

**Name of Activity or Assignment: Media Follower**  
**Name of Course: News and Promotional Writing**  
**Megan Bell, University of Minnesota--Crookston**

**I. LOC:**

**LOC #5 : Critically analyze messages**

- Identify meanings embedded in messages
- Articulate characteristics of mediated and non-mediated messages
- Recognize the influence of messages

**II. Length of Assignment:** Three weeks. The assignment is due at the end of the seventh week of the semester.

**III. Materials Needed:** Computer with reliable internet access; social media accounts (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.).

**IV. Instructions:** Overview: The purpose of this assignment is to gain an understanding of how social media and promotional writing are used in real-world situations. By following a celebrity or organization on various social media platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) and traditional media formats (newspapers or online reliable news sources), you will gain an understanding of the different styles, uses, audiences, principles, and forms messages take for audiences.

It is advisable to review the grading rubric at the beginning of this project. You may also find it helpful to self-critique your assignment with this rubric prior to submitting your final assignment to ensure that all requirements have been addressed.

**Social Media Log and Report Requirements**

You will maintain a log of media updates on the celebrity or organization of your choice. Record the date, source of the information, a brief excerpt that identifies the information, terms relevant to class content, and personal comments that may prove useful when doing the written and oral reports. A tool like Hootsuite (free trial available at [www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com)) may be used for tracking if desired.

Additionally, a copy of the actual information should be included whenever possible (examples: a copy of the tweet, a copy of a news article, a copy of a Facebook status, screen capture of a snap, etc.). Screenshots may be used to capture samples as well. Be sure to save copies in a manner that allows access at a later time. Do not bookmark or simply keep a URL as the content may change. It is worth noting if content does change or is removed as this may be important to address in the report.

Example Social Media Log: The log could look something like the example below. You are welcome to use another format that works for you and the method you choose for saving materials for this assignment.

Date	Source	Excerpt	Terms	Comments
1/20	Twitter	Real Housewives of “anywhere” against SOPA	Social media, tweet	Tweeted after the event. “Blackouts” occurred 1/18.
1/21	New York Times	Housewives of “anywhere” begin campaign against SOPA.	Press Release	Taking action. Maybe more than propaganda??

Report: This is the written summary of the uses of writing and strategies that are evident from the log you create as the celebrity or organization you are following post content. A minimum of five sources in addition to the textbook are required. To meet or exceed the expectations of this assignment, you must connect what you observe through the content in your log and make connections with the required readings in your report.

You must cite sources that you used to identify strategies (such as the textbook, optional readings provided in the course site, or credible sources you find on your own). APA style (not to be confused with AP style) is the preferred format for citing sources in-text and on the reference page.

The report will be 4-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman font with the log and samples, such as press releases, **not** counting toward the length requirement.

**V. Rubric or Scoring Guide:**

Media Follower Rubric (50 points possible)			
Criteria			
The Log (10 points possible): The log was included with the required information recorded - including screen captures, copies of text, etc.	The log met or exceed expectations with the inclusion of posts from most if not all days during the data collection period of at least two weeks with some days including multiple data points (more	The log falls below expectations, perhaps missing one or more pieces of required information.	The log is significantly below expectations (i.e. only seven days of data shown in log and from only one source).

	than one post on a particular platform and/or posts on various platforms on the same day)		
The Report (15 points possible): The report contained a written summary of the uses of writing and strategies supported with evidence from the log and at least five sources (plus the textbook)	The analysis met or exceeded expectations. The analysis was thorough and included high quality sources to support the analysis. Only minor improvements needed.	The analysis did not meet expectations. Examples of how an analysis may not meet expectations includes using fewer sources than required or all weak sources (ex. Wikipedia), lacking connections to the textbook, etc.	The analysis was significantly below expectations or was not included in the assignment submitted.
Connections (15 points possible): A clear connection is made between the content in the log, the analysis, and the supporting sources used. This includes Identify meanings embedded in messages, clearly articulating characteristics of mediated and non-mediated messages, and addressing the influence of the messages as they are presented through various media outlets.	The connections are clear and strong meeting or exceeding the expectations for the assignment.	The connections are clear and/or strong with room for improvement.	The connections are significantly below expectations or are missing from the assignment submission.
Conventions (10 points possible): The conventions of spelling, grammar, and citing sources were followed. The report met the specified length, and formatting was appropriate (i.e. headings used, format of the log, etc.).	The conventions of spelling, grammar, citations, and format met or exceeded expectations.	The conventions of spelling, grammar, citations, and format met expectations with room for improvements.	The conventions of spelling, grammar, citations, and/or format did not meet expectations.

**VI. Notes:** Students are encouraged to begin following and logging information early in the semester. If a student chooses to follow an individual or organization that posts with great frequency, the timeframe for following may be shortened to make the analysis manageable for a three-week project.

The textbook used for the course is included in the references.

**VII. References:**

Lipschultz, J. H. (2018). *Social media communication* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.