



**Course Title:** SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

**Course Code:** BUS 163W

**Instructor Name and Bio:** Jason McDonald

Jason McDonald earned his B.A. from Harvard and Ph.D. from UC Berkeley. In the 1990s, he pivoted towards Internet Marketing, starting a successful Web portal for embedded systems engineers, eg3.com. That caused him to master the art and science of SEO (Search Engine Optimization), and from there, Google Ads and nowadays social media marketing. He has best-selling books on each topic and currently manages over \$100,000 per month in ad spend, SEO efforts, and social media marketing for clients. His passion is to take complex digital marketing topics and make them easy-to-understand for small business marketers and entrepreneurs. He can be found online at <https://www.jasonmcdonald.org/>.

### **Class Sessions and Recording**

Meeting days and times: 2.5 hours of live ZOOM video each week, usually on Mondays 6-7:30 pm, and Weds. 6-7 pm, but subject to change.

Meeting location: Zoom

The class sessions will be recorded.

Participants are encouraged to participate live as that is the best way to stay on track and participate in Questions and Answers. That said, recordings are available and Dr. McDonald provides one-on-one 30 min. “office hours” appointments. Participation is part of the class grading, but that can also be satisfied by online discussions.

### **Course Features:**

- Live sessions
  - Weekly Lecture with Q&A
  - Weekly “Workshop” with Q&A, and discussion.
  - 30 Min. “office hours” appointments on request.
- Assignments & Coursework
  - Assignments and course materials posted in Canvas
  - Required discussions in Canvas
  - Students are required to submit a “Class Project” if they want to earn an “A.”

### **Course Summary**

How does a business, a product or service, or indeed any website get to the top of Google? Search Engine Optimization or “SEO” is the answer. SEO is the art and science of building a website to rank at or near the top of Google, as well as other search

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 365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305  
[continuingstudies@stanford.edu](mailto:continuingstudies@stanford.edu)  
 650-725-2650

engines such as Bing, Amazon, Yelp, VRBO, etc. While Google is the most important, the other search engines have some unique features such as e-commerce and/or customer reviews. This course will start with the basics of how Google works, explain “On Page” SEO (which is how a website talks to Google), “Off Page” SEO (which is about building links, getting reviews, and earning social authority), as well as content marketing and analytics. By the end of the course, you will not only understand the basics of SEO. You will have what it takes to create a step-by-step plan to optimize your website to rank, earn clicks, and generate success.

*\*Please see course page for full description and additional details.*

## Grade Options and Requirements

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - Students must earn at least 500 points as explained below.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  - Letter grades are determined on a percentage basis, with participation worth 300 points, quizzes 500 points, and a class project worth 200 points. An “A” is 90% or above, a “B,” 80%, etc.
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*\*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.*

## Textbooks/Required Materials

[SEO Workbook 2023](#). PDF is provided in the course, or it can be purchased.

## First Assignment

Prior to the first class, students are asked to complete the readings for Week One: *SEO Workbook*: Chapters 0 (Introduction), 1 (Goals), and 2 (Keywords).

## Tentative Weekly Outline

### Week One

What is “SEO?” Where are the SEO opportunities on a Google SERP (Search Engine Results Page). How do we identify relevant, “transactional” keyword for which we want to rank on Google?

### Week Two

What is “On Page” SEO and how to we build a Google-friendly website? What are the basics of tag structure, visible content, and even “semantic search” to create content that appeals to both Google and users?

**Week Three**

What is “Off Page” SEO? What are the three components of links, reviews, and social authority? How do we “build links” as well as get reviews or earn social authority?

**Week Four**

What is the new “content marketing” and how does that impact SEO, especially in a world of AI and “semantic search?”

**Week Five**

How do we know we’re succeeding? How can we measure our rank on Google, interpret what’s working (and what’s not), and once users are on our website use Google Analytics to observe their behavior?