

MEJO 720: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

A.K.A. HOW TO MARKET ANYTHING TO ANYONE

Course Syllabus & Schedule

Fall 2018

Posted 8.7.2018

COURSE DETAILS & LOGISTICS

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| INSTRUCTOR | Josh Carlton (please call me Josh) |
| MOST DAYS | Founder, 500THz |
| OTHER DAYS | Lecturer, UNC School of Media and Journalism |
| INSTRUCTOR EMAIL | joshcarlton@unc.edu // josh@500thz.com |
| COURSE SLACK | stratcomm720fall2018.slack.com // join by clicking here |
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| ONLINE CONTACT | skype: jcarlton25 // google hangouts/google chat: josh@500thz.com |
| OFFICE HOURS | Office hours will be held on Tuesdays from 11.30am–12.30pm. Other times are available via appointment. |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The definition of communications has dramatically changed over the last decade. In the not-too-distant past, companies could take a “set it and forget it” approach to communications. Now, in the world of Kickstarter, ad blockers, always-on connectivity and on-demand content, effective communication strategies are a must-have – not a nice-to-have.

The skills learned in this course will be beneficial in many job functions at organizations of any size, even without the specific job title of *communications strategist*. Together, we will explore how marketing communication, in particular, is being transformed by changes in culture and technology. While organizations have always engaged in strategic communication to inform and influence publics, the rich and exponentially cluttered information environment today presents vast opportunities and mind-boggling challenges. Today, **everything communicates**.

From the global transnational media firm, to the state-wide environmental activist organization, to the local public school, today’s organizations are grappling to create and sustain relationships through strategic, targeted, and integrated communication that supports organizational goals. The field of strategic communication is much broader than marketing communications. It is impossible, however, to adequately cover all sub-disciplines of strategic communications within the scope of a one-semester course.

We will focus specifically on general marketing communications for this course, but the concepts, strategies and tactics we study can be applied to corporations, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, activist groups, nongovernmental organizations, organizations promoting forms of social change, political parties or movements, and government organizations. Similarly, when you see the terms “buyers” or “customers”, you can also think of subscribers, voters, volunteers,

applicants, and donors. Important related topics such as crisis communication, corporate social responsibility, and non-profit marketing are not fully covered in this course, but I am happy to suggest resources should you like to learn more about these areas.

A NOTE OF THANKS

My thanks to Dr. Heidi Hennink-Kaminski and Dr. Kimberly Moore for their work in creating prior versions of this course.

INTRODUCTION TO THE INSTRUCTOR

As I was finishing my Master's degree at The University of Texas at Austin in 2005, I wrote a business plan for a research and strategy consulting business while taking an entrepreneurship class. The plan took about twelve years to fully bloom, when I launched my own research and strategy consulting company in early 2017. Now I am living out that mid-2005 business plan nearly every day. Strategy works.

Most days, I'm the founder of a market research and strategy consulting company, 500THz (ask me about the meaning some time). On other days, I teach Account Planning/Creative Strategy and Communications Strategy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In March 2017, I founded my company on the belief that empathy, creativity and simplicity are the antidote to today's over-thought marketing strategy landscape. I've solved brand marketing and communications problems for 80+ companies in nearly every industry, across 20+ categories.

I'm fascinated by the intersection of human behavior, culture, decision-making, and technology. Before founding my own consulting firm, I graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a Master's in Advertising Communications, followed by working in various strategy and leadership roles at Arnold, The Martin Agency, McGarrah Jessee, McKinney, and The Paragraph Project.

I have propelled dozens of big brands with big budgets towards even greater success and have empowered dozens of challenger brands with big aspirations to get closer to their dreams. In the classroom, I have taught Creative Strategy since 2008 at both the Robertson School of Media and Culture at Virginia Commonwealth University, and the School of Media and Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (with a brief hiatus between the universities). When I'm not obsessed with client or student success, I can be found outside with my kids and/or young Weimaraner – either coaching baseball or hiking.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Underpinned by appropriate theory, best practice models, and ethical frameworks of practice, this course challenges students to consider the evolving roles and definitions of marketing, advertising, and marketing public relations. The analysis of case studies and current situations is integrated throughout the course to stimulate critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills.

The course will provide you with opportunities to apply analytical skills to a variety of communication problems across multiple industries and to help you:

- Understand the role of research and planning in successfully engaging with internal stakeholders and external audiences
- Understand the differences between paid, owned and earned media; describe the impact of digital media on traditional marketing strategy; and integrate paid, earned and owned media into effective marketing communication campaigns
- Evaluate integrated marketing strategies and plans for a brand or an organization

- Create an integrated advertising and marketing plan for a brand or organization to solve a business challenge
- Measure, monitor and calibrate integrated advertising and marketing strategies for a brand or organization as part of a communications plan

Students will integrate the knowledge they've learned in the program to identify a real-world challenge – perhaps a brand believed to be underperforming in the marketplace or building support for a ballot referendum – and use concepts from the course to evaluate the situation and propose a comprehensive marketing communication plan (using a combination of owned, paid and earned media) to advance the objectives and goals of the organization. More information about the marketing communication plan will be presented later in the semester.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS & OTHER PRE-WORK

You will be required to purchase three books for the course, as well as several HBR Case Studies and Articles, which can be purchased at this link: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/556193>

Heath, C. and Dan Heath. (2007). *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*. 2007. New York: Random House. ISBN: 1400064287

Osterwalder, A. and Yves Pigneur, Gregory Bernarda, Alan Smith, Trish Papadakos. (2014). *Value Proposition Design (Strategyzer)*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. ISBN: 1118968050

Weinberg, G. and Justin Mares (2015). *Traction: How Any Startup Can Achieve Explosive Customer Growth*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin. ISBN: 1591848369

Additional chapter excerpts, articles and TED Talks will be posted to Sakai via links, course e-reserves, and/or PDFs. If something interesting and pertinent breaks during the semester, I may also share additional (free) materials via email and/or Slack for discussion.

OPTIONAL READING

If students are interested in learning more about these topics from other sources, please see the following books:

Kelley, T. and David Kelley (2013). *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*. Danvers, MA: Crown Business/Currency. ISBN: 038534936X

Lafley, A.G. and Roger L. Martin (2013). *Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press. ISBN: 142218739X

Morgan, A. and Mark Barden (2015). *A Beautiful Constraint: How To Transform Your Limitations Into Advantages, and Why It's Everyone's Business*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. ISBN: 1118899016

Scott, D. M. (2017). *The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use Social Media, Online Video, Mobile Applications, Blogs, Newsjacking, and Viral Marketing to Reach Buyers Directly*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. ISBN: 1119362415

COURSE CADENCE

The schedule for this course has been coordinated with Professor Ruel’s MEJO 721 course, so that Synchronous Sessions are held once every two weeks for each course on the same Thursday evenings. This course will have a Synch Session from 8pm–9pm EST.

Asynchronous Slack channel conversations (discussion board) run Monday through Friday on alternative weeks as well. Several opportunities for face/voice interaction with me each week have been included as indicated below; I am happy to schedule a Google chat or Skype appointment with you outside of these parameters if the need arises, with a reasonable amount of notice.

Our course “weeks” will begin on Thursdays and run for fourteen (14) days, with an assignment due approximately two (2) weeks later on Wednesdays by 11:59pm. Synchronous Sessions will be held in the middle of each Module.

The course calendar can be divided into three main parts:

- 1) On-boarding (Week 1)
- 2) Six (6) Learning Modules (Weeks 2-13)
- 3) Final Project Work (Weeks 14-16)

Part 1. Onboarding: The first week of the semester will serve as an onboarding experience as you read materials that cover basic marketing concepts, and then apply those concepts to your work environment through interaction with your colleagues and classmates.

Part 2. Learning Modules: Weeks 2 through 13 have been grouped into six (6) two-week modules with a variety of touch points and will flow as follows (with a few exceptions as noted in the calendar. Here is a general structure for how the two-week modules will flow:

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|---|---|--|--------------------|
| | | | | Module Begins Reading Day | Reading Day | Reading Day |
| Reading Day | Discussion Board | Discussion Board Office Hours 11.30am-12.30pm/ | Discussion Board | Discussion Board Synch Session 8pm-9pm | Discussion Board Work on Assignment | Work on Assignment |
| Work on Assignment | Work on Assignment | Work on Assignment Office Hours 11.30am-12.30pm | Work on Assignment Assignment Due: 11:59pm | | | |

Based on this cadence, the Instructor is available to interact with students for at least some portion of the day for eight (8) days of each 14-day Module, three (3) hours of which are dedicated, live face-time opportunities (Synchronous Session and Office Hours).

Reading Days: The first four (4) days of each module are set aside for students to read the assigned materials in preparation for the Discussion Boards and Synchronous Session.

Discussion Boards: The next five (5) days of each module are set aside for engagement on the Slack Online Discussion Board. The Discussion Board is intended for you to share with your colleagues examples of how the concepts we are studying can be applied to real-world examples, be it from your own personal experience or through trade articles or RSS feeds about other companies. We are intentionally using a vibrant, easy-to-use platform that will allow for posts to come from anywhere you have your phone. These posts provide a proof point for your ability to apply the concepts; the assignments will provide another opportunity for you to wrestle with and apply the material! The Instructor will check-in on each of these days. More details on Discussion Boards are outlined later in this Syllabus.

Synchronous Sessions: These will be held the second Thursday of each module from 8pm –9pm EST. If you are unable to attend “live”, please take the time to view the materials at a convenient time, preferably before you begin to work on your assignment. These sessions will be part lecture and part discussion.

Google Chat/Slack Direct Message Office Hours: Each Tuesday from 11.30am-12.30pm is set aside for online Office Hours. This is time set aside specifically for you and is organized around the traditional lunch-time for your convenience. The benefit of using online Office Hours to ask for clarification on course material, assignments or for a deeper conversation on the topic is my ability to respond immediately and personally to your query. Of course, you may contact me at any time, but my response will not be immediate.

Video Briefings: On the days when Modules begin, I will upload a short video segment for you to view at your convenience. Sometimes, this will be an introduction to the topic for the upcoming week. Sometimes this video may include reactions to questions the class raises in Discussion Boards and other places. These briefings are intended to be another way to receive relevant information from me in a semi-personal manner without requiring another synchronous session. Video briefings will be posted within the folder for that week’s Module no later than 6pm on the day the Module begins.

Assignments: Friday through Wednesday of the second week will focus on Assignments. You will complete five assignments total during the course; three (3) will be individual assignments and two (2) will be team assignments. Additional information on how to access and post completed assignments is provided later in this Syllabus.

A more detailed Course Calendar is provided at the end of this Syllabus.

Part 3. Final Project: The weeks following Thanksgiving Break will be dedicated to completing your final project for the course.

I will make additional office hours available weeks 14 and 15 to try to answer as many questions as immediately as possible. By Wednesday 12/5 at 11:59pm, you should have all your questions answered, and should be focused on writing and editing.

Your final projects will be due on Wednesday, 12/12 at 11:59pm.

Please begin to consider what you could work on for your organization that would benefit from a Strategic Communications Plan. You will create a plan, from scratch that includes all we cover in the course work. More details about the final project will be available the second week of the course.

MODULE DETAILS

Modules are ordered in a way that build together toward your full understanding of communications strategy.

| Weeks | Dates | Module Number | Topic |
|-------|-------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 8/23–8/29 | – | Course Introduction and Onboarding |
| 2-3 | 8/30–9/12 | 1 | What are we trying to accomplish with communications? Understanding the business and communications challenges. |
| 4-5 | 9/13–9/26 | 2 | Whom are we trying to reach? What is our 'brand' all about? Understanding the intersection of audiences and brands. |
| 6-7 | 9/27–10/10 | 3 | What do we say? What do we do? How to create compelling, relevant messages and behaviors. |
| 8-9 | 10/11–10/31 | 4 | Where do we reach them? Part I. Understanding the media landscape. |
| 10-11 | 11/1–11/14 | 5 | Where do we reach them? Part II. How to choose the best media channel mix. |
| 12-13 | 11/15–11/28 | 6 | How did it work? What should we change for next time? How to design a measurement plan as part of a larger communications strategy to know if/when the initiative is successful. |
| 14-16 | 11/29–12/12 | – | Final Project |

GRADING POLICY

Final graduate course grades are H, P, L, and F. **Failure to turn in any of the assignments or the final project will result in a F in the course. An assignment that is one second late is considered not turned in.** Late papers and late assignments will not accepted, no excuses. Failure to participate in one or more Module discussion board sessions will result in an L for the course. I will drop your lowest performing discussion board week. Here's a general description of graduate grades:

- H means a truly outstanding performance in the class and on assignments.
- P is a good, solid performance overall in the class and on assignments.
- L is a performance in the class and on assignments that is below the acceptable level for graduate students. It means the student does not understand the course material very well, does not have a grasp of what is required in this area at the graduate level, is not participating in the class at the level expected of graduate students, or has not participated in one or more Discussion Boards.

- F is failing. It is given rarely in the circumstance that a student has not handed in H, P, L graded assignments.

Your grade for the course will be determined by your performance in three areas:

| ASSIGNMENT | VALUE |
|--|-------------|
| 1) PARTICIPATION | |
| Weekly Slack Discussion Boards Contributions and Participation | 150 |
| Online Discussion Board "Hot Seat" Leading | 50 |
| 2) ASSIGNMENTS | |
| Assignment #1 | 120 |
| Assignment #2 | 120 |
| <i>Assignment #3: Final Project Proposal</i> | 120 |
| Assignment #4 | 120 |
| Assignment #5 | 120 |
| 3) FINAL PROJECT | |
| Final Project Deliverable | 200 |
| TOTAL | 1000 |

*After module 3, I will email you an indicator of how you are trending for your participation grade.

DISCUSSION BOARDS: 15% OF FINAL GRADE

As you well know, the success of any graduate seminar depends on the quality of discussion that we engage in, so please SPEAK UP! For every week of class, there will be two general threads of discussion:

- one thread related to understanding the key concepts and findings of the assigned readings/ videos
- one thread related to applying those materials to things you see in the real world as a "consumer" or as a professional in your workplace.

It is expected that all of you will participate in both of these threads each week with at least one substantive original post for each thread and at least one response post (responding to one of your classmates' posts) for each thread. If you must be completely absent from the Discussion Board for an entire week because of some major extenuating circumstance, please notify me in advance.

What is a substantive post? A substantive post should:

- Be more than two paragraphs (I am not going to count the paragraphs, but you get the idea!)
- Contain information related to the module's topic and the assigned prompts.

- (This doesn't mean you can't post shorter messages, but to earn the minimum credit you have to post two substantive messages, and respond to two other posts.)

Please spend your Reading Days reading and thinking! Following those days, the Discussion Board will “open” each week at 6 a.m. EST on Mondays and “close” at 6pm on Thursdays. You are required to post on at least two of the four days that the Discussion Board is open. (Please do not take this to mean that it’s acceptable to post at 11:55 p.m. on Monday and 12:05 a.m. on Tuesday and count that as two separate days!) “Binge posting” is not helpful to your classmates or your education. It is expected that you will check in with the Discussion Board and read your classmates’ posts even on (most) days that you do not post yourself. Early and/or late posts are not counted for grading purposes.

P: A weekly discussion grade of P can be earned by completing the required two original and two response posts, demonstrating an understanding of the assigned material and an ability to apply it to a practical professional setting.

H: A weekly discussion grade of H can be earned by increasing the quality (more so than the quantity) of your posts. H grades are reserved for those who bring high-quality additional information to the discussion, making connections that are not already made by the assigned readings, the instructor or classmates. These posts help others synthesize and apply the material and/or suggest new ways of examining the issue under consideration.

L: A weekly discussion grade of L can be earned by completing fewer than the required number of posts and/or by doing overly brief or superficial posts that fail to show an understanding and application of the assigned material.

F: A weekly discussion grade of F can be earned by not posting to the Discussion Board in any given week.

HOT SEAT DISCUSSION BOARD LEADING: 5% OF FINAL GRADE

In addition to contributing every Discussion Board week, you will be on the “Hot Seat” for one week during the semester. During this week, you (and one or two other classmates) are expected to log in every day (if not multiple times per day) to keep the conversation moving. Please note: this is **not** a team assignment. You may prompt with a question inspired by the readings or pre-work, respond to posts from classmates, ask follow-up questions of classmates, or any other number of things. If you are unsure of what to post or how to lead during your “Hot Seat” week, please email the Instructor prior to posting.

Hot Seat weeks are randomly assigned below. Note: this is NOT a team assignment. Rather, a shared responsibility:

| Module | On the “Hot Seat” |
|--------|---|
| 1 | Morris, Barry; Shook, Kerri; Moore, Branson |
| 2 | Freed, Christian; Honaker, Dave |
| 3 | Schaible, Brad; Robb, Megan |
| 4 | Rodenfels, Jack; Poindexter, Elizabeth |

| Module | On the "Hot Seat" |
|--------|---|
| 5 | Sayewich, Natalie; Ely, Kasha; Black, Chace |
| 6 | Martin, Andrea; Mendenhall, Megan |

ASSIGNMENTS: 60% OF FINAL GRADE

Each of the five (5) assignments will be worth 12% of your final grade. Assignment instructions will be posted in the "Instructor Overview" for each Module.

Completed assignments should be posted to the Assignment section of Sakai by 11:59pm on the last day (Wednesday) of the two-week Module.

If you need clarification on assignments, Tuesday Office Hours are one way to ask about the assignment. Any additional clarification questions should be posted to the #questions channel of the Course Slack no later than Tuesday at 12.30pm EST before the assignment is due. If you have a question, check first to see if it has already been asked and answered! Please note that I will not be available to answer questions about the assignment after 12.30pm EST on Tuesdays.

Two (2) assignments will be individual assignments and three (3) assignments will be team assignments.

Team Members: As a team, you will work through three (3) HBR cases over the semester. Each student has been randomly assigned to a team as follows:

| Team Name | Team Members |
|----------------|--|
| Dispatchers | Freed, Christian; Poindexter, Elizabeth; Morris, Barry |
| Correspondents | Martin, Andrea; Moore, Branson; Mendenhall, Megan; Honaker, Dave |
| Messengers | Robb, Megan; Shook, Kerri; Sayewich, Natalie |
| Connectors | Ely, Kasha; Black, Chace; Rodenfels, Jack; Schaible, Brad |

For those of you unfamiliar with the case study approach, here are recommendations for how to approach reading and digesting an HBR case study – which begins with reading the case three times:

1. The **first reading** should be a quick run-through of the text in the case. It should give you a feeling for what the case is about and the types of data contained in the case.
2. Your **second reading** should be more in-depth. Many people like to underline or otherwise mark up their cases to pick out important points that they know will be needed later. For example, analyze the case with respect to customer behavior and trends, competitor's behaviors and trends, and the firm's strengths and weaknesses. On your second reading, carefully examine the exhibits in the case. It is generally true that the case writer has put the exhibits there for a purpose. They contain information that will be useful in analyzing the situation. You will often find that you will need to apply some analytical technique to the exhibit in order to benefit from the information in

the raw data. Many of the questions I ask will focus on interpreting the exhibits in the case and assessing the implications of these findings.

3. On your **third reading**, you should have a good idea of the fundamentals of the case. Now you will be searching to understand the specific situation. You will want to get at the root causes of problems and gather data from the case that will allow you to make specific action recommendations. Before the third reading, you may want to review the questions in the outline of class assignments. It is during and after the third reading that you should be able to prepare your answers to the discussion questions. As is often the situation in actual practice, cases may not have all the data that you would like. Nevertheless, it is critical that you develop a reasoned plan of attack on the basis of data available. Moreover, **you should not attempt to find out what happened to the company or business as a basis for making your decision.**

More details on how to read and analyze Case Studies will be provided as part of Onboarding reading materials.

For each case study, examine the case (both text and exhibits) and be able to share what specific actions your team would recommend that the company take, and why. Specific queries will be posted for each assignment. As a benchmark, a typical, successful and well-written Case Assignment will have taken around 8 to 10 hours to complete, per person. Case Assignments may not exceed five (5) pages, double-spaced, 12 point font in the main body and 6 pages of supporting appendix material as needed. Please appoint one team member to post the completed case assignment to the "Assignment" section of the Sakai site by 11:59pm on the Wednesday it is due.

Here is the Assignment Schedule:

| Module | Individual or Team? | Due | Case/Topic |
|--------|---------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Team | 9/12 at 11:59pm EST | Bose Corporation: Communication Strategy for Challenging Apple's Beats by Dr. Dre |
| 2 | Team | 9/26 at 11:59pm EST | Kindle Fire: Amazon's Heated Battle for the Tablet Market |
| 3 | Individual | 10/10 at 11:59pm EST | <i>Final Project Proposal</i> |
| 4 | Individual | 10/31 at 11:59pm EST | Lululemon Athletica |
| 5 | Team | 11/14 at 11:59pm EST | The Hunger Games: Catching Fire: Using Digital and Social Media for Brand Storytelling |

Please note: Peer evaluations will be distributed for the three team assignments; your individual grade may be downgraded based on input from your peers.

FINAL PROJECT DELIVERABLE: 20% OF FINAL GRADE

Each individual student will develop a comprehensive digital marketing communication plan that integrates paid, earned, and owned media strategies. Your plan will address the a communication problem or challenge and will articulate a compelling goal and specify measurable objectives, suggest strategic solutions, and propose tactics comprised of owned, earned or paid media.

There two parts to the final project – a project proposal and a final plan. Detailed requirements for the proposal and the final plan will be posted in the “Final Project” folder in the Resources section of Sakai by Friday, September 7th.

Begin thinking about issue or business challenge you would like to address. Some of you may want to tie-in with an initiative in which your employer is involved, which could include an eCommerce site, a corporate social responsibility (CSR) endeavor, or a new product launch. Others may want to work on a plan for a hobby or non-profit initiative.

Project Proposals (Counts as individual assignment #3): Step one will be to post to the “Assignments” section of Sakai a completed proposal form by 9/26 at 11:59pm EST. Here you will make the case for why this business issue needs to be addressed and share details about your target market/audience. I will be in touch with each of you so I can provide feedback and focus, allowing you to begin to work on the plan itself.

Marketing Communications Plan: Step two will be to complete a comprehensive marketing communications plan that includes everything we cover in the Learning Modules, applied to your specific communications challenge. This plan will be due by Wednesday, 12/12 at 11:59pm EST.

EXPECTATIONS

1. **Attend.** If you are going to be “absent” online for several days due to business trip or other issues, please let me know in advance!
2. **Participate.** The success of this course is dependent on you playing an active role, both in-person and online in the discussion board (Slack). See the next section for more expectations on the Discussion Board.
3. **Share.** Sharing your ideas with others by presenting them well can set you apart from your colleagues in the real world. We will have plenty of practice with sharing your ideas.
4. **Write.** Writing clearly and succinctly is a key skill in whatever job you pursue.
5. **Be willing to be imperfect.** Creativity in communications is about pushing boundaries, which often times means it’s not perfect. There’s often not a “perfectly right” answer. Please come to each Synch Session and Discussion Board session (on Slack) willing to put yourself out there, and not judge others.

SYNCHRONOUS SESSIONS

Synchronous sessions will be held from 8pm–9pm on the middle Thursday of each of the six (6) learning modules. The synch sessions will be on the heels of Professor Laura Ruel’s synch session time. It is expected that students will have read the majority of the material in advance of the session so that they can get the most out of the session, fully participate in the discussion and ask any questions they might have about the readings or topics that emerged in the Slack Online Discussion Boards.

If you have questions and cannot attend the live session, please send your questions to me via email by 12:30pm EST that Thursday, so that I can address them in the session. Each session will be recorded and posted to the appropriate module folder in the “Resources” section of the Sakai site.

I understand that you each have busy work and home front schedules. If you plan to join the session “live”, please try to do so by 8pm; if you join later, please try to do so in as non-disruptive a

manner as possible. We'll be sure to shout out that you've joined as we shift between topics, speakers, etc!

We will use Zoom for the sessions. Please make sure you have high-speed Internet access, and if sharing bandwidth with other household members, that they are using the Internet lightly (i.e., no Netflix). More details on how to login to each Synchronous Session will be distributed during Onboarding (week 1).

STAYING CURRENT

It is highly recommended that you subscribe to RSS feeds or monitor the following resources to help you immerse yourself in the field this semester.

These resources will also help you source ideas for your Discussion Board posts, as well as provide additional examples of how strategic campaigns are utilizing digital media.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Web kottke.org wired.com/blogs readwrite.com avc.com zephoria.org/thoughts Techmeme.com</p> | <p>Media mashable.com insidefacebook.com digitalbuzzblog.com venturebeat.com @contagious MediaPost</p> | <p>Idea Companies bbh-labs.com madebymany.com/blog droga5.com/news kickstarter.com/blog hugeinc.com/ideas Hubspot blog</p> | <p>Industry News fastcompany.com TheDrum adfreak.com @fastcodesign WARC BusinessInsider.com</p> |
| <p>Creativity thefwa.com creativity-online.com designobserver.com coudal.com swiss-miss.com</p> | <p>Culture psfk.com monocle.com brainpickings.org springwise.com coolhunting.com</p> | <p>Strategists @uberblond neilperkin.typepad.com tomfishburne.com @bethcomstock markpollard.net</p> | <p>Conferences/Authors poptech.org danpink.com sethgodin.typepad.com 99u.com ted.com</p> |

The Cannes Lions Awards provide excellent examples of campaigns that integrate various elements of the IMC mix, both online and offline. These campaigns, or articles about the campaigns, may serve as examples for discussion board postings.

www.canneslions.com

The Institute of Public Relations provides a wealth of information about a number of public relations topical areas, including Issue Management, Corporate Social Responsibility, Crisis Communication, and Media Relations.

<http://www.instituteforpr.org/research/topics/>

The Jay Chiat Awards provide examples of insights, research, and ideas, all coming together into a creative communications strategy. These cases may serve as examples for online Discussion Board postings. We will also use selected winning case studies as required reading.

<http://stratfest.aaa.org/2017-winners/>
<http://stratfest.aaa.org/winners-2016/>
<http://stratfest.aaa.org/2014-winners-1/>
<http://stratfest.aaa.org/2013-winners/>
<http://stratfest.aaa.org/2012-winners/>

WEEKLY SUMMARIES

At the end of every Synch Session, a short survey will be distributed for your immediate response. This survey will ask three simple questions:

1. Your name
2. In 1-2 sentences, what conclusion did you arrive at, based on our discussion today?
3. What do you still want to know?

OFFICE HOURS

I will use [Google Hangouts](#) / [Google Meet](#) to host office hours. My Google account is josh@500thz.com

Please request to add me as a Hangouts contact during the Onboarding week.

I will initiate a Google Meeting approximately five (5) minutes before Office Hours each Tuesday. The link will be posted to Slack in the #general channel.

Chrome is the preferred browser for Google Meet.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

No late assignments will be accepted, no excuses. Plan ahead.

HONOR CODE

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty share the responsibility. If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to your Instructor or consult with the office of the Dean of Students or the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. This document, adopted by the Chancellor, the Faculty Council, and the Student Congress, contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected.

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University's honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. Using a set-up sound bite is a violation of the honor code. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your Instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course Instructor or Director, M.A. in Digital Communication Rhonda Gibson, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

ACEJMC CORE COMPETENCIES

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them [here](#).

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, classes in the School of Media & Journalism are designed to build your abilities in all of these areas. In this course, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the selected values & competencies below:

- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

ONLINE COURSE STATEMENT

1. By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources. Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy (<http://help.unc.edu/1672>) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette and privacy protection.

2. As part of this course you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC Chapel Hill Information Security Policies (http://its.unc.edu/ITS/about_its/its_policies/index.htm) when participating in online classes.

3. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC Chapel Hill, such as Google or Youtube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC Chapel Hill.

4. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

5. Online courses may at times require Web-based assignments that are public in nature and may be viewed by third parties online. This is especially true in social media and blogging platforms. Be mindful of the information you choose to share publicly as part of your assignments. Under the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and UNC's FERPA regulation (http://registrar.unc.edu/AcademicServices/PoliciesProcedures/StudentRights/CCM1_042762), a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties. However, FERPA protection does not extend to material shared publicly by students.

SEEKING HELP

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the Instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require special accommodations to participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Department of Disability Services website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/>

INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY

If you can't meet during scheduled office hours, please send an email to the Instructor with 2-3 proposed times.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

The Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including assignment due dates and topics, when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so students will be able to adjust their schedules.

DETAILED COURSE SCHEDULE

| Weeks | Dates | Module | Topic |
|--|------------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 8/21–8/29 | – | Introduction to Strategic Communications and Onboarding |
| <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings • Onboarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase required textbooks and HBR case studies/articles via link • Sign up for Slack (Online Discussion Board site/app) • Download Slack Desktop and Mobile Apps | | | |
| <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory Synchronous Session Thursday 8/23 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 8/28 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Profile Form due Wednesday 8/29 by 11:59pm EST | | | |
| 2-3 | 8/30–9/12 | 1 | What are we trying to accomplish with communications? Understanding the business and communications challenges. |
| <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 9/4 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Synchronous Session Thursday 9/6 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 9/11 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable • Assignment #1 due Wednesday, 9/12 by 11:59pm: Bose Corporation: Communication Strategy for Challenging Apple’s Beats by Dr. Dre | | | |
| 4-5 | 9/13–9/26 | 2 | Whom are we trying to reach? What is our ‘brand’ all about? Understanding the intersection of audiences and brands. |
| <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 9/18 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Synchronous Session Thursday 9/20 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 9/25 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable • Submit your initial ideas for Final Project Proposal for Instructor feedback: Wednesday, 9/19 by 11:59pm. • Assignment #2 due Wednesday, 9/26 by 11:59pm: Kindle Fire: Amazon's Heated Battle for the Tablet Market | | | |

| Weeks | Dates | Module | Topic |
|---|-------------|--------|---|
| 6-7 | 9/27–10/10 | 3 | What do we say? What do we do? How to create compelling, relevant messages and behaviors. |
| Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 10/2 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Synchronous Session Thursday 10/4 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 10/9 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable • Assignment #3 due Wednesday, 10/10 by 11:59pm: Final Project Proposal | | | |
| 8-9 | 10/11–10/31 | 4 | Where do we reach them? Part I. Understanding the media landscape. |
| <p><u>Note: Fall Break week off: Sunday 10/14–Saturday 10/20!</u></p> | | | |
| Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 10/23 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Synchronous Session Thursday 10/25 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 10/30 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable • Assignment #4 due Wednesday, 10/31 by 11:59pm: Lululemon Athletica | | | |
| 10-11 | 11/1–11/14 | 5 | Where do we reach them? Part II. How to choose the best media channel mix. |
| Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 11/6 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Synchronous Session Thursday 11/8 8pm-9pm EST • Office Hours Tuesday 11/13 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable • Assignment #5 due Wednesday, 11/14 by 11:59pm: The Hunger Games: Catching Fire: Using Digital and Social Media for Brand Storytelling. | | | |

| Weeks | Dates | Module | Topic |
|--|-------------|--------|---|
| 12-13 | 11/15–11/28 | 6 | <p>How did it work? What should we change for next time? How to design a measurement plan as part of a larger communications strategy to know if/when the initiative is successful.</p> |
| <p><u>Note: Thanksgiving Break Wednesday 11/21–Sunday 11/25</u></p> | | | |
| <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Briefing • Readings • Discussion Board | | | |
| <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 11/20 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) • Office Hours Tuesday 11/27 11.30am-12.30pm EST (optional) | | | |
| <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Participation and “Hot Seat” leading, if applicable. <i>Please note: due to Thanksgiving Break, Reading Days will be shortened in this Module, and the Discussion Board will be shortened by one (1) day.</i> | | | |
| 14-16 | 11/29–12/12 | – | Final Project |
| <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Final Projects | | | |
| <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office Hours Tuesday 11/27 TBD time • Office Hours Thursday 12/4 TBD time • Office Hours Tuesday 12/6 TBD time | | | |
| <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Project Due Wednesday, 12/12 by 11:59pm | | | |