

- how to craft content that incorporates authentic “target audience”/demographics and purpose.

Students will be able to:

- acquire the technical skills to create digital video, audio, photography, graphics, animation, websites, etc., and be able to develop content creation strategies by applying learned concepts and skills to future digital communication tasks.
- design a variety of digital content across a variety of digital genres, and be able to construct meaning for specific purposes and authentic target audiences, by creating digital communication content for a variety of digital genres (video, photography, podcasting, music, memes, blogs, vlogs, etc.)
- assess the role that purpose and authentic “target audience” play in content development, and be able to identify strategies for content creation and genre decision-making by designing a variety of digital communication products that incorporate specific purposes and target audiences.
- recognize the ever increasing importance and engagement level that video and other visual elements (photos, memes, graphics, pictographs, etc.) have in professional (as well as social) digital communication, and accordingly will be able to integrate effective video, photos and other visual elements into their own content.
- analyze communication problems effectively, and be able to overcome obstacles, adversity and conflict by proposing and enacting practical and creative solutions in a variety of self-directed and collaborative contexts.
- acquire the technical skills required to succeed in a variety of digital communication content development roles, and be able to apply those skills while performing and producing collaborative and self-directed digital communication tasks by successfully performing within a variety of leadership and support roles.

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 4 Assessment: Tools and Genres

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts and online course materials
- Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources.
- Materials linked to [The Social Media Marketing Workbook](#) by Jason McDonald
- Online newspapers and other online news sources
- Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites
- Social media sites

- Online resource links that may need to be regularly updated. Examples of online resources:
 - <https://petapixel.com/2015/03/16/9-photo-composition-tips-as-seen-in-photographs-by-steve-mccurry/>
 - <https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/tutorials/mobile-photography-tips>
 - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/good-pictures-phone-tips>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHvFHRPLvII>
 - <https://youtu.be/RMQnxK9RTRw>
 - <https://youtu.be/n2PvnsnEzqE>
 - <https://youtu.be/aCisC3sHneM>
 - <https://youtu.be/xl-WDjWrTtk>
 - <https://youtu.be/6fbdB-pmWFA>
 - <https://youtu.be/HUwhPlsxpqI>
 - <https://youtu.be/NUmdoFDtpQg>
 - <https://buffer.com/resources/podcasting-for-beginners>
 - <https://theaudacitytopodcast.com/tap100-100-amazing-podcasting-tips-from-successful-podcasters/>
 - <https://youtu.be/foYyeGlf9yU>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhJArnjpWU8&feature=youtu.be>
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKnABwgFTnw&feature=youtu.be&disable_polymer=true
 - <https://www.richardlackey.com/cinematic-iphone-video-composition/>
 - <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-popular-types-youtube-video-can-make-today/>
 - <https://www.atomiclearning.com/video-storytelling-guide/shot-rules>
 - <https://www.theverge.com/2017/7/26/16026238/smartphone-video-editing-apps-how-to-tips-iphone-android>
 - <https://www.atomiclearning.com/video-storytelling-guide/shot-rules>
 - <https://www.inboundnow.com/7-expert-tips-for-creating-and-sharing-viral-ready-marketing-memes/>
 - <https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-make-a-meme/>
 - <https://buffer.com/library/animated-gifs/>
 - <https://www.creativebloq.com/advice/the-ultimate-guide-to-gif-design>
 - <https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-make-gif/>
 - <https://www.dreamhost.com/blog/expert-blogging-tips/>
 - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/beginner-blogger-mistakes>

Unit 5: Content / Product Development & Branding

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

One of the crucial elements of digital, mobile and social media interaction is the need to produce content. In fact, when it comes to online influencers, youtubers, etc., often the need to constantly create consistent, engaging, content becomes a source of pressure, or at least an on-going need. Businesses, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies that are invested in digital, mobile and social media share that constant need, as do, to a lesser extent, personal users of social media. Digital Communication is first and foremost a communication content course, especially for development of professional communication skills and strategies, so the next logical step in this workshop-style class is product creation. Students will learn about and improve upon content creation and communication strategy through the set up of three different learning experiences, a self-directed, self-created digital communication product, a collaborative “team-created” digital communication product and a collaborative “teacher supplied” digital communication product. The year-long experiences will afford students the opportunity to learn to constantly “churn out” consistent, engaging content. Part of the challenge will be learning how purpose, target audience and specific audience demographics are an important consideration in digital content creation, and the introduction of branding will also be a part of the tasks. These concepts will be developed and expanded upon throughout the course. Content creation may take many forms, but since the online community is constantly inundated and engaged with visual images (videos, memes, photos, etc.), all students, whether for their primary content or for supplementing their primary content, will expand their knowledge and skill level of visual communication, especially regarding perhaps the most engaging elements of the current online world, video and photos. Consumers of media often take the images for granted, but producers of visual content use the power of pictures to influence, to sell, to story tell, to create subtext, etc. Part of this unit, and the learning throughout the year, is designed to help students explore how well thought out and well shot visuals can be a powerful tool for creating meaning and mood, and for using that power to influence, to sell and to spur people to act or react.

Recommended Pacing

30 days

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition

Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.
9.4.12.CT.3:	Collaborate with individuals to analyze a variety of potential solutions to social and other issues, like climate change effects, and determine why solutions may work better than others (e.g., political. economic, cultural)
9.4.12.CT.4	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).

9.4.12.CT.5	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based or other projects, and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.
Digital Citizenship	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content.
9.4.12.DC.2	Compare and contrast international differences in copyright laws and ethics.
9.4.12.DC.3	Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy in the context of safety, law, or ethics.
9.4.12.DC.4	Explain the privacy concerns related to the collection of data (e.g. cookies) and generation of data through automated processes that may not be evident to users
9.4.12.DC.5	Debate laws and regulations that impact the development and use of software
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.
9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
9.4.12.DC.8	Explain how increased network connectivity and computing capabilities of everyday objects allow for innovative technological approaches to climate protection.
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specific task
9.4.12.TL.2	Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
9.4.12.TL.4	Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem.
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions.
9.4.12.IML4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience.
9.4.12.IML5	Evaluate, synthesize and apply information on issues (including social, political and other) from various sources appropriately.
9.4.12.IML6	Use various types of media to produce and store information on social, political or other issues, like climate change for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender and age diversity.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital communication for professional purposes in many important ways is different than personal use, with content usually more strategic, more deliberate, more planned and thought out, often more delayed, 	

etc.

- It is usually good practice to keep personal and professional digital communication separate.
- Now that digital, mobile and social media is such a pervasive part of society, including in the business world, it is extremely advantageous to develop strong content creation skills, and equally important for consumers of digital communication to increase awareness and skill at deciphering the intent and effect of content.
- An important element for effective digital communication, especially professional, is the targeting of a specific authentic audience and an understanding of audience demographics.
- Along with “target audience” considerations, “purpose” or objective is a key component of digital content creation.
- Branding, and maintaining a consistent “branding voice” across digital, mobile and social media has become an important function for professional digital communication content-creators, and has also become a function of career-building, online influencers, image-building, etc.
- The most engaging, and increasingly preeminent online content is visual communication, or in some way incorporates visual elements, so there is great value, especially professionally, to developing more advanced skills and knowledge about visual content creation.
- Understanding good storytelling techniques, including visual storytelling, and its effect on consumers of digital communication, and then applying good storytelling techniques to online content, can be a powerful tool for content creators.
- The ability to create engaging digital communication content and products can have a very positive impact on career-building and career success.
- Digital communication posted online not only dictates your current online reputation, but it is “forever” so it will positively or negatively affect your future online reputation, so it is imperative that good digital citizenship is adopted and practiced at an early age, and is the chosen approach at all times.
- Content producers for digital, mobile and social media are becoming increasingly more sophisticated, and in many cases, increasingly more devious, manipulative, deceptive and destructive, and with the increasing use of bots and other technological advances adding to the sophistication and complexity, it is imperative that everyone become more knowledgeable, skilled, proactive, aware and safe through advanced digital literacy.

Unit Essential Questions

- What are the elements of successful communication?
- How does understanding your target audience and analyzing audience demographics increase the potential for effective communication?
- What is branding, how do professionals create brands, and how does it factor into successful business practices and personal uses, as well?
- How do you recognize bias and “agenda” in digital communication, and how does purpose factor into crafting content for digital communication?
- Why are visual elements, especially video, memes and photos, so dominant and engaging online, and what techniques can be used to increase engagement-level and effectiveness of visual elements?
- What is a good storytelling technique and how can it be incorporated into digital communication?
- How can we increase our digital and media literacy, including our recognition and critiquing of such elements as source credibility, bias, fact vs. fiction, agenda setting, gatekeeping, fake news, etc.?

Objectives

Students will know:

- basic communication theory
- how to craft content that incorporates “target audience”/demographics and purpose.
- what branding is, key elements of branding, branding techniques, and how to develop their own branding.
- how to better incorporate and enhance visual elements into digital content to increase engagement and effectiveness.

- the elements of good storytelling technique, and how to incorporate it into digital communication
- ways to connect in social media by appealing to emotion, laughter, etc.
- safe, legal and ethical practices online

Students will be able to:

- identify and define the components of fundamental approaches to successful communication, by reviewing and critiquing professional communication content as well the content of their peers and themselves in various contexts, including video, photos and other visual communication.
- assess the roles that “target audience” and “audience demographics” play in most product, content and message development, and be able to describe principles of effective audience-based strategies by critiquing a variety of communication samples and contexts.
- assess the role that “purpose” and “agenda” play in most product, content and message development, and be able to identify purpose, agenda and/or bias by critiquing a variety of communication samples and contexts.
- design, create and develop communication products that incorporate effective digital content by integrating key learned concepts, including communication theory, “target audience,” audience demographics, purpose, etc.
- create and build brands by applying and integrating effective branding techniques within their own digital communication product and content development.
- recognize the ever increasing importance and engagement level that video and other visual elements (photos, memes, graphics, pictographs, etc.) have in professional (as well as social) digital communication, and accordingly will be able to integrate effective video, photos and other visual elements into their own content.
- develop and apply skills that will enhance the visual elements of their digital communication across a variety of platforms.
- recognize the role good storytelling technique, emotion and humor play in digital communication, and, appropriately integrate those elements into their digital content to increase online engagement.
- analyze communication problems effectively, and be able to overcome obstacles, adversity and conflict by proposing and enacting practical and creative solutions in a variety of self-directed and collaborative contexts.
- acquire the technical skills required to succeed in a variety of digital communication content development roles, and be able to apply those skills while performing and producing collaborative and self-directed digital communication tasks by successfully performing within a variety of leadership and support roles.
- learn, research and practice safe, legal and ethical online approaches, processes and communications, and be able to protect themselves, their reputations, their brand and/or their employer/company (or school, organization, agency, etc.), by integrating the safe, legal and ethical online approaches and processes into their personal and professional online experiences and communications (ongoing objective)
- develop, choose and embrace digital and media literacy, and be able to evaluate digital communication by appraising content for concepts like: source credibility, bias, fact vs. fiction, agenda setting, gatekeeping, fake news, etc. (ongoing objective)

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 5 Assessment: Content Development

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher

x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner
Resources			
<p>Core Text and suggested resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts and online course materials • Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources. • Materials linked to <u>The Social Media Marketing Workbook</u> by Jason McDonald • Online newspapers and other online news sources • Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites • Social media sites • Guest speakers, when available • Online resource links that may need to be regularly updated. Examples of online resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.outbrain.com/content-marketing/ https://www.jeadigitalmedia.org/2012/08/23/curriculum-for-a-high-school-social-media-class/ https://www.spinxdigital.com/blog/top-10-website-designs-2020/ https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-website-designs-list https://time.com/4960202/most-influential-websites/ https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/en-us/blog/5-companies-dominating-content-marketing https://www.brafton.com/content-marketing/ https://www.reliablesoft.net/website-marketing/ https://www.lyfemarketing.com/blog/website-marketing-strategy/ https://www.lean-labs.com/blog/seven-examples-of-branding-and-website-design https://www.orbitmedia.com/blog/web-design-tips/ https://www.wix.com/blog/2017/10/5-design-tips-for-a-professional-site 			

Unit 6: Digital, Mobile & Social Media in the “Professional” World

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

Digital, Mobile and Social Media have become prevalent and dominant in so many lives, and increasingly impact public opinion, actions and policies. It is where many people live out their lives, stay connected, exchange ideas, debate, entertain, find jobs, search for friendship and love, shop, get their news, propagandize, spread influence, start revolutions, connect globally, learn, and just about every other facet of life. Whether viewed as a positive or negative development, and likely it is viewed as a combination of both, there is no arguing about its impact and pervasiveness. The professional world, including businesses, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies and educational institutions, has not only noticed, but has altered its business plan, marketing strategy, public policy and overall approach to embrace and optimize the use of digital, mobile and social media. In this unit, students will not only explore professional uses of digital communication, but will also learn and build skills for content creation and strategies for the more dominant digital, mobile and social media currently being utilized in the professional world. Along the way, students will also be introduced to some of the less emphasized platforms and channels that are worth learning for their utility in certain industries and organizations, as well as for supplemental uses of them for increased cross-promotion. A special emphasis will be on digital marketing, especially social media marketing, since it is such a big part of the professional world, and is not only important to understand from a “business sense,” but also from the perspective that with the increasingly sophisticated and extensive use of social media marketing strategies and techniques, it is our responsibility to protect ourselves by becoming more educated, savvy and aware online consumers.

Recommended Pacing

20 days

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition

Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.
9.4.12.CT.5	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.

Digital Citizenship

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content.
9.4.12.DC.2	Compare and contrast international differences in copyright laws and ethics.
9.4.12.DC.3	Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy in the context of safety, law, or ethics.
9.4.12.DC.4	Explain the privacy concerns related to the collection of data (e.g. cookies) and generation of data through automated processes that may not be evident to users

9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.
9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specific task
9.4.12.TL.2	Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
9.4.12.TL.4	Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem.
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions.
9.4.12.IML4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Since the online world has transformed society and the way we live,” it follows that business, non-profit organizations and government agencies necessarily have had to transform the way they operate, and consequently, professional skills and strategies for communication across digital, mobile and social media has become an invaluable skill set for future career building. ● The digital lifestyle has changed how and where people buy, so while core marketing and sales techniques still apply, digital marketing campaigns and image building have become important functions, requiring understanding and mastery of digital communication content creation and strategy for the business world. ● Despite the appearance of overlap, professional use of digital, mobile and social media is substantially different than most personal use, and requires much more restraint, awareness, responsibility strategy, planning and consistency, and also requires a greater knowledge of the “nuts and bolts” and the nuances of the digital, mobile and social media platforms. ● Professional communication using digital, mobile and social media usually goes through a structured process to increase effectiveness and success, with a standard process resembling: research, planning and strategy, implementation and measurement, and with target audience and purpose always guiding the process. ● Just because digital content gets likes and views doesn’t mean the popularity automatically turns into revenue; instead business and fundraising is a product of engaging communication content that turns followers into promoters who will increase the “reach” of your message, brand, product, etc. ● Knowing your target audience, audience demographics and your purpose will not only increase effectiveness of content development, but will also guide your decision-making when choosing channels 	

and platforms for dispersing your content.

- “Reverse engineering” is an important part of the research process for content creation and media choice.
- Mastering the more dominant digital, mobile and social media platforms is crucial, but it is also important to master the less dominant channels that also play a role in professional communication and marketing.
- Mastering and consistently managing “cross promotion” is especially crucial for campaign and branding effectiveness and success.
- Metrics and analytics, along with other on-going feedback methods, are necessary core tools to assess and increase success and effectiveness.

Unit Essential Questions

- How is the approach different for professional digital communication vs. personal digital communication, and why is it a good idea to keep them separate?
- How does the technique of “reverse engineering” help with discovery of effective and successful marketing techniques, channels and strategies?
- What types of strategic decision-making, pre-planning and reviewing/editing techniques will help increase effectiveness and increase safety and “reputation protection”?
- What are the currently most utilized digital, mobile and social media, and how are they most effectively utilized in marketing?
- How are some of the lesser-used or lesser-known social media (and other digital and mobile media) utilized in overall marketing campaigns and in other business agendas?
- How does consistent cross-promotion increase content and campaign effectiveness, and help solidify branding?
- How are target audience, audience demographics, purpose/objective and branding maintained and managed in an overall digital communication/digital media campaign?
- Why are metrics and analytics such an important part of digital/social media marketing, and how can metrics and analytics, along with other feedback methods, be used to assess and increase success and effectiveness?

Objectives

Students will know:

- the difference in approach between personal and professional digital communication
- basic marketing techniques and how they apply to digital marketing, including social media marketing.
- strategic decision-making and pre-planning techniques to increase effectiveness and “reputation protecting” before posting content.
- how to strategically utilize the current most dominant digital, mobile and social media in marketing, and for other digital communication objectives.
- how to strategically utilize the lesser-known or lesser-used digital, mobile and social media to increase effectiveness and to add to consistent cross-promotion.
- how to incorporate previously learned concepts of target audience, audience demographics, purpose/objective and branding into an overall campaign.
- how to use metrics and other feedback methods to measure success and effectiveness, and how to use the gained information to adapt and increase success and effectiveness.

Students will be able to:

- develop a safe, ethical, legal, appropriate and professional approach to social media, and be able to differentiate between personal and professional use of social media
- recognize and analyze basic marketing methods and strategies by “reverse engineering” successful and effective campaigns across a variety of social media platforms and contexts.
- develop strategic decision-making skills by devising, evaluating and justifying action plans before

implementation on social media and media technologies.

- model awareness and understanding of the need for research and evaluation when incorporating social media into a marketing campaign by “reverse engineering” a variety of successful and professional social media campaigns.
- acquire the technical skills required to successfully create a variety of digital communication content, and be able to adapt and integrate content across a variety of social media platforms by strategically developing and implementing self-directed and collaborative digital / social media campaigns.
- brand, and to develop a consistent “brand voice” while extending brand reach by building content strategy and by evaluating the potential effectiveness of social media platforms for intended target audiences and purposes.
- measure and quantify the effectiveness and success of digital content and campaigns by adopting and applying professional approaches to metrics for evaluation and feedback, and then by demonstrating the ability to adapt accordingly.

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 6 Assessment: Digital, Social and Mobile Media

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts and online course materials
- Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources.
- Materials linked to [The Social Media Marketing Workbook](#) by Jason McDonald
- Online newspapers and other online news sources
- Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites
- Social media sites
- Guest speakers, when available
- Online sites and links that will evolve and change regularly. Examples of sources:
<https://www.webhostingsecretrevealed.net/essential-social-media-marketing-guide/>
<https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-social-media>
<http://www.jeadigitalmedia.org/2012/08/23/curriculum-for-a-high-school-social-media-class/>
<https://www.postcontrolmarketing.com/social-media-audit-template/>
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-marketing-resources>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-marketing-strategy/>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-branding/>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/facebook-marketing-strategy/>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/social-media-marketing-plan/>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/topics/social-media-for-small-business/#socialanalytics>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-marketing-strategy/>

Unit 7: Digital Communication Practicum

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

To this point in the course, the class has worked mostly on digital communication content creation and strategizing for “in-house” communication products and for “in-house” clients and needs. The workshop/production style experiential environment allowed the students to learn through experimentation and feedback across many digital, mobile and social media and techniques, and then to receive peer and student feedback, and perhaps feedback from invited guests and online consumers of their digital communication content. However, since it was mostly learning through “in-house” experimentation, it was similar to a lab in which students learn to experiment, develop their style, skill-build, problem-solve, collaborate, etc. Most importantly, the students learn “how to fail” and how to deal with mistakes, and then of course, how to learn from mistakes and failure in order to have the opportunity for greater success.

At some point, the learning comes together, and then it is time for students to experience realization about their own growth, and to assess their ability to apply their class success to real world scenarios. This unit will serve that purpose, as well as “up the stakes” by expanding the learning to a more “business-like” approach to digital, mobile and social media. While students will continue managing their year-long “in-house” campaigns, the main focus in this unit will be for students to collaboratively develop campaigns for external clients, either real or simulated. They will learn how to service clients and face accountability every step of the process, requiring a more professional approach, and business-like decision-making and problem solving. Along the way, students will be introduced to more advanced concepts, like search engine optimization, the psychology of sharing and engagement, positive community development based on building relationship and trust, receiving and handling feedback positively (even when the feedback is negative), metrics and algorithms (and accountability based on such factors), advanced branding and “brand voice development” across channels, advertising, promotion and monetizing through digital, mobile and social media, etc. Throughout it all, despite the more business-like approach, the higher stakes and the servicing of external clients, the focus of the “practicum” will remain on digital communication creation and on strategizing about the utilization of digital communication for specific purposes and target audiences across digital, mobile and social media.

Recommended Pacing

30 days

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
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9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
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9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition
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Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
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9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
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9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.
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9.4.12.CT.4	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).
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9.4.12.CT.5	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.
Digital Citizenship	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.1	Explain the beneficial and harmful effects that intellectual property laws can have on the creation and sharing of content.
9.4.12.DC.2	Compare and contrast international differences in copyright laws and ethics.
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.
9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specific task
9.4.12.TL.2	Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
9.4.12.TL.4	Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem.
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions.
9.4.12.IML4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience.
9.4.12.IML5	Evaluate, synthesize and apply information on climate change from various sources appropriately.
9.4.12.IML6	Use various types of media to produce and store information on topics, social and other types of issues, like climate change for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender and age diversity.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “psychology of social,” and specifically why some content gets shared and some content goes “viral,” involves important concepts that digital communication content creators should know and apply. • In addition to continuous and consistent content creation, campaigns and branding require management of digital, mobile and social media for positive “community-building” in order to build engagement based on “relationship and trust.” • Effective digital communication content creators understand and incorporate search engine optimization and social media algorithm optimization. • Monetizing opportunities through digital, mobile and social media are numerous, widespread, varied and sometimes complex, but are important tools for business, politicians, fundraisers, influencers, etc. • One of the most important functions of campaigns, beyond the structured process of actually developing the campaign, is servicing the client, so interpersonal and specific business communication skills are important for career-building. 	

Unit Essential Questions

- Why does some content get shared and some content even go viral, and how can the “psychology of social” be applied to digital content creation in order to increase effectiveness and engagement?
- How can digital, mobile and social media be managed for positive community building, and for engaging people to build relationships and trust?
- How do you adapt content and “delivery” of content for search engine optimization and social media algorithm optimization?
- How does monetizing (advertising and other sales techniques, site-specific monetization opportunities, influencer promotion, etc.) work with digital, mobile and social media?
- How do you develop and/or manage branding for external clients or products?
- How do you develop a professional digital communication/digital marketing campaign and incorporate course concepts like communication theory, “target audience,” audience demographics, purpose, research, SEO (Search engine optimization), channel/platform (evaluation, selection and integration), cross-promotion, community (relationship and trust) building, branding, metrics, etc.
- How do you “service” a client in a professional setting, and how do you handle yourself professionally, ethically, legally and responsibly when working in a professional setting.
- Incorporating a variety of skills and talents into meaningful tasks that have real-world implications usually has the potential for optimal learning.
- If, as was once said, “education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten,” then authentic learning, like a digital communication practicum connecting learning to real world applications, is an effective method for impacting students.
- Greater success is often possible through collaboration and a recognition that each team member brings a unique set of talents, skills and traits that, if utilized, can enrich the experience while maximizing potential for accomplishment.

Objectives

Students will know:

- theory on “the psychology of social” in order to ascertain why certain content gets shared and even others go viral.
- how to engage people online to build relationships and trust, as part of positive community and reputation-building.
- techniques for search engine optimization and social media algorithm optimization
- branding techniques and how to apply them to “external clients.”
- how to service clients, and build and manage digital communication campaigns for outside clients or products (authentic or simulated, depending on availability)
- how to handle themselves in a professional setting (professionally, ethically, legally, responsibly, etc.)

Students will be able to:

- identify and define the components of why certain content gets shared and how to improve the “virality” of content in order to increase engagement value of their own digital content.
- adopt a positive community building approach, and be able to engage with people to build relationships and trust by integrating positive, professional, ethical, respectful, “business-like” and “helpful” interactions in digital communication, online social community management and all other interpersonal engagement.
- apply search engine optimization techniques, as well as social media algorithm optimization, and be able to adapt their digital communication content and “on-line delivery” by integrating SEO techniques throughout their content and digital strategies.
- recognize online monetization opportunities (advertising and other sales techniques, site-specific monetization opportunities, influencer promotion, etc.) by researching and then formulating strategic digital business plans (simulated).
- develop a “brand voice” and be able to create a consistent experience across all digital communication

outlets by designing a digital communication campaign (either simulated or authentic, depending on availability) for a business and/or non-profit organization and/or government agency.

- devise digital communication content strategy and create professional-level digital content, and be able to design and build an effective digital communication campaign for an “outside client” (either simulated or authentic, depending on availability).
- integrate key learned concepts (including communication theory, “target audience,” audience demographics, purpose, research, SEO (Search engine optimization), channel/platform (evaluation, selection and integration), cross-promotion, community (relationship and trust) building, branding, metrics, etc.) into digital communication campaigns for outside clients (either simulated or authentic, depending on availability).
- protect themselves, their reputations, their brand and/or their employer/company (or school, organization, agency, etc.), by integrating safe, responsible, legal and ethical online approaches and processes into all of their personal and professional online experiences and communications
- acquire the technical, creative and strategy-devising skills required to succeed as digital communication creators and as social media managers, and be able to apply self-direction skills to impact the success of digital communication campaigns by effectively performing in a variety of roles for self-directed and collaborative digital communication tasks.
- successfully perform as collaborative team members, and recognize that success is tied to individuals working together for a common purpose, and discover that each team member brings a unique set of talents and traits that, if utilized, can enrich the production and the team experience by participating with peers in defined support and leadership roles during a variety of digital communication activities and tasks, as well as other collaborative activities (and conferences, brainstorming sessions, peer feedback sessions, bonding activities, etc.)

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 7 Assessment: Digital Communication Practicum

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts and online course materials
- Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources.
- Materials linked to [The Social Media Marketing Workbook](#) by Jason McDonald
- Online newspapers and other online news sources
- Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites
- Social media sites
- Guest speakers, when available

- Online resource links that may need to be regularly updated. Examples of online resources:
<https://www.outbrain.com/content-marketing/>
<https://www.jeadigitalmedia.org/2012/08/23/curriculum-for-a-high-school-social-media-class/>
<https://www.spinxdigital.com/blog/top-10-website-designs-2020/>
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-website-designs-list>
<https://time.com/4960202/most-influential-websites/>
<https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/en-us/blog/5-companies-dominating-content-marketing>
<https://www.brafton.com/content-marketing/>
<https://www.reliablesoft.net/website-marketing/>
<https://www.lyfemarketing.com/blog/website-marketing-strategy/>
<https://www.lean-labs.com/blog/seven-examples-of-branding-and-website-design>
<https://www.orbitmedia.com/blog/web-design-tips/>
<https://www.wix.com/blog/2017/10/5-design-tips-for-a-professional-site>

Unit 8: Digital Communication: Careers and Personal Branding

Content Area: 21ST CENTURY LIFE AND CAREERS

Course & Grade Level: Digital Communication, 9-12

Summary and Rationale

The Digital Communication course is a workshop and production course that involves a year-long exploration of communication and content creation through “hands-on” experiential learning. Along the way, theory and strategy is also acquired and then applied through practical and “real life” experiences. By late in the course, students have developed and expanded their skill set and knowledge base, and have created content for a variety of “professional and business” scenarios and challenges, real and/or simulated, culminating with participation in a practicum to assess student ability to apply year-long learning to real-life experiences, again either authentic and/or simulated. However, too often in education, students recognize learning but are conditioned to relate learning to school, to grades, etc. The key to making the course more relevant and meaningful to students, and to thus make the learning experience more meaningful and enduring, is to connect the learning to each individual’s life. While this connection and relatability is embedded throughout the course, the final unit specifically addresses the objective. Through research, practical experiences and tasks, and discussion, students are given the opportunity to envision their future and the future of digital communication and digital, mobile and social media. Students learn about career and career roles that are specific to the course curriculum, and they also learn how the course skills and content are transferable to just about any career. They are given an opportunity to explore possible career paths for themselves and how they might apply (or be required to have) the types of skills and knowledge experienced in the course. Students get a chance to envision the future, and the need for adaptability, especially given the rapid pace of change in the world of technology and business, and they have an opportunity to research what careers might look like and what future career skills will be required. Finally, students learn about career and job searching in a digital world, and how to use the course concepts and skills to create personal branding, including tools like personal websites and digital portfolios, for career building.

Recommended Pacing

15 days

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers:
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills**

Creativity and Innovation

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze and use creative skills and ideas.
9.4.12.CI.2	Identify career pathways that highlight personal talents, skills and abilities.
9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement and transition

Critical Thinking and Problem-solving

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.CT.1	Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
9.4.12.CT.2:	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving.

Digital Citizenship

CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.DC.3	Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy in the context of safety, law, or ethics.
9.4.12.DC.4	Explain the privacy concerns related to the collection of data (e.g. cookies) and generation of data through automated processes that may not be evident to users
9.4.12.DC.6	Select information to post online that positively impacts personal image and future college and career opportunities.

9.4.12.DC.7	Evaluate the influence of digital communities on the nature, content and responsibilities of careers, and other aspects of society
Technology Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.TL.1	Assess digital tools based on features such as accessibility options, capacities and utility for accomplishing a specific task
Information and Media Literacy	
CPI #	Cumulative Progress Indicator (CPI)
9.4.12.IML2	Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
9.4.12.IML3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions.
9.4.12.IML4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience.
9.4.12.IML9	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias and motivations.
9.4.12.IML10	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important to immediately begin online reputation management, including “cleaning up” of one’s online image, after which reputation management (content, behavior, approach, etc.) needs to be an on-going process. ● Reputation management is also a crucial function for brands, companies, organizations, government agencies, industries, celebrities, influencers etc., so it is imperative for employees, members of organizations, etc. to be cognizant of this function regarding their online content and behavior. ● It is important to know, understand and abide by current legal, ethical and privacy standards for personal and professional digital communication. ● Personal branding is an important part of career search and career building, and tools like personal web sites and digital portfolios are increasingly becoming the norm. ● Networking is, and always has been integral to career search, employment-seeking, career building and business practices, however nowadays a lot of networking takes place through digital, mobile and social media, including with platforms (like LinkedIn) that are most effectively used by incorporating professional digital communication skills and etiquette. ● Professional digital, mobile and social media skills, along with professional digital communication content creation skills are increasingly becoming a “core skill set” for career-searching and career-building, as more and more employees are expected to utilize such skills on the job. ● Currently, and likely even more so in the future, there are many career opportunities in business, not-for-profit organizations and government agencies specifically tied to digital communication and digital, mobile and social media. 	
Unit Essential Questions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How should you manage your online reputation, how can you “clean up” your online image, and how should you manage your online reputation, content, behavior and approach going forward? ● How do you manage and protect the online reputation of brands, companies, organizations, government agencies, etc.? ● What are the current legal, ethical and privacy standards for digital communication and social media use, both personally and professionally? ● How do you develop “personal branding” for career building and employment seeking? 	

- How are (and how do you create) digital tools (personal websites, online portfolios, etc.) utilized in career building and employment-seeking?
- What is networking, and what is the role online and digital networking now plays in career building, as well as within the everyday functioning of businesses, organizations and government agencies?
- How are digital, mobile and social media used for networking and other important business and professional functions, and what is the importance for networking on platforms like LinkedIn?
- What are the core digital, mobile and social media skills necessary for current and future careers overall, and what digital, mobile and social media skills are necessary for specific types of careers?
- What are some of the current possibilities for careers in digital communication, social media, digital marketing and related careers, and what is the outlook for the future?

Objectives

Students will know:

- professional theory about managing online reputation for personal, professional, etc.
- how to apply online reputation management techniques to protect reputations of brands, companies, organizations, government agencies, etc.
- current standards for ethical, legal and privacy issues regarding digital, mobile and social media.
- the value and methods for “personal branding” in career building and employment-seeking.
- how to use some digital tools and social media for career building.
- how to build a personal website.
- how to build a digital portfolio.
- how to network, particularly through social media.
- what digital, mobile and social media skills are important to master for careers now and in the future, across various careers, and also specific to their own possible career paths.
- about current and future careers in digital communication, social media, digital marketing and related careers.

Students will be able to:

- elevate their online reputation by critiquing and modifying (where needed) their own online reputation, content and behavior through self-assessment and peer assessment, and by applying current theory about online reputation management to past, current and future reputation management, digital content and conduct.
- manage the reputation of businesses/organizations (simulated or real) represented within class tasks by modeling identity/reputation best practices throughout all course activities.
- demonstrate awareness of ethical, legal and privacy issues when using social media outlets by choosing “high road” digital citizenship in all actions, content, etc.
- develop personal branding for career/employment-seeking, and be able to create and develop relevant digital content by integrating and designing digital career tools, concepts and skills, possibly including developing personal web sites, digital portfolios, profiles for LinkedIn and/or other social media outlets, etc.
- identify and define the opportunities for networking in a digital world by reviewing the use of LinkedIn (and/or other current business-oriented social media sites) and by critiquing less business-oriented sites for other networking opportunities.
- envision and prepare for their own future by researching and formulating theories about the future of digital communication and social media careers and the future need for digital communication and social media skills in other careers, and then by designing a self-inventory to help increase potential readiness for their future careers.

Evidence of Learning

Assessments:

- Student reflection within peer and teacher conferences
- Class discussion & activities
- Rubric assessed tasks and processes
- Personal experiences, in and out of class
- Review of recent news or other online content
- Internet research

Unit 8 Assessment: Personal Branding--College and Careers

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

x	Collaborative Team Member	x	Effective Communicator
x	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	x	Information Literate Researcher
x	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	x	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

Core Text and suggested resources:

- Handouts and online course materials
- Online resources, including materials from Hootsuite, HubSpot, and other current, evolving resources.
- Materials linked to The Social Media Marketing Workbook by Jason McDonald
- Online newspapers and other online news sources
- Professional and student video samples, YouTube and other online video sites
- Social media sites
- Online sites and links that will evolve and change regularly. Examples of sources:
 - <https://www.online.drexel.edu/support/career-development/personal-branding.aspx>
 - <https://spu.edu/depts/cdc/documents/PersonalBranding-ebook.pdf>
 - <https://www.seniorhighhustle.com/personal-branding-high-school-students/>
 - <https://ripplematch.com/journal/article/why-students-should-build-a-personal-brand-on-linkedin-and-how-to-do-it-b46c2238/>
 - <https://ripplematch.com/journal/article/why-college-students-should-create-a-personal-website-and-how-to-do-it-4afd206e/>
 - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2016/08/31/10-personal-brand-tips-for-college-grads-entering-the-workforce/#50eb44f83b0e>
 - <https://collegeinfo geek.com/personal-website-examples/>
 - <https://personalbrand.com/6-website-example-personal-brand/>
 - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-personal-websites>
 - <https://medium.com/@strikingly/10-killer-examples-of-personal-branding-websites-81a6005bd1c4>
 - <https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/articles/2017-08-03/how-social-media-can-help-and-harm-your-job-search>
 - <https://careers.usc.edu/employers/train-your-employees/social-media/module/>
 - <https://careers.northeastern.edu/article/social-media-and-digital-branding/>
 - https://study.com/articles/careers_in_social_networking.html
 - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/adigaskell/2017/09/11/using-social-networks-to-advance-your-career/>
 - <https://www.themuse.com/advice/10-ways-to-use-social-media-for-your-career-not-just-for-killing-time>