OL 501: Nonprofit Communications & Fundraising in the Digital Age

A Self-Paced 2 to 3 Month Online Nonprofit Fundraising Certificate Program

Syllabus: The step by step process. This Nonprofit Online Donations program is designed in a progression where each weekly module represents one sequential step for you to take in the process of campaign design and development. The assignments have real tools for you to download, print out, edit, and use as templates over and over again in launching new initiatives.

**Here is what the schedule looks like if you average two assignments per week:**

**Week 1.** You will have the first week to explore the website and course materials—and sneak a peek at the first assignments.

**Week 2.** Determine who your potential new donors are, what they are looking for, what you can offer them, and how they can find you:

* Assignment 1. 1) Define your goals for online nonprofit support and 2) the type of new individual supporters you are looking for. Do you want supporters that give a donation, volunteer, subscribe? How many do you need to meet your goal?
* Assignment 2. Get specific: Who exactly are these new nonprofit supporters you are hoping to reach? What causes do they want to support? Where do they look for causes to support? What information do you already have current, similar supporters? Compile this information and place it beneath Assignment One’s goal list.

**Week 3.** Email List Building. Capture Names: How to capture valuable new subscribers—and then send them newsletters that convert them into donors.

* Assignment 3. What does your nonprofit do? Specifically, in a sound bite, let’s make this sound attractive to your new supporters
* Assignment 4. Let’s do a quick website review: Does it have quick and easy navigation? Is it mobile friendly and well organized for future growth?
* Assignment 5. Collecting subscribers. What information should you ask of a new subscriber on your signup form?

**Week 4.** Email List Building 2.

* Assignment 6. Installing sign-up forms and popups on your website. Which type? Where should they pop up? What should they say?.
* Assignment 7. Incentives: Do you have a free offer? Compiling an e-book or membership program to entice new subscribers.

**Week 5.** Planning campaigns.

* Assignment 8. Channels: Your communication connection: where will you launch your first campaign? Clearly define the channels that connect you to your target supporters: newsletter, blog or social media?
* Assignment 9. Calendar: Develop an achievable communications calendar.

**Week 6.** Planning campaigns 2.

* Assignment 10. Write faster: Writing techniques for getting the job done. Get triple duty out of a blog post/landing page by using it as the basis for a newsletter, for social media, and for a free e-book too.
* Assignment 11. Compelling 2-page fact sheet: Packaging your program/project so that is compelling to donors.

**Week 7.** Keywords and Simple Landing Pages: The importance of landing pages, keywords and conversions.

* Assignment 12. Keywords and the 21st Century communication secret: [Shhh… It’s all about them!]. Use the same language your visitors use.
* Assignment 13. Landing pages are your salesmen: They convert a casual visitor into a donor, volunteer or subscriber.

**Week 8.** Keywords and Simple Landing Pages 2.

* Assignment 14. 12 steps to building a perfect landing page template. Plus, a bonus checklist.
* Assignment 15. Turning your MS Word landing page from assignments 13 and 14 into a real, live, webpage.
* Assignment 16. Demystifying SEO. Use keywords in your headings, page title, page description and content. Post information rich, long content.

**Week 9.** Email Newsletters. Romance your Subscribers.

* Assignment 17. Email subject lines. Your chance to be both creative and a Sherlock too.
* Assignment 18. Email layout: What should your email look like? How long? What will lure subscribers to click through to an actionable landing page?

**Week 10.** We’ve covered a lot of advanced territory over the past 4 to 5 weeks. Now it’s time to begin compiling what you’ve learned into a campaign. Hopefully, you saved all of the PDFs from the different assignments for your review.

* Assignment 19. Write a new, compelling newsletter as part of your first campaign. Create a master newsletter template for replicable efficiency.

**Week 11.** Tying it all together. You will launch and promote your first fundraising communication using templates that I provide.

* Assignment 20. Making the final connection between your newsletter and your landing page:
  + Make sure that your newsletter and your landing page templates are dovetailed together for ensuring that there is consistency between what the reader reads in your newsletter and finds on your landing page.
  + Incorporate a call to action in both the newsletter and in your landing page: convert visitors into donors.
  + Proof read: Final check: Yoast SEO, mobile friendly format, readability (send samples to different devices), check links, and check payment systems.

**Week 12.** Launch your first new campaign!

* Assignment 21. Launch your campaign: How to proofread, send and promote your 1st newsletter of the campaign.
* Assignment 22. Track your performance over the first week and watch it grow.
* Assignment 23. List what you would do better next time while the experience is still fresh in your mind.