

# TC 371, "Publications Management"

Dr. Julianne Newmark

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[jnewmark@nmt.edu](mailto:jnewmark@nmt.edu)

[www.juliannenewmark.com](http://www.juliannenewmark.com)

## About our course:

The TC elective "Publications Management" course strives to introduce TC students to the "theory and practice of meeting managerial responsibilities," as the catalog description of the course reads. Other course topics include "communication in organizations, management and supervision, project management, technology and professional communication, and legal and ethical issues," all subjects with which students in the "Publications Management" course will engage directly through their work with various aspects of the journal *Xchanges* over the course of one semester. The *Xchanges* journal, edited by the course professor Dr. Newmark, is our course's "client project" and we will work on many tasks related directly to a journal upgrade; we will also work on tasks that more broadly concern improving student knowledge of academic journals as a genre and of online journals within that genre.

The course will use analysis of *Xchanges*'s current site as well as its archive to meet many goals, including encouraging students towards "professionalism in the field" (with exercises in written and visual communication catered to help achieve this outcome); practice in **editing**, **critical thinking**, and **oral presentation**; production of original student **research** in TC and related fields; and collaborative and interactive **group work**. Students will conduct research on the practice of **production of online publications**, editing of online publications, and management of academic and professional publications. Students will create written and oral presentations, activity reports, memoranda, progress reports, and multimedia presentations. The supplementary research analyses of other academic and professional journals will help students to see the ultimate outcome of the production-end of "publication" writ large.

## Special Considerations:

The "Publications Management" course is one in which you are expected to be highly self-motivated and organized because you have clear deliverables that need to be achieved by certain deadlines across the term. You also need to be organized and self-motivated because you won't have a professor keeping tabs on you multiple times a week!

## Course objectives:

You will be responsible for several major tasks, which we will allocate to groups of students and to individual students. Some tasks all students will perform:

- 1) Assessing the current *Xchanges* site in terms of design and technical functionality;
- 2) After considering the site's current mechanism of operation, determining whether moving to a Content Management System (CMS) is the proper course of action next (and if so, which one);

- 3) Fixing "minor" problems on the site that exist that impair usability (internet gibberish existing in certain archive files, missing and broken links, etc.);
- 4) Creating modifiable PDF forms for all correspondence-related aspects of the journal's operation;
- 5) Creating a robust existence for the journal on its Facebook and Twitter accounts;
- 6) Embarking on analytics research for the journal, considering traffic and user involvement with the site over the last five years;
- 7) *(If time allows)* Redesigning (and perhaps "rebranding"?) the site to fit whatever new CMS or template has been chosen by the class as a collective;
- 8) *(If time allows)* Relaunching the journal by the end of April, 2015.

You will be expected to submit to me bi-weekly Activity Reports that demonstrate your progress on your own and group-assigned tasks. I will use these Activity Reports to assess your performance in the class. You will also submit a midterm and final progress report. The whole class will, as a collective, produce an online presentation to submit to me by the end of April that will encapsulate all major accomplishments in the above-named areas. You will also be expected to do independent research to educate yourself on who *Xchanges's* "peer" journals are, so that you understand the context in which you're working. We will cover *Xchanges's* context somewhat in our first meetings.

**Assignments:** *All assignments must be submitted via email to [jnewmark@nmt.edu](mailto:jnewmark@nmt.edu), with the student's name and assignment title in the subject line.*

### **History, Research, and Planning Memorandum 10%**

This is your first assignment. This will be a three-page, single-spaced memorandum and must cover: 1) What is *Xchanges*?; 2) What are other journals with a similar focus?; 3) What is the purpose of *Xchanges*?; 4) How might various aspects of the journal's online existence and reach be improved? and 5) Into which area of the journal do you think you could most effectively intervene and why? You will need to do a careful analysis of the journal as it currently exists online. You may interview stakeholders in the journal—Dr. Newmark and Andy Keith – if you wish. You may also read scholarly articles about the journal. Use properly cited and integrated direct quotes from interviews and scholarly articles, if you use them.

### **Midterm and Final Progress Report 20% (10% each)**

I will provide Progress Report details and a template on my website, two weeks before the Midterm Report's due date.

### **Participation 10%**

I will assess your participation through my impressions of your work involvement and output through our GoogleDocs workspace and through your participation in other email and correspondence exchanges.

### **Final Group Video Presentation 15%**

As a class, you will begin to craft a video presentation in week 13, which will be due in week 15. In this presentation, you need to:

- Give a history of *Xchanges*
- Analyze *Xchanges*'s current existence and its current problems and strengths (from design, technical, and usability perspectives)
- If you completed an individual project, you must make room in the group video presentation for information on your accomplishments
- Offer a summary of your team and whole-class accomplishments
- Point to *Xchanges*'s future, by identifying the chosen CMS or other platform for relaunch
- Offer a summary of "next steps"

As a class, students need to decide whether to meet the parameters for submission to *TheJUMP* journal.

### **Individual *Xchanges* Project(s) Summary Report/Presentation 30%**

You will present to me, in week 16, a report – in whatever format you choose—that offers details on:

- Initial impressions of course goals
- Your chosen areas of work and your accomplishments therein
- Your role in larger class and group projects and accomplishments therein
- Examples of work you completed
- "Future Work" that a future *Xchanges* intern might perform in your specific areas of expertise

### **Bi-Weekly Activity Reports 15%**

Every two weeks you will submit an activity report form that will detail your hours dedicated to work planning, editing, producing, corresponding for, promoting, or researching about aspects of the *Xchanges* journal. I will provide a form for this on my website.

### **Course Calendar:**

#### Week one:

January 12-16

Course introduction meetings

#### Week two:

January 19-23

**Activity Report 1** due by end of day Friday.

Plan class-wide communication utility (email? GoogleDocs? something else?); By end of week, have collaborative planning calendar established and populated. Share with Dr. Newmark.

#### Week three:

January 26-30

**History, Research, and Planning Memorandum** due by end of day Friday.

#### Week four:

February 2-6

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark

**Activity Report 2** due by end of day Friday.

Week five:

February 9-13

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark

Week six:

February 16-20

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark  
**Activity Report 3** due by end of day Friday.

Week seven:

February 23-27

**Midterm Progress Report Due**

Week eight:

March 2-6

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark  
**Activity Report 4** due by end of day Friday.

Week nine:

March 9-13

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark

Week ten:

March 16-20 – **SPRING BREAK**

Week eleven:

March 23-27

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark  
**Activity Report 5** due by end of day Friday.

Week twelve:

March 30-April 3

Progress on individual and group projects, with correspondence and updates to Dr. Newmark

Week thirteen:

April 6-10

Begin work as a whole class on Collaborative Video Report  
**Activity Report 6** due by end of day Friday.

Week fourteen:

April 13-17

Continue work on Collaborative Video Report

Week fifteen:

April 20-24

**Final Progress Report** due by end of day Friday.  
**Collaborative Video Report** due by end of day Friday.  
**Activity Report 7** due by end of day Friday.

Week sixteen:

April 27-May 1

**Individual Project Summary** report due by end of day Friday.

Student exit interviews

## Policies

Department Mission Statement and Objectives:

“The CLASS Department is a multidisciplinary department whose mission is to cultivate critical awareness and broad understanding of the ideas and values characterizing human history and experience. CLASS courses encourage critical, historically informed consideration of the collective experience of humanity and the many beliefs and conflicts in our common cultural heritage.

“Students study literature, philosophy, art, and music in the social, political, and economic contexts in which those works first appeared. Humanities courses help students increase their awareness and understanding of human values, human history, and human experience.”

Late work:

Assignments must be turned in designated on the syllabus. After this time, for each day an assignment is late, I will deduct one letter grade (meaning, if the paper begins at an "A," or 100 points, and is one day late, I will begin grading it from an "A-," which is 92 points. From the second day to the third day late, the grade goes from a "A-" to a "B+," which is 89 points, and so on. Each day of the week counts in this calculation). Again, extraordinary circumstances might excuse a late assignment, but these are rare. Because of the remote nature of this course, all assignments must be submitted in .docx or PDF format via email to [jnewmark@nmt.edu](mailto:jnewmark@nmt.edu). I reserve the right not to accept late papers.

Equal Access (Counseling and Disability Services):

New Mexico Tech is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. Qualified individuals who require reasonable accommodations are invited to make their needs known to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (OCDS) as soon as possible. In addition, New Mexico Tech offers mental health and substance abuse counseling through the Office of Counseling and Disability Services. The confidential services are provided free of charge by licensed professionals. To schedule an appointment, please call 835-6619.

Emergency Notification System:

For information see:

<http://www.nmt.edu/cat-campus-police/4002-emergency-notification-system>

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism, in very general terms, is the use of someone else's words or ideas without proper citation. The style guide *Everyday Writer* – which you may have from English 111 or 112 -- includes information about plagiarism.

Also, the NMT library offers a handy website addressing many plagiarism issues and provides advice on avoiding plagiarism: <http://infohost.nmt.edu/~nmtlib/INFO/OREf/plagiarism.html>. I also address plagiarism issues on my website: <http://juliannenewmark.com/materials.html>. New Mexico Tech's Academic Honesty Policy can be found starting on page 59 of the NMT catalog,

[http://www.nmt.edu/images/stories/registrar/pdfs/2013-2014\\_UNDERGRADUATE\\_Catalog\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.nmt.edu/images/stories/registrar/pdfs/2013-2014_UNDERGRADUATE_Catalog_FINAL.pdf)

You are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following this policy.

#### Student Learning Outcomes for the Technical Communication Program

<http://infohost.nmt.edu/~huma/programs/creditout.html>

1. Professionalism within the field of TC (e.g., skills in written communication, visual communication, technical writing, editing, critical thinking, and oral presentation).
2. Ability to conduct original research in TC and related fields intellectual breadth and depth in TC.
3. Ability to work collaboratively and understand the way TC projects are products of negotiated interaction.