

Assignment: Social Media Campaign

Course: Honors E110: Indigenous Ecological Knowledge and Writing for Social Change

### Social Media Campaign Prompt

Social media is something that many of us encounter every day, but how often do we consider the rhetorical moves that social media posts make? Further, how is the space of social media also a space of social awareness, activism, and change? What are the specific affordances and pitfalls of social media platforms in encouraging social change? These questions and more will help us think about how to adapt your major research paper from this semester into a compelling social media campaign that raises awareness and inspires action around the topic of your research.

The purpose of this assignment is to think differently about social media and your Current Situation Analysis topic by adapting it to a social media campaign on Instagram. Your Current Situation Analysis, at this point, is a well-researched argument about either a humanitarian issue regarding Indigenous rights, or a broader ecological issue that you have put in conversation with Indigenous ecological knowledge. Your goal is to create a series of posts that serve to raise awareness and promote change on the particular issue you've already researched. You want to think carefully about your audience—which will be public rather than academic—as well as the rhetorical devices available to you on these platforms (hashtags, captions, stories, etc.). You also want to think about the “share-ability” of your posts to make them accessible to the broadest range of people, as well as the way the Instagram algorithm can work for or against you. We will discuss these concepts in class to lay the groundwork for how you will approach the project.

I'm choosing Instagram as the only platform option for a few reasons. 1. This is an app associated with and used by college students, and 2. This is the app on which I see the most social media activism due to the affordances of its platform. On Instagram, you are to create ten slides in an effort to raise awareness for the current situation you've researched. This could be one grid post with ten slides in the carousel and a caption, or ten grid posts with captions, or ten stories in a row, or ten reels. You are certainly permitted to do more than ten of these things, but ten is the minimum. This campaign is meant to be informative, so you will need to put a pretty significant amount of words on the screen. While photos are nice and helpful, the main goal is to inform people of a particular issue they might not know about while balancing their attention span and the share-ability of your posts. You must also include your references to your sources in some way, ideally a single slide with a works cited.

You are not required to use your own existing social media accounts for this project. I recommend that you create new accounts with names that are specific to your chosen current situation, but if you'd like to post on your personal account you will need to make it a public account so I can look at the post. If you are not willing to make your personal account public for me to look at (which is perfectly fine and completely understandable), you are required to make a different account where the posts can actually live. This is fairly simple to do on Instagram.

I want this assignment to be a fun end-of-semester project to wrap up all we've learned. While I intend for you to have fun, I also want you to turn in something you're proud of. In order to produce visually appealing posts, we will learn basic design principles from one of UD's librarians, Amanda McCollom. She will also show us how to use resources like Canva to make beautiful and informative graphics while still conveying important information that spurs social change. Some examples of Instagram accounts that do this type of activism are @hollyrose.eco, @greendreamerkamea, @agrowingculture, and we will analyze some of their campaigns in class.

Finally, for this assignment you will also write a short 300-500 word essay reflecting on the social media medium, its rhetorical situation, and how you adapted your research to fit Instagram. Your reflection could consider the following questions: How did you adapt your long-form research paper for the platform of Instagram? What kind of decisions did you have to make in the process of this project? How did you incorporate design principles into your conception and execution of the project? How was this project different than the initial research you did? What did you find challenging, and what did you find enjoyable about this project? What about this project and its process surprised you? This essay is due after the final campaign. Your reflection will be the basis of a short presentation offered to your classmates, the details of which are in a separate assignment prompt. We will share a number of the campaigns in our final class to showcase and celebrate the work you did.

### Assessment Criteria

Design: 30 pts

- Does the project employ design principles that make the visuals pleasing to the eye?
- Is the balance of text and visual content accessible to the average viewer?

Content: 40 pts

- Does the project textually and visually convey key details of your research?
- Is the content broken up into the posts in a logical fashion?
- Does the campaign inspire legitimate and real-world action in the viewer?
- Are your sources listed in a visually accessible/appealing way?

Instagram Context: 30 pts

- Does the project effectively use a wide range of Instagram's features (carousel, grid posts, captions, hashtags, etc.)?
- Is the project "shareable," meaning, will others read it and re-post it on their own accounts?

Total: 100 pts

Assignment: Social Media Campaign End of Project Presentation

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### Social Media Campaign Presentation Prompt

Your Social Media Campaign is an excellent representation of all the work we did this semester, and the epitome of our goal to “write for social change.” It combines the basic understanding of Indigenous ecological knowledge and current ecological issues with your particular and extensive research and sophisticated argumentation of the Current Situation Analysis. You should be proud of all the work you’ve done so far. You also had the opportunity to marry this important content to a setting in which visual aesthetic and the Instagram algorithm plays an important role in communication.

As a way of wrapping up the semester, I like to have students “present” their Social Media Campaigns to the rest of the class to show what we’ve all been working on. These presentations are meant to be a fun, engaging, and casual way to wrap up and celebrate all the work we’ve done. Even so, some guidelines are in order to help you plan for your presentation slot.

In order to have 10-11 students present in a 50-minute class period, each presentation should take about a total of 5 minutes from start to finish. This time frame is not very malleable. For the presenter, plan to take 2-3 minutes (and by “plan” I suggest you write out something ahead of time—there’s not a lot of margin for rambling) to share your screen and explain some of the major portions of your Social Media Campaign related to the rubric categories (design, content, IG use) you engaged in your reflection. A good goal is to plan to explain one major project decision for each category; that will probably line up with the time nicely if you prepare well. Then, we will have 2-3 minutes for classmates to respond to the campaign presentation with encouragement and critique. This means we will have time for 1-3 direct comments after each presentation. I expect each class member to make at least 2 direct comments throughout each presentation day. I want this to be engaging for all, and that depends on active and direct participation. If you do not get to speak directly, I also strongly recommend engaging with your classmates’ presentation via the chat.

It is not lost on me that I am asking you to distill an entire semester’s worth of research and material into 2-3 minutes. This exercise is important and part of the course goals and objectives geared toward making information digestible for your audience.

The presentations will be assessed on...

- Addressing each major category of the rubric
- Cogently, directly, and concisely addressing each point of your presentation including apparent preparedness for these comments

- Presentation time management (staying within 2-3 minutes for your presentation portion—practice if necessary)